Integrated project class as a capstone gives all students visual experience

More than a project, an experience

- Flint Hills Media Project has provided Wichita State University students and faculty an authentic opportunity to tell some of the rich stories of the people and places of our state.
- Participants cover the Symphony in the Flint Hills concert and also the stories of the host communities and people.
- Students tell their stories through verbal and visual media.

Integrated, multidisciplinary

- Students from electronic media, integrated marketing communications, journalism and interpersonal communication.
- Students interview, write and photograph. They shoot and edit video, and they practice using social media to share stories. They design/layout a magazine.
- Students research and study not only storytelling and media production, but also music, history, geography and geology to better understand the stories they’re working to tell.

Team based storytelling approach

- Students work in teams of three or four, each person with different strengths.
- Teams conduct many of their interviews together.
- Groups use all the tools (words, video, photos, graphics).
- Groups use multiple platforms to completely tell stories: website, magazine and social media.

PROFESSIONAL MEDIA PUBLICATIONS

The Wichita Eagle/Kansas.com
The Lawrence Journal World
The Ottawa Herald
Council Grove Republican
Pratt Tribune
Mission Valley Herald
The Wabaunsee County Signal
The Washington Post
KWCH TV/kwch.com
KPTS public television
KMUW public radio

MAGAZINE

Students responsible for writing, photography, editing, layout and production of a 156-page color magazine, with a distribution of 2,500

DIGITAL

Stories, photos and galleries on flinthillsmediaproject.com. In addition, about 25 new video pieces published each year on Vimeo.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Flint Hills Media Project on Facebook
flinthillsmediaproject on Instagram and Vine
@WSUfhmp on Twitter

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My only regret is not being able to take this class again. It was seriously one of the best college experiences I had. I not only found confidence in what I wanted to do but I also found friends that I could share my love of media production with. Take the class when you have the chance. It will make your semester. And if you can manage, take the class again.

The real world experience I got from FHMP was unlike any other class I’d ever taken. I was pushed out of my comfort zone, especially creatively. Whatever I created — photographs, magazine spreads, social media postings — was to tell a story to an audience who may or may not have experienced the event firsthand.

“...No experience in my college career offered more opportunity for personal growth and practical application of what I’ve learned than the Flint Hills Media Project. Every aspect of what the ESC teaches its students is put into practice. Students find themselves working across all media. The work is intense, the schedule compact, and the challenges sizeable. Interviewing skills are repeatedly put to the test and are honed quickly. Deadline pressure is always imminent — particularly on the day of the event as news stories are filed for newspapers across the state. Team work is emphasized as the students spread out over a large area to cover 50 or 60 different stories. We learned so much about this vibrant, vital ecosystem and its inhabitants, and we believe we’re better citizens — better Kansans — for it.”

The Flint Hills Media Project was one of the best experiences I had as a student, and it has had a profound influence on my education. I came into the course with an interest in web design, and was allowed the opportunity and creative freedom to develop and create the class website. It sparked my passion in web design, which I now am pursuing as a part of my future career. This class has also provided me with invaluable additions to my portfolio. And most recently, one of my photos was used by the Washington Post. As a student, this is an amazing accomplishment that I would not have had for it not for this class. It’s truly an experience. We were challenged to our greatest extent, and we emerged with a greater understanding of the communication field and ourselves.

A traditional communication class cannot prepare you for a real-world job quite like the experience-based Flint Hills Media Project class can. I wasn’t working on an assignment that only my professor would see — my audience consisted of thousands of people. Thanks to FHMP, I know I belong in the visual communication career field, and I have a magazine to prove it.

FHMP was a great experience for me because it enabled me to get hands-on experience that was extremely valuable in my career. The access to high quality equipment and software was amazing too. This project ignited my passion even more to become the video artist and media lover that I am today.