INTRODUCTION:

Over a four-week period, students will use the lens of British journalism from the past 350 years as a way of exploring British, and more particularly London, history. Through focusing in on several seminal events in British cultural and political life during these centuries, they will become familiarized with the central role that print journalism has played in British political history and the broader culture from the late seventeenth century forward; and the way in which British journalistic culture imprinted its mores on the broader world.

The course is not intended as a comprehensive modern British history course; rather it will use key events in the life of Britain and of London, and the media portrayal of those events, to show a society in transition, and to explore the emergence, over the centuries, of modern, vibrant, cosmopolitan London.

Our journey will start with the Fire of London, in 1666 – the event that destroyed medieval London and paved the way for the birth of the modern metropolis -- and its coverage both by the London Gazette, the capital city's only newspaper at the time, and in the diary writings of the famous civil servant-cum-literary chronicler Samuel Pepys. It will move into the eighteenth century and, in particular, the great political debates unleashed during the decades of the American and French revolutions – both parliamentary debates and also philosophical disputes about the rights of citizens in a modern state, which were disseminated amongst the populace and magnified by journalists-cum-pamphleteers such as Tom Paine and the anarchist theorist William Godwin. It will continue into the nineteenth century, with the great essayists clustered around William Hazlitt and the Spectator magazine; the radical newspapers of political movements such as the Chartists – a movement that came out of South Wales, but that ultimately had a huge impact on politics in the capital city; the great Victorian social chroniclers – Dickens, Mayhew, Booth, in particular; and the political journalists who covered what is widely seen as the first modern political campaign: Gladstone’s 1880 Midlothian Campaign.

Finally, we will journey into the twentieth century, looking at the way a growing mass media covered the run-up to, and prosecution of, two World Wars. I will include in this section pieces by full-time journalists such as the famous Guardian editor C.P. Scott, musings by newspaper magnates such as Lord Northcliffe, founder and owner of the Daily Mail and one of the formulators of the modern tabloid
sentiment, as well as the journalistic writings of George Orwell and Winston Churchill.

The course will continue into the 1980s, culminating with the violent labor protests that accompanied Rupert Murdoch’s moving of the *Times* newspaper to a non-union, high-tech production site at Wapping, in East London. In many ways Wapping, born in strife and revolutionary in its impact, represents the birth of twenty-first century journalism in England; as such, it is an appropriate end-point for this course.

**READING REQUIREMENTS:**

Before journeying to London to begin their studies, students will be expected to have read select chapters from Elizabethan chronicler John Stowe’s *Survey of London*. This will give them a sense of the history and geography of the medieval city destroyed by the Great Fire; as such it will be a prologue to the main body of the course. Additional pre-course readings will include chapters from the recently published oral history *Londoners*, by the Canadian journalist Craig Taylor; and Zadie Smith’s novel *White Teeth*. Thus, by the time they arrive in London, students will have a sense of the history out of which London emerged, as well as the teeming, multicultural, metropolis that it is today.

Additional readings during the four weeks of the course: Peter Ackroyd’s acclaimed *London: The Biography* – this is a long book, and, while I am assigning the book in its entirety, I will give permission to students to dip in and out of the text as their interests determine; V.S. Pritchett’s *London Perceived*; extracts from Henry Mayhew’s vast oral history from the high Victorian period, *London Labor and the London Poor*; and a couple books about the history of British journalism – I am currently leaning toward Kevin Williams’ *Get Me a Murder a Day: A History of Media and Communication in Britain*; and Andrew Marr’s *A Short History of British Journalism*. I also have several other books on journalism in the UK that I will either reference or recommend students read in addition to the required texts.

I will also hand out extracts from writings by the late nineteenth century journalist Charles Booth, the late twentieth century London chronicler-cum-novelist Ian Sincalir; essays by William Hazlitt; and possibly also essays by Benjamin Disraeli and Winston Churchill.

In addition, all students will be expected to read at least one newspaper, on a daily basis, while in London. During non-class hours, they will also be expected to utilize library resources to access historical archives containing newspapers and magazines from the eras on which they choose to focus their research for their essays.

**COURSE WORK:**
For **HIS 102S**, all students will be expected to write a 4,000-word research paper, exploring one distinct period in UK history and the ways in which the media of that period covered and shaped understanding of its major events.

Because of the time-constraints built into a four-week course, I will be meeting each student individually for a 15-minute discussion at the end of the first week, during which they will propose a research topic to me. I will meet within them again individually at the end of week three, during which time students will give me a progress report on their research and we will discuss writing concerns that they might have. The papers will be due in at the end of week four.

As they work on their papers, students will also be expected to talk with me about their topics both during class sessions, and, informally, during field trips and other activities. I will also be available for by-appointment office hours on the afternoons after classes, and for email consultations.

There will be a short, in-class final exam in week four as well. It will be essay-based, with four essay questions, based on the classes and field trips, presented to students and with students expected to answer ONE of the four questions. The exam will be 90 minutes in length, and I expect essays in the 700-800-word range.

**The HIS 102S will be graded as follows:** 15 percent of the grade will be based on in-class participation. I will take detailed notes on each student’s engagement during these weeks. 65 percent will be based on the 4,000-word essay. Of this 40 percent will be based on the quality of research and the cohesiveness of the arguments developed in the essay; the remaining 25 percent will be based on the quality and elegance of the writing itself. The final 20 percent will be based on the final exam.

For the **HIS 198** course, students will be expected to keep a journalism-journal, in which they detail their experiences with UK media, both present and past, as presented to them on field trips, in libraries, and in the media they observe, buy, and read during their four weeks in London; within this journal I expect them to build up an understanding of the ways in which London, as a world city, functions on a daily basis and the ways in which its constituent communities are informed about their world. Students will show me these journal entries throughout the four-weeks of the course. It will be graded on a **pass/no pass** basis.

**CLASS AND FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE** (In addition to the detailed outline here, one evening each week, we will go either to the British Film Institute, the National Theater, or one of the many cultural festivals that London hosts in the summer. Also, for classes that go beyond the regular 9am-1pm slot, we will break for lunch from 12-1.):

**Week One: The Fire of London to the Napoleonic Wars.**
Sunday:
Students arrive, settle in at their accommodations, and meet up for an informal evening orientation session.

Monday:
9am-noon, class will meet for an overview lecture on what the course is and what the research expectations on students are.
12-1.30: we will break for a group lunch.
1.30-4: Discussion of late seventeenth century London, from the Great Fire onward. We will go over some of the original newspaper materials from the time, as well as Samuel Pepys' diaries. I will assign readings for the week.

Tuesday:
10-4: All-day field trip to the Museum of London. Followed by an evening walk along the river Thames and through the financial district of the old City. We shall dine as a group that evening, probably at the Simpsons Tavern, the oldest Chop House in London.

Wednesday:
9am-1pm: Class on the growing media presence in eighteenth century Britain. Rise of the philosophes in France and the economic and political philosophers in the UK. The impact of pamphleteers on British – and in particularly London – political culture. The role of the press in the Napoleonic Wars.

Thursday:
Field trip: Fleet Street – the historic center of British journalism. My plan is to take them on the Ghosts of Fleet Street walking tour. Followed by a visit to a major newspaper's editorial offices. For this trip, I shall likely take students either to the Guardian's offices or to the Daily Telegraph's.

Friday:
The day will be set aside for one-on-one meetings (arranged by appointment) with students. I will meet with each student for approximately 15 minutes to discuss research interests and begin the essay-writing process.

Saturday:
I may arrange for a long day-trip to Thetford, in Norfolk, to visit the city museum there and explore the exhibits on Tom Paine.


Monday:
9am-1pm: The class will explore the rise of the periodical and newspaper culture in early nineteenth century Britain, and the increasingly important place within European society accorded London opinion-makers.

Tuesday:
Field trip – walking tour of Dickens’ London.

Wednesday:
9am-1pm: For the first part of the class, there will be a guest speaker. I will bring in a historian of British media history. For the second part of the class, I will lecture on the rise of Victorian culture, and the place within it of the great chroniclers. The class will have a particular focus on Dickens’ fiction-cum-journalism; on Henry
Mayhew’s oral histories; and on the social research work of Charles Booth. It will also explore the rise of the Settlement Houses and the work of reformers and commentators such as Arnold Toynbee and William Morris.

**Thursday:**
Field trip – Jack the Ripper walking tour.

**Friday:**
11am-1pm. We will have a short class on the rise of tabloid culture in the mid-late nineteenth century, and, in particular, the role of crime within the world of Fleet Street journalism and the broader late-Victorian imagination.

**Week Three: Victoria’s Death, World War One, and the Birth of Modernity.**

**Monday:**
9am-1pm: The class will explore the media reaction to Queen Victoria’s death, in 1901. She was, it must be remembered, the world’s most important statesperson, and her funeral was an event of huge international significance. It was also one of the first major funerals to be documented by moving images. We will also explore the interplay of rising nationalism and mass media in the years from Victoria’s death to the outset of the Great War, in 1914.

**Tuesday:**
9am-3pm: Guest Speaker. I will bring in a senior figure from the BBC. For the second half of the class we will explore the media’s role as the World War unfolded, and the role of the political press in shaping post-war politics in Britain, as the Liberal Party faded, the Labour Party rose, and the Conservative Party navigated a post-war world that saw unprecedented challenges to Britain’s colonial role, the general strike of 1926, and Europe was riven by the rise of both Communism and Fascism. I will use Winston Churchill as something of a guide through these years, since by many measures this was his most fruitful period as a commentator and historian.

**Wednesday:**
Field Trip – National Media Museum, either a rail trip to Bradford, or a visit to the satellite museum in London.

**Thursday:**
Day set aside for student-instructor meetings, to shore up the writing projects.

**Friday:**
Field Trip – Imperial War Museum.

**Saturday:**
Field trip to Chartwell, Churchill’s private country-residence.

**Week Four: World War Two Through to Wapping.**

**Monday:**
9am-2pm: Class on the media battles surrounding Appeasement and the years leading up to World War Two; war correspondents during the London Blitz and the years following; and British media in the aftermath of World War Two: with a particular focus on the 1948 Olympics, the 1951 Festival of Britain, the Queen’s coronation, the Profumo Affair, and Beatlemania.
**Tuesday:**
Guest Speaker. I will bring in a Parliamentarian to discuss the media and modern politics in Britain. For the second half of class, we will look at the media during the years of social strife in the 1970s and 1980s.

**Wednesday:**
Field Trip: BBC offices in London.

**Thursday:**
Field Trip – News International’s facility in Wapping, in London’s East End.

**Friday:**
Wrap up day for the class, followed by a final group dinner, location TBD.