



**Boston University Study Abroad  
London**

**Boston University Study Abroad London  
The Foreign Correspondent  
COM JO 416 (*Elective*)  
Spring 2013**

**Instructor Information**

A. Name                      David McNeil

Your tutor, David McNeil, brings to this course vast experience as a Foreign Correspondent with the BBC for 21 years. For 19 of those years, he was based outside the UK and has reported for the BBC from 46 countries.

**Course Overview**

This course will introduce you to the world of the Foreign Correspondent. In the United States, ambitious reporters often seek an overseas posting because it could further their careers back home. In Britain, the job of Foreign Correspondent is seen as a full career, and end in itself, not just a means to promotion.

In JO 416, you will examine the motivation and priorities of the Foreign Correspondent, “someone who is paid to travel the world, live in interesting places and tell people about them”. As the world shrinks, so we need to know more about other cultures. We cannot always “go there” and, if we do, it is often only for a brief visit in which we can garner no more than an initial impression. A Foreign Correspondent lives and works in the country from which he/she is reporting for years at a time. He/she can provide insight, background and context, as well as report events as they happen. In this way, knowledge and understanding are spread.

So what is it like to be a Foreign Correspondent? What credentials – journalistic and linguistic – are required? How does a Foreign Correspondent find the news? How does he/she process it? What constitutes political, social and personal reporting?

Many Foreign Correspondents find themselves covering wars and if they do well the first time they report a war, they will be sent to cover other wars. A large part of this course is devoted to analysing the role of the War Correspondent. We examine photojournalism, television news and radio coverage of wars from the first media war (the Boer war) to the first television war (Vietnam) to the recent war in Iraq.

In JO 416 we will also examine the function of the Foreign Correspondent within the structure of an international newsgathering system. In this context, we will consider the role of television, radio and newspapers and the international news agencies. For example, why is radio still such an important source of news in the UK?

**Reading List**

Additional readings may be posted on the course webpage: <https://lms.bu.edu>

(you must be logged in to view materials).

Scoop (set book)  
The First Casualty  
A Rumor of War  
From Beirut to Jerusalem  
Live From The Battlefield  
Anyone Here Been Raped and Speaks English

Evelyn Waugh  
Philip Knightley  
Philip Caputo  
Thomas Friedman  
Peter Arnett  
Edward Behr

## **Attendance Policy**

### **Classes**

All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.

#### *Authorised Absence:*

Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness, for which students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor's note as soon as possible). **Please note:**

**Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence**

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- Illness, supported by a local London doctor's note (submitted with Authorised Absence Approval Form).
- Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)
- Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

**The Directors will only in the most extreme cases (for example, death in close family) allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.**

#### *Unauthorised Absence:*

Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a **4% grade penalty** to their final grade for the course whose class was missed. This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a 'Fail' in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

## **Grading**

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism: <http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester>

## **Course Chronology**

Monday	Course Introduction
21 Jan	The Foreign Correspondent – motivation and priorities
	- Function as part of an international newsgathering system
	- Sources and subjects
	- Essentials of technique

## The War Correspondent – Photojournalism

Tuesday 22 Jan	The Foreign Correspondent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Interviewing and filing</li><li>- Tricks of the trade</li></ul> Reporters at War (1)
Monday 28 Jan	British Newspapers and Magazines The first media war Set Assignment One
Tuesday 29 Jan	The War Correspondent – a strategy for survival <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-relations with the military</li><li>-censorship</li><li>-ethics</li></ul> Reporters at War (2)
Monday 4 Feb	Journalism Online – The Digital Revolution Radio Journalism Set Assignment Two
Tuesday 5 Feb	The Foreign Correspondent and the White House Press Corps Campaigning Journalism
Monday 11 Feb	The International News Agencies Making programmes at the BBC
Tuesday 12 Feb	Interactive workshop – news releases and the art of the interview The Birth of the Newsreel
Friday 15 Feb	British Television News – Production Values The Way Ahead Analysis of set book
Tuesday 19 Feb	Exam Exam times and locations will be posted on the BU London website and in the Student Newsletter two weeks before exam dates.