

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations is working in collaboration with the  
*New York Times* to provide a unique six-week online training

28 September – 2 November 2011



## Reporting On Elections

**How to apply:** <http://www.unaoc.org/forms/application-for-new-york-times-online-training-reporting-on-elections/>

### Dates (live sessions)

September 28- November 2, 2011

Week 1: Wednesday, September 28, 10:30am EST – introductory module

Week 2: Tuesday, October 4, 10:30am-11:30am EST - live session

Week 3: Wednesday, October 12, 10:30am-11:30am EST - live session

Week 4: Wednesday, October 19, 10:30am-11:30am EST - live session

Week 5: Wednesday, October 26, 10:30am-11:30am EST - live session

Week 6: Wednesday, November 2, 10:30am-11:30am EST - live session

(EST = Eastern Time)

### Course Description

This five-week course is designed to cover the most common practical problems, ethical considerations and special issues involved in reporting on elections in the United States, by examining how such reporting is done by journalists at The New York Times.

The course assumes participants already understand the fundamentals of journalism. It assumes an understanding of the difference between opinion writing and news reporting. The course is designed to illuminate American political reporting techniques for participants from other countries who may have had different experiences with journalism and freedom of expression. To make sure that everyone can take part in the conversation, comments will be translated from English to Arabic and vice versa.

**Course Goal** The goal of this course is to teach journalists from other countries and graduate students of journalism in the U.S. about the key issues involved in covering politics and elections in this country. We will do this by examining the principles and techniques of election coverage practiced by The New York Times. Approximately 100 participants will take part in the course.

**Objectives** At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Interview candidates or outside experts...
- Plan and analyze Polling...
- Practice Journalism ethics...
- Use various media in reporting

## Course Outline

### WEEK 1: Course Introduction

### WEEK 2: Remembering the Fundamentals

- What do we mean by fairness, accuracy, impartiality?
- Covering the issues vs. covering the horse race
- Avoiding unfair terminology and tone
- The role (and limits) of political analysis



#### GUEST

**Michael Slackman** Deputy Foreign Editor and former Cairo Bureau Chief of The New York Times

### WEEK 3: Ethics for Political Journalists

- What to do about your personal views
- Rules about employment (before/after) and other forms of payment
- Transparency for your audience; the importance of labeling (news vs opinion)



**GUEST**

**William E. Schmidt** Deputy Managing Editor, The New York Times

#### WEEK 4: Interviewing and Polling

- How to interview candidates and their allies
- How to find fair and independent outside experts
- Polling: why we do it, how we use the results
- Pitfalls of polling and how to avoid them
- Comments on Web sites: a form of voter interview?



**GUEST**

**Janet Elder** Editor of News Surveys and Election Analysis, The New York Times

#### WEEK 5: The Roles of Photos, Audio, Video and Graphics

- How to apply basic principles of fairness to these forms of journalism; special issues particular to these forms
- Teaching reporters which tools suit which story, and how to use them
- Cutting-edge examples from nytimes.com and how you can adapt them to your coverage



**GUEST**

**Amy O'Leary** Deputy News Editor and former multimedia producer, The New York Times



**About the Instructor Paul Moses** Paul Moses joined the journalism faculty at Brooklyn College in 2001, and is also on the faculty of the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism. He specializes in writing about religion and New York City government.

Mr. Moses spent 23 years working in daily journalism, mostly at Newsday's New York City paper, where he served as city editor, Brooklyn editor, City Hall bureau chief and religion writer.

As a rewrite man, he wrote lead stories on major news events ranging from the 9/11 terrorist attacks to a 1991 subway crash that killed five people, the latter winning the Pulitzer Prize for Spot News Reporting. He has also reported for The Associated Press and numerous other newspapers and magazines, and blogs for Commonweal Magazine.

A Brooklyn College graduate, Mr. Moses also has an M.F.A. in English from the University of Massachusetts, and is the author of "The Saint and the Sultan: The Crusades, Islam and Francis of Assisi's Mission of Peace" (Doubleday, 2009).

#### Guest Speakers



WEEK 1

#### Michael Slackman

Michael Slackman is the deputy foreign editor at The New York Times, helping to oversee all global coverage, with an emphasis on coordinating the Middle East report. Before returning to New York, in May of 2011, Mr. Slackman was a foreign correspondent for The Times for six years.

As a correspondent, Mr. Slackman most recently was the Berlin Bureau Chief, a posting that lasted a year. Previously, he spent eight years based in Egypt, three for the Los Angeles Times and five for the New York Times.

During that period he reported from every country in the region, from Morocco to Iran. He covered Iraq before and after the invasion, and as both a reporter and an editor, he has helped document the tremendous changes sweeping the Arab world.

Before going to the Middle East, Mr. Slackman was the Moscow Bureau chief for the Long Island newspaper Newsday for three years, covering the economy and social chaos of post-Soviet Russia and the leadership transition from Yeltsin to Putin (1998-2001). He is a graduate of Northeastern University.



WEEK 2

**William E. Schmidt**

William E. Schmidt is the deputy managing editor of The New York Times, and a veteran foreign and domestic correspondent. He has been a member of the newsroom's senior management team since 1997.

Mr. Schmidt joined The Times in February 1981 as a national correspondent, serving as bureau chief in Denver, Atlanta and Chicago. From 1991 to 1995, he was a London correspondent for The Times before returning to the New York headquarters as deputy national editor. He was named associate managing editor for personnel and newsroom administration in 1997, and deputy managing editor in 2008.

Before joining The Times, Mr. Schmidt worked for Newsweek, where he was the Cairo bureau correspondent for three years, 1976-1978.

In 1987, Mr. Schmidt was part of a team of reporters that shared the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting for coverage of the space shuttle Challenger disaster. In 1977, he shared an award from the Overseas Press Club for his reporting on the war in Lebanon.



WEEK 3

**Janet Elder** Janet Elder is the Editor of News Surveys and Election Analysis for The New York Times. She has covered seven presidential campaigns and oversees all the paper's coverage of public opinion.

Ms. Elder came to the Times in 1984 as a reporter covering family issues, including the introduction of parental leave legislation. But her deep interest in politics led her to the polling department.

The Times's political polling operation has a reputation for being one of the most reputable in the world, noted for being both accurate and even-handed. In addition to politics, the department designs and executes surveys on many different issues in American life. Ms. Elder designed the national survey that was part of the Times's Pulitzer Prize-winning series, "How Race is Lived in America."

She is also responsible for the paper's best-seller list (books) and she herself wrote a book, "Huck," that made its way onto the New York Times Best-seller list.



WEEK 4

**Amy O'Leary** Amy O'Leary is a Deputy News Editor at The New York Times, and a former multimedia producer there. In this role, she collaborates with department heads on planning and production of major projects, and provides guidance and editing to the newsroom's Web producers.

In 2007, Ms. O'Leary was the first audio producer ever hired by The Times. Prior to that, she worked as a radio producer for "This American Life," the much-honored National Public Radio program, and served as the producer and host of "The Tristan Mysteries" for WNYC, New York City's public radio station.

Her radio work has appeared on "This American Life," "Radio Lab," "On The Media," "Studio 360" and "Weekend America." Ms. O'Leary's work has been nominated for three Emmy awards. She first learned to produce radio at the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies.

#### About the New York Times Knowledge Network

Building on The Times's decades of active involvement in education, The New York Times Knowledge Network offers a wide range of distinctive adult and continuing education opportunities, including online courses, programs and Webcasts. Some of our programs are offered directly by The Times, while others are presented in collaboration with universities, colleges and other educational institutions.

Students in our online continuing education classes benefit from the expertise and experience provided by the faculty of renowned educational institutions, and from the full resources of The New York Times. Some courses are supplemented by Times articles and multimedia. Others have Times editors or reporters as guest speakers or instructors, sharing their timely insights and informed perspectives.

In areas ranging from art to business, writing to politics, journalism to science, online programs from The New York Times Knowledge Network are as rich and varied as The New York Times itself.

## About the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations



### **About the UNAOC ([www.unaoc.org](http://www.unaoc.org))**

The UN Alliance of Civilizations was established in 2005 as an initiative of the UN Secretary General, under the cosponsorship of the President of the Government of Spain and the Prime Minister of Turkey. It emerged out of a conviction that, in order to achieve sustainable peace, long-standing divisions and misperceptions between cultures need to be addressed. In April 2007, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Jorge Sampaio, former President of Portugal, as High Representative for the Alliance. Under his leadership, the Alliance promotes dialogue that delivers change on the ground. It is supported by a growing Group of Friends of 129 governments and international organizations.

The UNAOC regularly conducts training workshops for journalists from Europe, North America, Pakistan, Indonesia, and the Arab world, in person and online. The trainings are aimed at building journalism skills, reflecting on the role of media in covering and mitigating conflicts, and exploring tools for reporting on political and social issues in the digital age.