Newsday Tuesday Assignment Series

Assignment Description

An important element of this course is improving media literacy. Many students do not have a regular habit of consuming trustworthy news media. Newsday Tuesday is a simple assignment to encourage students to listen to news regularly throughout the course and report what they are learning in the news and how it relates to class, while also practicing media literacy skills.

Students will be expected to listen to 90.3 WPLN's *Morning Edition* (6 am – 10 am) or *All Things Considered* (5 pm to 7 pm) once per week. For example, students may access this broadcast through FM radio, a web browser, the NPR app, or through their home's smart speaker ("Alexa, play WPLN.") while they are getting ready in the morning or during their morning or evening commute.

To our regular Tuesday class meetings, students will bring a short, **hand-written report** (name on paper) of one story they heard that week on NPR that they thought was MOST related to topics that have been or will be covered in the class (economics, poverty, policy, race, discrimination, etc.). The report should address:

- A summary of the story (1-2 sentences)
- How the story relates to course content (1-2 sentences)
- What you learned from listening to the story (1-2 sentences)
- One follow-up question to learn more about this issue
- Your opinions about either the topic covered or the quality of the news coverage (1-2 sentences)

Starting on our Tuesday class meeting for **Module 2**, students will turn in their report and the instructor will randomly select a few students to share the news story they chose to write about that week. There will be 10 class meetings for which students will bring their Newsday Tuesday.

Notes for Instructors

Students tend to rely heavily on deadlines within course managements systems (CMS). Students feedback was that they were much more likely to remember this assignment if there was a deadline/reminder in their CMS. In recent semesters, I have found this to be the case.

This assignment should be worth very few points per submission, so students are not unduly stressed about missing one or two of them.

Despite student's requests to make this an electronic submission, the potential for AI generated content is particularly high for this assignment. Therefore, I have kept this a pencil-and-paper, handwritten assignment.

There are many media outlets that could be used for this assignment. A major goal is to make sure they are paying attention to reputable news outlets. Students often do not have the requisite knowledge or experience to recognize what is technically a news outlet, much less whether it is reliable or not. For this course, despite it's somewhat left-leanings, I recommended NPR radio programs for its accessibility (e.g., public access with no paywall; available in written and audio formats; availability through FM radio, smart phone apps, smart home systems) and general reliability as a news source. Other news outlets were considered (particularly reliable conservative-leaning journalism), but the ability of such outlets for students to make news consumption a regular habit, either due to paywalls or written format, was limited. For the sake of transparency, students were well-aware of NPR's left-of-center bias from the beginning of the semester and were asked to critique it's reporting as part of their Newsday Tuesday assignment.