

The editors of *Medijska istraživanja / Media Research* indexed in SCOPUS would like to invite contributions to a special issue:

Higher journalism education *online* – state, challenges, perspectives

Digital age has significantly transformed higher education of journalists from both of its main aspects - academia and profession. New possibilities and opportunities, as well as more demanding challenges conditioned by rapid technology development particularly call for a specific scientific research and regular improvement of the content of study programs, and of the way they are organized and performed. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic radically changed the traditional perception of journalism education and the educational experience for all main participants of the educational process.

Scientific journal *Medijska istraživanja / Media Research* helps to improve journalism theory and media research from 1995 by focusing on a range of important subjects, therefore thematising this topic continues the tradition. This special issue aims to present contemporary practice and theoretical thought of higher journalism education in an online environment with the intent of reviewing new trends in that scholarly area, particularly in the European context. The topic is relevant primarily because we passed the turning point where, using different technological solutions, the conventional journalism education was enriched with new teaching methods, tools, and approaches for educational purposes allowing it to adequately answer the media industry demands. Complex issues arising from web-based/online teaching and learning on an academic level of journalism education requires research of conducting professional journalism competencies from at least two main focuses:

1. Distance academic programs that educate journalists

Distance study programs are those performed entirely at a distance, respectively those in which all courses are performed online and those in which the complete teaching and learning process is mediated by ICT (Sener, 2015, Bates 2020). Distance academic programs that educate journalists have existed in some countries, such as the United States, for almost three decades (Castaneda, 2011), while in some areas, such as Southeastern Europe, they are still missing. There is, as well, a particular lack of literature presenting the introduction of such study programs, analysing curriculum, discussing challenges, advantages and disadvantages, as well as comparative research (Vukić and Brautović, 2021). On that trail, we seek for articles on the following topics:

- planning and conducting study programs
- program concepts diversity
- (specific) teaching contents
- (national) case studies
- analysis of curricula and / or syllabuses

- advantages and disadvantages of study programs
- international comparative analyses
- organization of students' practice in media, etc.

2. Conducting e-learning in study programs that educate journalists

The pandemic caused by the COVID-19 virus required an urgent shift to distance learning at all levels of education and for all the professions around the world, including academic programs that educate journalists, but e-learning in a hybrid form or only remotely was, in some institutions already a well-known academic practice. Similarly, student internships in students' media and in partner media organizations, have moved into a virtual environment. As such teaching experience differs significantly from the classroom experience and from in-person teaching, the transformation was a certain challenge for those who have encountered e-learning for the first time in these circumstances.

Although, there is a range of research topics regarding e-learning which resulted in different insights and conclusions, based on the recent experience of the heads of the higher journalism education institutions in Russian Federation during pandemic (Vartanova and Lukina, 2021), it could be argued that the journalism education in an online environment in the recent years faced numerous issues that can be associated with three key aspects: technological, pedagogical, and communicational. A number of articles illustrates it. For example, Fowler-Watt et al. (2021) present teaching experience of covering COVID-19 crisis within specific pedagogic challenges of the pandemic, such as teaching mobile journalism, reporting of the community and Zoom managing of students' wellbeing during lockdown. Further, Pain, Ahmed and Zahra Khalid (2021) discuss the consequences that the low internet connectivity, and the lack of access to technology brought to journalism education, giving the example of a good practice and remedy in the case of Kashmir, India. Studying the journalism students' distance learning experience at the Lomonosov Moscow State University during restrictive measures Poluekhtova, Vikhrova and Vartanova (2020) found that while effective online education presumes stable communication of all participants in the teaching process and among departments, online learning is not an alternative to the in-person journalism education because the formation of professional identity is hard to acquire at a distance.

Of all the mentioned perspectives from a general or from the emerging pandemic circumstances point of view, we encourage various contributions on the following topics:

- analysis of teaching documentation and curricula and/or syllabuses
- adaptation of teaching contents that are performed in the classroom for e-learning
- e-learning and teaching methods
- lifelong e-learning
- collaborative e-learning systems (Moodle, Merlin, MS Teams, etc.)
- hybrid forms of teaching
- e-learning experiences (teacher/student perspective)
- creativity in e-learning
- conducting student internships at a distance (student media/media organizations), etc.

We are looking for **scientific research articles** from a wide range of academic contexts and methodologies, and for **book reviews** of the books published in 2021-2022, and we actively encourage interdisciplinary, comparative and innovative submissions that will contribute to the development of the journalism education research field.

The Editor-in-Chief of *Medijska Istraživanja / Media Research* is Nada Zgrabljic Rotar and the guest editor of this special issue is Tijana Vukić. All submissions and questions about this call for contributions should be sent to a special issue editor's email: tijana.vukic@unipu.hr.

The special issue will appear in the second half of 2023.

The deadline for submissions is **November 20, 2022**.

The procedure with the received papers for this special issue is identical to the procedure for regular publication in the journal *Medijska istraživanja / Media Research*. Submitted articles are subject to double-blind review and only those submissions with two positive reviews will be published. We seek for 8000 words long articles (about 50,000 characters). Detailed description of the journal, the journal style guide and Guidelines for contributors can be found at <http://www.mediaresearch.cro.net/en/guidelines-for-contributors/>

This special issue is organized as a project collaboration within the three-year (2021-2023) international scientific project *Higher Education of Journalists in a Digital Environment (HEJDE)*. It is an institutional project of the Faculty of Humanities of the Juraj Dobrila University of Pula aimed at the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research of the state, challenges and educational opportunities of the modern academic education of journalists.