One hour lecture  
For journalism educators  
Reporting Islam  
Overview pairs with Lecture slides

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<th>Time (minutes)</th>
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| 05-10          | Lecture and workshop aims  
                Remind key readings they need to  
                have done for the lecture and  
                workshop |
| 10-15          | Why focus on Reporting Islam |
| 15-20          | Factors affecting reporting and News frames |
| 20-37          | Video (slides embedded in video and  
                also in this ppt) |
| 37-43          | Key questions for journalists reporting  
                on Stories about Islam and Muslims |
| 43-55          | Introduce them to the resources, focus  
                on website mainly, show through the  
                key items there. Ask them not to look  
                at curriculum before workshops. |
| 55-60 CLOSE    | Questions on lecture content |

**Slide notes:**  
The slides can be adapted for your own use and the length of the lecture.

**Slide 1 Reporting Islam**  
- Introduce topic  
- Ask students why they think this is an important topic (potential answers are current  
  political climate, impacts of poor reportage on Muslims i.e. verbal, physical attacks,  
  flow onto legislative environments, social division and isolation, potential  
  radicalization. These issues will be explored in the lecture).

**Slide 2 Lecture and workshop aims**  
- This lecture aims to explore a number of key issues identified by the literature that are  
  associated with problematic reporting of stories about Muslims and Islam. It will  
  touch on some of the ways that you can improve your practice in reporting these types  
  of stories. Most importantly it will focus on the issue of news sources; that is whose  
  voices are heard in stories because that alone can improve the diversity of voices in  
  stories.  
- In addition it will introduce you to some very basic terms and concepts in relation to  
  the Islamic faith. There is no suggestion that journalists need to be experts in the  
  Islamic faith nor any other religion, but the take home lesson is to check facts, terms  
  and ensure you don’t replicate some of the problematic practices that have been  
  identified and the flow on problems that they may cause - as we will cover in this  
  lecture.
Slide 3 Why focus on Reporting Islam?
- The key readings suggested for students cover some of these issues as well. Journalism educators should refer students to these readings before the lecture as preparation.
- There is a large body of international research that identifies a range of key issues in relation to news media coverage of stories about Muslim and their faith. Key issues identified by this research include:
- While researchers have identified that news media coverage of Muslims became particularly problematic post 9-11, there is evidence that it was an issue prior to those events. One matter researchers agree on is that journalism has changed post 9-11 particularly in relation to how news media engage with and report on Muslims.
- Researchers have focused almost exclusively on analyzing poor examples of news media coverage of Muslims, with only a few researchers going beyond that type of research to suggest what might constitute best practice in news media reportage of stories about Muslims and their faith.
- Ahmed and Matthes (2017) analysis of more than 300 academic publications about news media constructions of Muslim identities established that a recurring theme is that stories about Muslims are routinely framed in negative and stereotypical ways, with the US, the UK and Australia attracting significant attention in the body of research about news media representations of Muslims despite those countries having quite small populations of Muslims.

Slide 4 Factors affecting reporting
- Journalistic culture – key points to make are that if the culture of a newsroom is one that rewards a focus on stories that emphasize and escalate conflict, then it will be difficult terrain to negotiate but not impossible. Focusing on the facts is one way of dealing with this culture i.e. explaining that there is relatively little or no conflict.
- Framing of news stories - conflict lens. Key points to make here are that resolution can be a news frame but that it is infrequently used.
- Newsroom budgets and staff numbers – time pressures often result as well as a lack of funds to investigate stories in any depth.
- Newsroom policy – policies vary across news organisations in relation to how particular issues are presented i.e. the angle taken. Some policies will be explicit while others will be implicit. Ethics
- Political and social environments – these also have an impact on how stories are framed and what facts, information or opinions sources emphasize over other facts. Policy environments can also affect the focus on stories as do legislative environments.

Slide 5 News Frames
Stories about Islam and Muslims:
- Are framed through the lens of terrorism (for example there can be a ‘jump to conclusions’ mentality when events break
- Include stereotypical character representations
- Often focus on religion regardless of the context
And:
- Audiences who have little or no contact with Muslims then view news media coverage as representative of ALL Muslims – we know from research (Dunn, 2005; O’Donnell, K., Davis, R., and Ewart, J. 2017) that Australians know very little about
Muslims and their faith. We also know from the research that journalists and journalism students’ baseline knowledge of Muslims is quite low (Ewart, J., O'Donnell, K., Chrzanowski, A., 2017).

- There is often an absence of Muslim voices in news stories. That is, they are not frequently used as sources in news stories about them, and that often non-Muslims are used as spokespeople in stories about Muslims. This means the perspectives of Muslims are absent from stories that inherently concern them. In addition, where Muslims are used as sources, journalists often rely on the usual suspects i.e. outspoken and often non-representative Muslims. This is because they are easy to contact and willing to speak, but they are not always representative of the range of views of Muslims on the issues being discussed.

- Muslims presented as objects of exoticism and curiosity – for example, the focus on images of Muslim women wearing various forms of the headdress when less than 40% of Muslim women in Australia wear any form of head covering.

Slide 6 and 7 Find related news story examples to include

Examples could include those that highlight how news coverage conflates un-related issues, or examples that stereotype, cause fear and social division.

Note: We were unable to include examples in these slides due to copyright issues.

Slide 8s-12 Islam basics (Play video 17 minutes)

- The video can be accessed at the reportingislam.org site
- The video is 17 minutes in length and includes a set of slides accompanied by two Muslims trainers who alternate in the presentation.
- The Slides are reproduced in this lecture presentation.

NOTE: It would be good if you could get a local Muslim community leader or an Islamic studies academic to present this part of the lecture in person and to answer questions students may have about Muslims or Islam.

Slide 13 Key Questions for journalists when reporting

- Take students through these key considerations when covering stories about Muslims. These questions were derived from the key international research about Western news media coverage of Muslims and attendant problems and issues. Ask students to consider these before the workshop exercise. Ask them to also consider their own biases, cultural backgrounds, and how these might potentially influence reporting practices, and how they might overcome them.

Slide 14 Intro to Resources

- Take students to the website and play intro from Greste at minimum. Greste deals with key points about problems with some news media coverage of Muslims. You could play this at the beginning or here to reinforce the messages from the lecture.
- If time permits take them though the individual components of the website, focusing on those that provide hints and tips about reporting protocols and practices.

Slide 15 Questions