

ROBBY BYRD, Ph.D.

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PROFILE SUMMARY

First and foremost, I am a storyteller, who has spent most of my career telling the stories of people often forgotten or ignored. Social justice and advocacy have always been central to my mission as a professional journalist, journalism educator and media researcher. This passion has helped me to develop into a dynamic, highly technical, hands-on media professional with a wealth of knowledge and experience successfully managing media projects ranging from journalistic endeavors to qualitative primary research. My primary area of focus is LGBTQIA+ communities and media, including LGBTQIA+ representations in mainstream media.

Areas of expertise include:

Social Justice Journalism | Social Media Management/Engagement | Editing | LGBTQIA+ Media Research | Event Planning | Project Management | Podcasting | Video and Audio Production/Editing | Data Visualization | Writing | Data Analysis | Compelling Presentations | Strategic Media | Teaching | Mentoring | Qualitative Research

WORK EXPERIENCE

Associate Professor of Multimedia Journalism (Sep 2021 – Present)

Assistant Professor of Multimedia Journalism (Aug 2015 – Sep 2021)

University of Memphis Department of Journalism & Strategic Media | Aug 2015 – Present

- Collaborated with an LGBTQIA+ community of researchers and secured a \$2.5k grant to establish the Mid-South LGBTQ+ Community Archive at the University of Memphis. Orchestrated and led a launch event for the opening of the archive.
- Actively engaged in primary qualitative research for LGBTQIA+ media and audience analysis, journalism pedagogy, and podcasting. Delivered outstanding results on-time and often above expectations.
- Won the 2020 Dean's Faculty Advisor Award and the 2018 Department of Journalism and Strategic Media Mentorship award.
- Head faculty member in the journalism major. Lead 10 faculty in curriculum development and planning for 150+ undergraduate majors.
- Designed, developed, re-designed, and implemented 10 courses, including courses in podcasting, video production and social issues reporting.
- Effectively managed four major community-based scholarship projects with undergraduate students. Earned 14 awards from the Tennessee Associated Press for outstanding project results.
 - *MemphisMirror.com*: news magazine website focused on telling the stories of people, communities and events often excluded from coverage in other news outlets. The site has won 12 Tennessee College AP Awards since 2016.
 - *Mirror Mirror Season 1*: Podcast and multimedia project focused on the public transportation system in Memphis area. The project looked specifically at issues of race, class, and ability and public transportation. Project won an award from Tennessee College AP in 2018.
 - *Life in Quarantine Podcast*: A seven-part podcast series focused on the stories of everyday Memphians coping with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. One area of focus for this project was trauma-informed reporting practices. Included podcast, website, social media and RSS feed.
 - *Rivalries Ranked*: Sports podcast ranking the top rivalries in sport. Each episode focused on a different league. Included the podcast and social media. Project won a Tennessee College AP award in 2019.
- Led a group of students on a study abroad experience to Mainz, Germany in 2017. Taught a media criticism class to 20 students from the U.S. and Germany.

Visiting Instructor (Aug 2014 – Aug 2015)

Graduate Teaching/Research Assistant (Aug 2011 – Aug 2014)

The University of Southern Mississippi School of Communication | Aug 2011 – Aug 2015

- Secured a \$6k grant from the Dow News Fund to actively host a residential summer camp for high school journalists. Demonstrated writing, photo, video, and audio journalism skills to 25 student journalists.
- Advised, mentored, and strengthened the skills of 50 undergraduate students in broadcast journalism major.

Instructor – Department of Continuing Education (Jan 2011 – May 2014)

Graduate Assistant (Jan 2009 – Dec 2010)

University of South Alabama | Jan 2009 – May 2014

- Taught continuing education courses in Microsoft Office Applications that included PowerPoint, Word, Outlook, Excel, Access, and Microsoft Project.
- Taught several sections of public speaking for undergraduate students as part of a graduate assistantship.

Editor

The Covington News & Alcovy Magazine | Jan 2008 – Sep 2008

- Directly oversaw and led a team of 10 full-time reporters, photographers, and designers for a community newspaper in the Atlanta, Georgia suburbs.
- Won a Georgia Press Association Award for a special project on climate change and water shortages in the Atlanta Metro area.

General Manager

The Amory Advertiser & Aberdeen Examiner | Oct 2005 – Jan 2008

- Effectively led a team of six reporters, two sales specialists, and four administrative specialists at two community newspapers in Mississippi. Boosted the circulation of both publications by 25% during tenure.
- Earned multiple awards from the Mississippi Press Association for general excellence, special projects, and editorial writing.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Sports Editor

The Meridian Star | Jul 2005 – Oct 2005

Sports Editor/News Reporter

The North Jefferson News | Oct 2003 – Jul 2005

Sports Reporter

The Amory Advertiser | Oct 2002 – Aug 2003

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

AEJMC (Association of Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication) | 2011 – present

- Chair of LGBTQ Interest Group (2019)
- Vice-chair of LGBTQ Interest Group (2018)
- Research chair of LGBTQ Interest Group (2017)

AJHA (American Journalism Historians Association) | 2010 – present

NLGJA: The Association of LGBTQ Journalists | 2022 – present

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Mass Communication | University of Southern Mississippi – Hattiesburg, Mississippi

M.A. in Communication | University of South Alabama – Mobile, Alabama

B.A. in Public Relations | Mississippi State University – Starkville, Mississippi

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Access, Outlook, PowerPoint); Adobe Creative Cloud (Photoshop, InDesign, Premiere Pro, Illustrator, Dreamweaver, Audition); Social Media Management (Hootsuite, TweetDeck); Content Management Systems (WordPress); Project Management Applications (Slack, MS Project)