Don’t let this be you!

Honors Statistics in Journalism Seminar

This one-credit course will sharpen your statistical skills as well as teach you how to interpret and write about numbers clearly and accurately. The course will help you practice good journalism and improve your numeracy skills. Designed for science and humanities students, the seminar will allow for writing and reasoning so you will never conclude (and write) that 4-in-10 is a majority!

Must have an A in an introductory stats course (high school, Pitt, or another college or university).

UHC: Special Topics: Honors Statistics in Journalism
Thursdays, 2-2:50 p.m.
Taught by: Nancy Pfenning and Cindy Skrzycki
Questions? Contact nancyp@pitt.edu or skrzycki@pitt.edu
Either of the following two headlines would work to describe a new course on "Statistics in Journalism" that we offered for the first time this past spring at the University of Pittsburgh:

- "Lackluster Enrollment Plagues New Course" would describe the seven students brave enough to sign up for the one-credit honors class.
- "Rave Reviews From Students on Groundbreaking Course" would sum up our end-of-semester teaching evaluations.

Those headlines also reflect what we were trying to teach students: Different versions of the truth can sway readers in widely divergent directions. The experience was so eye-opening that we are convinced that a course on the use and misuse of statistics in science-based news coverage is one that would benefit all students, no matter their major. It would not only focus their attention on the importance of accuracy, precision, and word choice in writing, it would also help them understand the difficulties of arriving at an accurate version of the truth.

*To read the rest of the article, see http://chronicle.com/article/Just-the-Facts-/139713/