



Chris Graves

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
College of Journalism and Mass Communications
307 Andersen Hall, Lincoln, Neb. 68588
402-472-4051(w) | 513-817-9134 (c)
chris.graves@unl.edu
<https://www.chrisgraves-journalist.com/>
X:chrisgraves | LinkedIn: chrisgraves64
she/her/hers

EDUCATION

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Graduate student, College of Arts and Sciences, English Department, Creative Writing program non-fiction, 2025-ongoing

- *Completed*. Nebraska Writing Project Summer Advanced Institute, intensive writing and writing pedagogy coursework, June 2025
- *Completed*: Seminar in Literacy Studies: theorizing collaborative writing and collaborative learning, fall 2024
- *Completed*. Nebraska Writing Project Summer Institute, intensive writing and writing pedagogy coursework, June 2024

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Bachelor's degree in journalism, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, December 1987

- First generation college student

Nebraska Wesleyan University

Attended, 1983-1985

TEACHING & ADVISING

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communications

Associate professor of practice of journalism, Deepe Family Chair in Depth Reporting, 2025-current

Assistant professor of practice of journalism, Deepe Family Chair in Depth Reporting, 2023-2025

Assistant professor of journalism, 2020-2023

Courses taught

- Instructor, JOUR491, investigative reporting and narrative writing course
 - o Investigating Nebraska prisons, spring 2025
 - o Missing women from marginalized communities in Nebraska, spring 2024
- Instructor, JOUR346: Nebraska Mosaic, a reporting and writing course focused on reporting about refugee communities, fall 2024-ongoing
- Lead instructor, JOUR107, information gathering course required for journalism and broadcast majors, fall 2023-ongoing

- o Developed course, offered each semester beginning fall 2023
- Lead instructor, JOUR490A and JOUR490B, an endowed global multimedia reporting year-long course
 - o Vietnam, Mekong Delta region, January 2024
 - o Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, May 2022
- Instructor, JOUR200A, fundamental editing course required for all college majors
- Instructor, JOUR200B, fundamental reporting/writing course required for all journalism majors, ongoing
- Direct undergraduate honors creative projects
 - o Maddie Adams, History of Public Records Law in Nebraska, 2024
 - o Alyssa Huber, “Out of the Silence: A Domestic Violence Survivor Reclaims Her Life,” 2024
 - o Megan Buffington, “Farming for Nebraska’s Future,” 2023
 - o Sydney Brun-Ozuna, “Nebraska Press Association vs. Stuart,” 2021

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Graduate College

Graduate Faculty Associate, 2020-present

- Teach graduate courses
- Master’s degree examining committees
 - o Arthur Jones, Refugee Resettlement in Nebraska, 2024
 - o Aaron Sanderford, “Picking Corn: Nebraska’s Political Podcast,” 2024
 - o Melissa DeFord, “Mainstream Media’s Framing of Sexual Violence on October, 7, 2023,” 2023-2024
 - o Cassandra Miller, “Journalists Working in Nonprofit News: What Do They Value?” 2023
 - o Jim Snyder, “COVID-19 in Grand Island, Nebraska,” 2020-2021

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communication

Lecturer, Summer 2020

- Instructor, JOUR891, special topics graduate course in solutions journalism

Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

Adjunct professor, 2014-2017

- Co-developed first-of-its-kind web site and associated curriculum to publish student work for the city of Oxford as part of public affairs capstone reporting course
- Taught beginning news writing and reporting

TEACHING WORKSHOPS and PRESENTATIONS

Nebraska Public Media

Presentation, August 2024

- Facilitator, “Staying Safe on the Beat: How to Protect Yourself While Reporting”

Society of Professional Journalist, Regions 4 and 5, Regional Conference

Panel, April 2024

- Panelist, “Pike County Murders”

Journalism and Women's Symposium

Presentation, October, 2023

- Instructor, "Sit Down, Shut up and Listen: Teaching Post-Covid"

Nebraska High School Press Association

Workshop, October, 2023

- Instructor, "Raccoon on a Ledge: A Lesson in How to Find Fabulous Story Ideas"

Nebraska Press Association

Panel, April, 2023

- Panelist, "The Objectivity Debate and the Power of Accountability"

Nebraska Public Media

Workshop, Summer 2022

- Instructor, "Writing Across Platforms," workshop for professional journalists in Nebraska.

USA Today, Cincinnati Enquirer

Workshop, September, 2021

- Instructor, "Reporting with Compassion," workshop for professional journalists in Ohio

U.S. State Department, IREX, Mandela Fellowship Reciprocal Exchange

Workshop leader, July 2021

- Co-instructor, solutions journalism workshop for 13 Kenyan journalists.

RESEARCH

PUBLISHED RESEARCH

"Fundamentals of Editing and Reporting I: Teaching lead writing for digital/print, broadcast and social media simultaneously"

Author, June 2021

- Peer Review of Teaching Project portfolio that examined my own methods tied to teaching lead writing differently.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

"Death in the Foothills: Love, loss and murder in Appalachia"

2016-present

- Research on narrative nonfiction book examining the role of family in Appalachia researched through immersive reporting into the 2016 killings of eight family members by four members of another family in southern Ohio
 - Book proposal with national editors
-

CREATIVE ACTIVITY

“Warning: These classes are academic rigorous and emotionally challenging,” Nebraska Quarterly, Summer 2023

Author, June, 2023

- Magazine cover story on challenging classes in each of UNL’s nine colleges

“Man in notorious Ohio mass family killing sentenced to life without parole” Washington Post, Washington, D.C.

Author, December 19, 2022

- National news story on sentencing of George Washington Wagner IV. Subject of ongoing research

“Change Agents,” Nebraska Quarterly, Winter 2022

Author, December 1, 2022

- Feature story on five UNL alumni working in careers different from their degrees

“Ohio jury convicts George Wagner IV in 2016 killing of Rhoden family” Washington Post, Washington, D.C.

Author, November 30, 2022

- National news story on the conviction of George Washington Wagner IV. Subject of ongoing research

“Eyewitness to History,” Nebraska Quarterly, fall 2022

Author, September 1, 2022

- Feature story about the storied career of retired FBI agent and UNL alumnus Greg Stejskal

“In Ohio, prosecutors say they have uncovered scheme by one family to kill another” Washington Post, Washington, D.C.

Author, July 31 2022

- National news story setting the stage for first trial in Ohio’s mass killing of one family by another. Subject of ongoing research

“North Star Journey,” MPR News, St. Paul, Minnesota

Partnership Coordinator, April-July 2022

- Created partnership strategies between MPR News and other statewide news outlets for a 175-story special project

“After Guilty Plea, Jake Wagner Faces Life Without Parole And The Daughter He Killed For” WVXU-91.7, Cincinnati, Ohio

Author, April 23, 2021

- News story on surprise guilty plea in Ohio’s most complex homicide investigation. Subject of ongoing research

“Angela Wagner Pleads Guilty In Rhoden Family Murders” WVXU-91.7, Cincinnati, Ohio
Author, September 21, 2021

- News story on guilty plea in Ohio’s most complex homicide investigation. Subject of ongoing research

Copy editing and writing, MPR News, St. Paul, Minnesota
Contributor, December 2021-January 2022

“Music Scores in Stadium Spotlight: Farm Aid III was the first concert in Memorial Stadium, followed by Garth Brooks three decades later” Nebraska Quarterly, Winter 2021
Author, December 1, 2021

- Feature story about historic Garth Brooks concert more than 30 years after Farm Aid III

“Leonard Manley, outspoken patriarch of 5 murdered in Rhoden family killings, dies” WVXU-91.7, Cincinnati, Ohio
Author, December 13, 2021

- News story about death of a family patriarch in the ongoing story of Ohio’s most complex homicide investigation. Subject of ongoing research

“Purpose + Action: Moving Purpose-Driven Storytelling from Message to Mission” Brand Storytelling
Co-author, December 2020

- Examination of how companies are increasingly connecting their purpose-driven storytelling to actions to affect change in the social causes that affect employees, customers and consumers

ADMINISTRATION

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communications
Course Coordinator, JOUR200A: Fundamentals of Editing and Writing I, Fall 2025-ongoing

- Responsible for planning, development, implementation, and assessment of foundational communications courses required for all college majors. Manage the curriculum, coordinating with faculty and adjunct instructors to ensure consistent quality, monitor student learning and resolve any issues that may arise during the course delivery.

CONTRIBUTOR

- Washington Post
- National Public Radio
- CNN
- Dateline NBC
- USA Today
- Court TV
- WVXU (Cincinnati)
- Minnesota Public Radio News
- iHeartRadio

- “Piketon Massacre: Return to Pike County,” Season 2, Episode 6 — *The Victims Need a Voice*, June 16, 2021. Ten million downloads
 - “Piketon Massacre: Return to Pike County,” Season 2, Episode 12 — *Crime and the Media*, July 28, 2021. Eight million downloads
 - Investigation Discovery
 - Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege, and Justice
-

SERVICE

Society of Professional Journalists student chapter, University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Faculty Adviser, fall 2023-ongoing

- Mentor and guide chapter's executive board on issues of governance, membership, programming and funding
- Travel with students to Midwest Journalism conference, April 2025

Nebraska Writing Project Advisory Board

Member, 2025-ongoing

- Serving a three-year appointment with a network of educators (kindergarten through college) committed to teaching and writing across disciplines and communities; the site of the National Writing Project, the largest organization in the U.S. devoted to writing education.

First-generation Advisory Board, University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Member, fall 2022-ongoing

- Serve on board that develops, implements and assesses First Generation Nebraska programs and events

Teaching Support Network, University of Nebraska, Center for Transformative Teaching

Inaugural member, fall 2022-ongoing

- Serve as a resource of instructors to provide support/mentoring for UNL faculty on teaching methods/course design

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communications Curriculum Committee

Member, fall 2024-ongoing

First-generation Student Success Summit, University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Member, Communications Subcommittee, summer/fall 2023

- Serve on subcommittee developing communications plans bridging the equity gap for first-generation students in terms of recruitment, retention, and graduation rates

State of Nebraska, Judicial Branch

Organizer, presenter, participant: “Covering Nebraska Courts,” February, 2022

- Developed, organized and presented a workshop for working Nebraska journalists on how to effectively cover the Nebraska court system. 70+ registrations.

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communications
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee**
Member, 2020-spring 2024

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communication, Media
Law Professor Search Committee**
Member, 2022

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communication,
Assistant Dean for Research and Faculty Affairs Search Committee**
Member, 2021

**Syracuse University, Newhouse School of Public Communications, Robin Toner Program
in Political Reporting**

Juror, Toner Prizes in Excellence in Political Reporting, 2025, 2023, 2022, 2021

- One of three jurors reviewing 10 to 12 entries of either national or local political reporting to award Toner Prizes, which honor an extraordinary journalist and encourage high-quality political reporting vital to a healthy democracy

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, Global
Eyewitness Reform Committee Task Force**

Member, spring/fall 2021

- Reviewed concerns and “A Call to Reform” report of course alumni, calling for the college to reform its premiere global studies program
- Met with stakeholders
- Listened to feedback to inform changes to the program

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, Global
Eyewitness Reform Faculty Committee**

Member, spring 2021-fall 2021

- Met bi-weekly with faculty members in spring, summer and early fall to take committee recommendations to restructure Global Eyewitness program
- Named lead instructor of the program in late fall 2021; created syllabus, learning outcomes and course content to move from eight-week course to 16-week course

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Journalism and Mass Communications,
Strategic Planning Committee Task Force, External Relations Committee**

Member, 2020-May 2021

- Helped develop goals and guidance for the college-wide strategic planning process with focus on external relations with industry partners, funders, alumni and external communities

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teaching Support Network, University of Nebraska, Center for Transformative Teaching
Learning community participant, NCLUDE, spring 2024

- Semester-long learning community focused on supporting youth mental health and teaching with compassion; read “Mind Over Monsters,” by Sarah Rose Cavanagh, and meet several times during the semester to discuss teaching methods and techniques to challenge students with compassion

Solutions Journalism Educators 2.0 Academy, Solutions Journalism Network and the University of Oregon’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Participant and presenter, July 2022

- Two-day training and presentation related to teaching solutions journalism at collegiate level; presentation focused on how merging trauma-informed reporting practices with solutions journalism can reframe deficit narratives – especially in marginalized communities with survivors of generational trauma

Solutions Journalism Educators Academy, Solutions Journalism Network and the University of Oregon’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Participant, June 2021

- Two-day training to learn how to teach solutions journalism at collegiate level: how solutions journalism can engage students and audiences; how to teach students to frame, source, interview for and structure solutions stories for print and multimedia; and how to develop class lectures, discussion, exercises and assignments for solution journalism courses and/or modules within existing journalism courses

Poynter, Diversity Across the Curriculum

Participant, May 2021

- Participant in four-week program examining existing curriculum for oversights and opportunities, applying strategies to develop new materials that emphasize diversity and inclusion and devising ways to infuse inclusion and diversity into teaching

University of Nebraska, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, Accountability Journalism in the 21st Century: The Questions We Ask Have Consequences

Participant, May 2021

- Faculty seminar examining how to build DEI measures into upcoming teaching courses

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2021 spring Teaching and Learning Symposium, “Confronting Realities in the Classroom: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion”

Participant, March 2021

- Symposium to better understand connections between inclusive practices and education as a general practice of freedom

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Peer Review of Teaching Project

Fellow, 2020-2021

- Campus-wide program designed to assist faculty in examining teaching through the lens of intellectual content, teaching practices and student understanding

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Center for Transformative Teaching, Summer Institute for Online Teaching

Participant, June 2020

- Three-week remote learning sessions on how to prepare for and execute online teaching; including backward design in curriculum development, setting course goals and objectives that are student centered

HONORS

Deepe Family Chair in Depth Reporting, University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Journalism and Mass Communications

Chair, 2023-current

- Selected as one of two chairs to teach investigative and in-depth reporting and writing courses

Maude Hammond Fling Faculty Research Fellowship, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Research Council

Fellow, 2021 (extended to 2022)

- Selected to receive grant that will allow for continued research into “Death in the Foothills”

JOURNALISM EXPERIENCE

Minnesota Public Radio News, St. Paul, Minnesota

Managing Editor, 2017-2020

- Responsible for all aspects of digital news presentation and distribution of MPR News stories and products
- Managed a staff of 10 editors, producers, staff photographer and freelance photographers/videographers
- Worked across the newsroom with reporters and editors to develop stories from ideation to execution, including COVID-19 and George Floyd digital coverage
- Collaborated with executive leadership to set strategy to grow audiences and to execute MPR mission to serve our audiences across multiple platforms and distribution channels

Cincinnati Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio

Metro Columnist, 2015-2017

- Covered issues affecting women and children in Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky
- Crime and justice issues, childhood poverty, violence against children, family homelessness, wage disparity, reproductive rights
- Continuing investigative reporting on the 2016 Rhoden family massacre in Pike County, Ohio

- Host of Parents Storytellers Project, a public engagement event curated for the community

WCPO-TV, Cincinnati, Ohio

Managing Editor, 2013-2015

- Helped develop first-of-its-kind, digital-first team of 10 enterprise beat reporters in a broadcast newsroom
- Led and collaborated with beat and enterprise reporters, technologists, data journalists, visual journalists and an editorial cartoonist to deliver award-winning, high-impact stories using multimedia tools across digital and social platforms
- Devised, orchestrated and edited long-form / video documentary piece on a medical program in Afghanistan rooted in Cincinnati; project meant we sent a reporter to Bagram Air Force Base for 10 days
- Edited multiple long-form investigative pieces as well as multimedia, non-fiction narrative piece on an unsolved killing of a police officer that won regional, state and national awards
- Worked closely with marketing and PR as well as the larger broadcast managers and Scripps executives to brand and communicate mission of WCPO Insider program

Cincinnati Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio

Deputy Managing Editor, 2005-2011

- Created, grew and managed a team of 12 digital editors
- Integrated all aspects of Web operations into print newsroom
- Developed and executed targeted online and community-based strategies to grow the digital footprint in the Cincinnati market
- Managed large-scale projects from ideation to implementation
- Analyzed web traffic trends to find content opportunities to grow digital audiences
- Collaborated with technologists to create content plans and new digital news products
- Devised and executed the first external blogging network to build revenue and readership; replicated throughout Gannett
- Created and hosted the first live event on consumer savings strategies for readers
- Page views grew 38 percent and 35 percent in consecutive years; awarded best website by the Ohio Associated Press in 2007, 2006, 2005; awarded Gannett's most improved newspaper for Web innovation

Cincinnati Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio

Assistant City Editor, 2003-2005

- Managed a team of six reporters whose work uncovered lead in housing that made children sick; large-scale lapses in city-wide fire inspections; sex-harassment scandal of county prosecutor that ended in his resignation and subsequent write-in election

Star Tribune, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Reporter, 1992-2003

- First to document gang and drug culture fueling Minneapolis' record rise in its homicide rate; led to initiatives lauded by the U.S. Department of Justice and replicated across the nation. Work nominated for Pulitzer Prize

- Reported on spree killer Andrew Cunanan, whose last killing of fashion icon Gianni Versace led to international media coverage; work featured in books, magazines, cable and television programs, including Dateline NBC, 20/20, CNN specials. Work nominated for Pulitzer Prize
- Reported on gaps in state's foster care system and death of child, lead to change in state law that opened up child-protection records for journalistic review
- Investigated and chronicled clergy sex abuse in Minnesota
- Among first nationally to report on the emergence of identity theft
- Reported extensively on terrorist Zacarias Moussaoui and his pre-9/11 activities in Minnesota

Cincinnati Enquirer, Cincinnati, Ohio
Reporter, 1990-1992

The Lansing State Journal, Lansing, Michigan
Reporter, 1987-1990

JOURNALISM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Society of Professional Journalists annual conference, Las Vegas, Nevada, September 2023
- NICAR annual conference, Nashville, Tennessee, March 2023
- Implicit bias training, MPR News, 2018
- Myers-Briggs (ENTJ), MPR News, 2018
- Online News Association annual convention, attended 2017
- Society of Professional Journalists, Google Tools training, 2018 and 2015
- Google Analytics, individual qualification, 2017

JOURNALISM AWARDS

- Pulitzer Prize, Local News Reporting, "Seven Days of Heroin: This is What an Epidemic Looks Like," 2018. (Newsroom award)
- Best columnist in Ohio, APME, 2016
- Spot News Coverage, "Rhoden Family Massacre," APME, 2016
- Best Column, "Dear Mrs. DuBose," Cleveland Press Awards, 2015
- Dozens of AP and SPJ awards throughout career; primarily for breaking news, explanatory and investigative work

MEMBERSHIP

- Online News Association
- Society of Professional Journalists
- Investigative Reporters and Editors
- Criminal Justice Journalists (founding member)