'Gifted storyteller' Guidi takes over Arizona Sonora News

School of Journalism
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Ruxandra Guidi [1] wants to help students improve their storytelling—a craft that has fascinated and driven the new School of Journalism faculty member since her days growing up in Caracas, Venezuela.

A lot of the things that she read in the newspapers, or heard from friends and family and on the radio "were the early seeds of my interest in journalism and current affairs," said Guidi, who was 14 when she immigrated to the United States with her mother.

A freelance reporter, editor and teacher for two decades, Guidi specializes in audio reporting and podcasting and has contributed to High Country News [2], the BBC's "The World," NPR's "Latino USA," The Guardian and The Kitchen Sisters [3]. She created the Fonografia Collective website with her husband, focusing on "empathetic and culturally sensitive documentary storytelling about everyday people around the world."

Guidi, an assistant professor of practice, came to the University in the fall, succeeding retired professor Terry Wimmer as the instructor and editor for Arizona Sonora News [4], the school's capstone media course. She's excited about helping students "dream up" unique approaches to stories while learning how to report on the community and the border.

"And I'm really excited about coming up with projects that we can do together as a class," such as podcasting or producing a long-form magazine with a theme, "encouraging students to pursue their own approach to storytelling," Guidi said.

Guidi studied political science at Rutgers University, where she rediscovered her passion for current affairs and social justice issues.

"It was kind of like a little 'aha moment' for me," Guidi said. "It's like, 'Oh, this is kind of how to explain what I love, how to make myself useful in what I love.'"

She later earned a master's degree in journalism from the University of California, Berkeley, where her passion for storytelling deepened and she learned about NPR's "The Kitchen Sisters Present?" podcast.

"Rux is a gifted storyteller who works across platforms and looks for new ways to tell stories in intelligent, thoughtful and sensitive ways," said Carol Schwalbe, director of the School of Journalism.

Guidi values journalism that goes beyond facts and into the understanding of what really affects people and their lives. She likes to challenge stereotypes.
"We can be balanced and we can be fair," Guidi said. "But I (also) believe in standing on the side of justice or on the side of what's right."

"It boils down to really listening, really thinking about the role you play, how your stories influence public opinion and how your stories influence the way that you're seen as a journalist," Guidi said. "I think we have an incredibly important mission, but it's often misunderstood."

A version of this article originally appeared on the School of Journalism website.

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Links
[1] https://journalism.arizona.edu/users/ruxandra-guidi
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