
JOURNALISM: WRITING & REPORTING in Fall 2019 (CM1011)

Course Code	CM1011	Professor(s)	Hannah Westley
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-306
Class Schedule	TF: 12:10-13:30 in C-104	Office Hours	Tuesday and Friday 11am-1pm
Credits	4	Email	hwestley@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

What opportunities does this course offer you?

Taking this course will offer you foundational skills that will help you in your other university courses and in life. Studying journalism means learning how to develop communication competences and sharpen critical thinking. From learning how to sift information, to identifying what is important and working in a cross-platform environment, you will learn how to make judgments on how to filter the quality, integrity and importance of the material being provided to you, what are the crucial questions to ask of a source, and how to present issues to audiences in engaging and innovative ways. The world of journalism offers something new and different every day; with each new assignment comes a new sector of life to capture. If you are curious, have an open mind and a strong desire to learn new things, journalism will come naturally.

What will you be doing in class?

Each week you will be engaged in learning about journalism, how it functions, where it comes from and the role it plays in our social, political and cultural lives. We will think about journalism in a comparative context, locally and globally, about journalists who cross borders and about the impact of journalism throughout history. We will consider the future of journalism, how we got to the digital age and where we go next. Thinking independently, you will become your own harshest editor and help others evaluate their writing. You will learn how to identify news, source stories, gather information and write accurately under deadline pressure. To help you develop this expertise, the first lesson of the week will be an opportunity to listen, learn and discuss ideas, while the second class will take the form of a newsroom. You will participate in an editorial meeting, discuss the day's headlines, pitch story ideas, decide which stories to prioritize and how to write them. You will get a taste of all aspects of journalistic writing which will allow you to demonstrate and develop your writing skills and learn how to communicate complex ideas in clear and correct English across diverse media platforms.

How will you know if you're making progress?

Every week, you will be producing written work in class which you will post to the class website. This will allow you to receive immediate feedback both from myself and your classmates. Class quizzes are an opportunity for you to show how much you've learnt about the discipline and we'll go over them in class to see what areas you still need to work on. These exercises will make up 30% of your final grade. Another 20% will come from your regular attendance and participation in class discussions. Your midterm paper, worth 15%, will take the form of a feature article which you will research and write independently (with some advice from me). You will also sit a midterm exam, 15%, which will test you on your comprehension of the main concepts covered thus far in class. Your final piece of work, worth 20%, will be a two-part assignment: an original piece of reporting, sourced, researched and written by yourself, accompanied by a critical reflection focused on how and why you wrote the piece as you did.

In your written work, I will be looking for accuracy, grammar, spelling, AP style, clarity, deadlines, conciseness, structure, proper punctuation, quality of interviews/reporting and use of quotes (if applicable), use/number/quality of sources, attribution, research, objectivity, etc. You must abide by the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics (<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>), NPPA (<https://nppa.org/ethics>), and the RTNDA Code of Ethics (http://www.rtdna.org/content/rtdna_code_of_ethics#.VTNMjltAwUU). If you miss the deadline, your story won't run so grading will also be based on meeting deadlines. Late work is not accepted. Work of publishable quality will receive an A. Stories with minor errors will receive a B. Stories with several errors will receive a C. Stories with many errors will receive a D. Any assignment with a Gross Factual Error (GFE, such as a name misspelling or incorrect fact) will receive an F.

How can I improve my chances of success?

You should come to each class session and you must be prepared to work. A successful journalist is someone who is curious, thirsts for knowledge and new information. Before each class, you will have completed the readings outlined on the schedule as well as be abreast of the day's headlines. You already surf the Internet, have a strong social media presence and read interesting articles, now you will learn how to make your voice heard in new and innovative ways.

Course Learning Outcomes

learn about the history and professional role of reporting from a culturally comparative perspective
be able to identify news, source stories, gather information and write to a deadline.
be able to sift, prioritize and present complex information in a clear, accurate and engaging fashion
be able to make judgements about the quality, integrity and importance of source material.
think independently, be your own best editor and help others evaluate their writing.

General Education

Course Outline

CLASS SCHEDULE:

September

Week 1 – 2nd - 6th

Discovering Journalism

Student Learning Outcome (hereafter SLO): You will have a general overview of journalism, its history, future, and its role in a democratic society.

READINGS

- The Elements of Journalism, The American Press Institute

<https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/what-is-journalism/elements-journalism/>

- Speaking Truth to

Power: <http://niemanreports.org/articles/a-century-of-pulitzer-journalism-speaking-truth-to-power/>

- How to deal with eyewitness reports:

https://firstdraftnews.com/digital-journalists-online-social-media-first-responders-breaking-news/?utm_content=bufferf521f&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Tuesday 3rd - Session I

TOPICS: Review syllabus; format for filing news stories; making the switch: news consumer to news reporter

Friday 6th - Session II

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

September 8th– last day to drop/add courses online

Week II – 9th– 13th

How do you know it's news? The components of the story

SLO: You will be able to identify a newsworthy story, recognise the inherent values of news and explain the structure of a news story

READINGS

- On Blackboard: How do you know its news? From *So you want to be a journalist? Unplugged*. Second Edition, Grundy, Hirst, Little, Hayes, Treadwell, CUP, 2012
- Writing News: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/sep/25/writing.journalism.news>
- Style Guides: <http://www.poynter.org/2011/how-many-style-guides-do-journalists-really-need/132992/>

Tuesday 10th- SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 13th- SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting: the week's stories, the best and the worst coverage. Compare different language newspapers, political bias, the most effective use of multimedia coverage.

Blog Assignment: Write 200 words (in the first person) answering this question: Why are you studying journalism? What does journalism mean to you?

NOTE: All blog posts started on Friday must be published by Sunday at midnight. You are expected to comment on (at least two) of your peers' posts by Tuesday's class.

Week III -16th– 20th

Research and Finding Things

SLO: You will have an understanding of research methods, know how to evaluate the quality and reliability of information and how to check online sources

READINGS

- On Blackboard: Research, from *So you want to be a journalist? Unplugged*. Second Edition, Grundy, Hirst, Little, Hayes, Treadwell, CUP, 2012
- How do journalists verify information: <http://www.poynter.org/2013/new-research-details-how-journalists-verify-information/203728/>
- The Panama Papers: the largest international investigative journalism project of all time: <http://qz.com/729106/how-two-german-newspaper-reporters-broke-the-story-behind-the-panama-papers/>

Tuesday 17th- SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 20th- SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting

Blog Assignment: Make a list of the news websites available to Anglophone residents in France. Peruse their headlines. Find one story you would like to follow up and write the pitch for it. How would you research this story? List the possible research methods you would use.

Week IV –23rd - 27th

Fact Checking and Sub Editing

SLO: You will understand the importance of and necessity for correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. You will appreciate the importance of fact-checking in an age of misinformation.

Tuesday 24th - SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 27th- SessionII

TOPICS:

News meeting

Assignment: Fact checking and subbing exercises

Week V – 30th– 4th

Writing News for Readers

SLO: You will be able to write a short news story and be aware of the different styles and formats available to you.

READINGS

- See Blackboard, The Lead, from Melvin Mencher, *News Reporting and Writing*, chapter 6
- The Structure: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/01/cut-this-story/307823/>
- The Hourglass: <http://www.poynter.org/2003/the-hourglass-serving-the-news-serving-the-reader/12624/>

Tuesday 1st- SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Assignment: Read online newspapers to find two examples of good leads and two examples of bad leads. Cut and paste the first few paragraphs of the story into a separate document and cite why you liked the lead or didn't. Underline and label the who, what, when, where, why, how and how much questions answered in the opening paragraphs.

Friday 4th- SessionII

TOPICS:

Mid-semester exam

October

Week VI – 7th- 11th

Writing Broadcast News

SLO: You will know how to write a broadcast news story and understand the role of broadcast journalism in today's society

READINGS

- Radio and TV Basics: http://www.thenewsmanual.net/Manuals%20Volume%202/volume2__48.htm
- Radio on the wane? <https://medium.com/@lwalker/radios-next-incarnation-join-the-creative-disruption-a527ec2a364#.hhwm6s6ph>

Tuesday 8th- SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 11th- SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting

Assignment: Find an example of a news broadcast transcript online. Select an online news story and rewrite it for a radio news bulletin.

Mid-semester assignment due

Week VII – 14th – 18th

Multimedia Journalism and Writing News for the Web

SLO: You will be able to write a story for an online platform and will have an understanding of how online journalism is transforming the industry

READINGS

- Writing News for the Web: <http://www.poynter.org/2003/writing-news-online/13605/>
- Writing for Mobile: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/skills/digital-journalism/article/art20141202144618106>

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- Reflecting on the role of social media and the news: <http://mediashift.org/2015/09/how-social-media-platforms-are-changing-the-business-of-news/>
 - Curating online news: <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/distributed-news-how-buzzfeed-curates-stories-for-social-platforms/s2/a609312/>

Tuesday 15th - SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 18th- SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting

Assignment: Write the headline, intro and four paragraphs of a news story for a mobile device. This should be a campus news story. You can research and interview fellow students over the weekend. Make sure the story is posted by Tuesday's class.

October 18th, Mid-semester grades due

Week VIII – 21st – 25th

Facts and Figures and Knowing the Law

SLO: You will be aware of the importance of knowing your rights as a journalist and the way the law both shapes and defines your journalistic practice. You will have compared the rights and freedoms of journalists operating across national borders and under different regimes.

READINGS

- On Blackboard: Responsible Reporting and the Law from *The Responsible Reporter, Journalism in the Information Age*, Bruce Evensen, Peter Lang 2014
- Know Your Rights: <http://www.splc.org/page/presentations-and-handouts>

Tuesday 30th - SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

October 30th- November 3rd, fall break, no classes

Week IX – 28th-1st

November

Week X- 4th -8th

Writing Beyond the Inverted Pyramid

SLO: You will explore new and nontraditional ways to present information and learn which types of alternative formats work best with each type of news story.

READINGS

- On Blackboard: Writing Beyond the Inverted Pyramid from *So you want to be a journalist? Unplugged*. Second Edition, Grundy, Hirst, Little, Hayes, Treadwell, CUP, 2012
- The Pros and Cons of the Inverted Pyramid: <http://www.poynter.org/2003/writing-from-the-top-down-pros-and-cons-of-the-inverted-pyramid/12754/>

Tuesday 5th-SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 8th- SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting

Assignment: Identify news stories which use different structures to the inverted pyramid. Explain the structures. Rewrite a news story in an alternative format.

November 4th, Last day to withdraw from a course/no credit option

Week XI -11th- 15th

Interviewing and the Long Story

SLO: You will understand and be able to employ the main interviewing techniques. You will have an understanding of the tradition of and renewal of interest in longform journalism

READINGS

- On Blackboard: Four Principles of Interviewing, Melvin Mencher
- Interviewing: <http://www.poynter.org/2013/how-journalists-can-become-better-interviewers/205518/>
- Longform journalism: <http://www.fastcompany.com/3042312/most-creative-people/the-secrets-of-writing-smart-longform-articles-that-go-absolutely-viral>
- Critical Thinking: <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/12/against-long-form-journalism/282256/>

November 11th– 12th, Armistice Break (no classes)

Tuesday 12th- SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 15th- SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting

Assignment: Select a number of interviews from online sources; compare the techniques. What additional questions would you have asked? And how?

Choose an interviewee, research and prepare your questions. This could be someone on campus you find inspiring, someone you have met in Paris or a professional whose career you would like to know more about. Interviews must be posted by class on Tuesday.

Week XII -18th– 22nd

Investigative Reporting

SLO: You will understand the social and professional role of the investigative journalist

Watch Spotlight

READINGS

- Introduction to Investigative Reporting: http://www.thenewsmanual.net/Manuals%20Volume%202/volume2_39.htm
- The Bureau of Investigative Journalism: <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com>
- http://sand-kas-ten.org/ijm/Chapter_1.pdf

Tuesday 19th-SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 22nd - SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting

Assignment: Select a piece of investigative journalism and identify the research techniques and sources that have been used. Write a news piece about the investigative article.

Week XIII -25th– 29th

Feature Writing

SLO: You will understand the tradition of feature writing and its technical components

READINGS

- On Blackboard: Feature Writing from *The Responsible Reporter, Journalism in the Information Age*, Bruce Evensen, Peter Lang 2014
- The winner of the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for feature writing: <http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/kathryn-schulz>

Tuesday 26th- SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 29th- SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting

Assignment: Select three feature articles and note their defining characteristics. Write a news piece derived from one of the features.

Week XIV– 25th- 29th

The Meaning of Professional

SLO: You will understand the fundamental values and principles of journalism, such as truth-telling, watchdog reporting, accuracy, courage, tolerance, minimizing harm, and justice

READINGS

- Why we trust:
http://www.cjr.org/special_report/why_we_trust_and_why_thats_changing_online.php
- Trusting online news:

https://www.theguardian.com/media-network/2016/jun/10/facebook-instant-articles-google-amp-publishers-readers-trust-distributed-media?CMP=share_btn_tw

- This could happen to YOU: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/may/26/open-door-column-note-to-readers>
- http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Trust%20and%20Journalism%20in%20a%20Digital%20Environment_0.pdf

Tuesday 26th- SessionI

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 29th- SessionII

TOPICS: News meeting

Assignment: Write a news report about a disgraced reporter or someone who has breached the public's trust.

December

Week XV –2nd – 6th

Tuesday 3rd– Session 1

TOPICS: Course Conclusion

December 6th, last day of classes,

December 7th- 11th, reading days

December 12th – 18th, Final Exam

January 2nd, all grades due

Final Exam as published on schedule

Final assignments due at the start of class. Each student will spend five minutes discussing his or her story; topics may include new skills learned, interesting details that emerged during reporting, any particular challenges, story structure, and/or how the story might be expanded into a longer feature article. Attendance is mandatory.

ONLINE RESOURCES

General guidelines and ethics:

The Associated Press www.ap.org

The National Union of Journalists, UK www.nuj.org.uk

The American Press Institute, USA www.americanpressinstitute.org

Reuters Handbook of Journalism http://handbook.reuters.com/index.php?title=Main_Page

Ethics <http://www.spj.org/pdf/spj-code-of-ethics-poster.pdf>

The Center for Investigative Reporting <https://www.revealnews.org>

Journalism Practice:

Pew Research Centre (non-partisan thinktank), Media and Journalism www.journalism.org

Colombia Journalism Review www.cjr.org

Media and Technology:

Mediashift: www.mediashift.org

Style Guide:

Associated Press Stylebook 2016 (accessible online through the AUP Library http://www.apstylebook.com.proxy.aup.fr/aup_edu/)

Buzzfeed Style Guide <https://www.buzzfeed.com/emmyf/buzzfeed-style-guide>

Useful vocab:

<http://www.easymedia.in/elements-newspaper/>

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

Every week, you will be producing written work in class which you will post to the class website. This will allow you to receive immediate feedback both from myself and your classmates. Class quizzes are an opportunity for you to show how much you've learnt about the discipline and we'll go over them in class to see what areas you still need to work on. These exercises will make up 30% of your final grade. Another 20% will come from your regular attendance and participation in class discussions. Your midterm paper, worth 15%, will take the form of a feature article which you will research and write independently (with some advice from me). You will also sit a midterm exam, 15%, which will test you on your comprehension of the main concepts covered thus far in class. Your final piece of work, worth 20%, will be a two-part assignment: an original piece of reporting, sourced, researched and written by yourself, accompanied by a critical reflection focused on how and why you wrote the piece as you did.

Other
