Overview: This course is the gateway introduction to the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, and to your own progression of study here. This semester, you will learn the basics of journalism -- both in this course and its companion, Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling. Combined, the two courses will challenge you to learn the fundamental line of questioning that is the basic training of the journalistic mindset, as well as the reporting, writing and media production skills to best present your stories. Specifically, this course will sharpen your critical thinking skills, introduce you the conventions of journalistic writing, and require you to jump in and start reporting. Along the way, your method of gathering information, reporting and writing will improve.

The common weekly Monday lectures will provide background on enduring questions and issues in journalism as well as current ethical problems that arise in the coverage of news.

Then in your smaller section meetings you will practice the conventions of lead writing, of hard news and later in the semester, feature stories. These skills will prepare you for the next assignment in this course, the next class you take at the School and will even serve as a foundation that will help you in any communication endeavor, journalistic or otherwise.

This class will require consistent attendance and, more critically, attention on your part. The assignments require you to plan ahead for your reporting; unlike academic papers, journalism pieces aren’t something you can throw together the night (or hours) before it’s due. To succeed, you should expect to spend a minimum of six hours a week on this course in addition to time spent in class. The reward for doing so will go beyond a grade; it will bring with it the knowledge that you have a solid grasp of what actually goes into the practice of journalism.

A note about co-requisites: This course and Multimedia Storytelling

The multimedia course is designed to introduce you to the basics of presenting journalism in different mediums, and learning which mediums best serve which types of stories. It’s an ability that employers now assume entry-level journalists will have, and thus goes along with basic reporting, writing and AP style as foundational skills you will be expected to have.
In the interest of supporting creative efforts to tell good journalistic stories in a number of ways, there is some allowable crossover of editorial content. Some assignments for this class may be about the same general topic as your multimedia project, but only on condition that the stories are distinct in focus and in presentation. You may use in your multimedia projects reporting and writing content that you developed for this course, but the actual results must be clearly different. For example, the difference is not clear enough if all you do is take a story from this class and submit it, verbatim or with only minor re-arranging of paragraphs and a different lead, as a text project to your multimedia class.

**Required Texts:**

*The Associated Press Stylebook 2011.* On order at the University Bookstore, cross listed both under 019:098 (this course) and 019:088 Multimedia. This is the reference book of record for the professional news industry in the United States. You will be expected to get into the habit of consulting it for written assignment in both courses, and to learn some of the basic conventions for your assignments. If you have a 2010 version available, you may use that.

*The New York Times,* which is available in hard copy in the machines in the Adler Journalism Building (1st floor adjacent to the lounge) and *The Daily Iowan* (available all over campus) or the online versions of both. These are your daily textbooks both to be prepared for the weekly news quiz, and also to deepen your understanding of what defines news.

A note on assigned readings and deadlines. For the most part, the assigned readings listed on the common syllabus for each week are a preparation for your section meeting, not for the large Monday lecture. You may do in-class writing drills in your sections that are based on the assigned reading, or you may read and discuss parts of the chapters in class. This will be up to your instructor, who will communicate this to you in section meetings and, likely, in the ICON message board for your section.

The deadlines for the major assignments are indicated below by the week they are due. The exact day and time during that week by which they are due is again, up to your section instructor.

**Major Assignments**

#1 Life Event Essay due week 3  
#2 Interviewing/reaction story due week 5  
#3 Mock presser due week 6  
#4 City Council due week 8  
#5 Cops/Crime/Courts story due week 10 or 11  
#6 Feature 1 (Choice) due week 13  
#7 Feature 2 (Profile) due week 15
Semester Schedule* (Section activities will vary according to instructor)

Week 1: Introduction

All sections except sections 001 and 002 will meet the week of Jan. 16th. The first lecture for all sections is on Jan. 23rd.

Week 2: What is News

1/23  What is News lecture

Sections: Assign 500 word life event essays. Suggest reading, discussing in class Covering the 21 Debate as an example of a newspaper’s function in a community.

Week 3: Objectivity and Tone

Assigned Reading:
Blur Chapter 3 (ICON)

1/30  Lecture based on Blur readings

Sections: Assignment #1 Life event essay due. Fix your writing mistakes activity.

Week 4: Leads

Assigned Reading:
WRN Ch. 3 The Basic News Story (ICON)

2/6  Leads: starting off the story, lead types

Sections: Suggest exercises using WRN Ch. 3 The Basic News Story exercises at end of chapter. Also AP Guide to News Writing Ch. 3 and AP Guide Newswriting Exercise. (First have students do the exercise, then discuss using the chapter.)
Week 5: Basic Interviewing applied to Reaction Story

Assigned Reading:
WRN Ch. 7 Interviewing (ICON)

2/13 The reaction story and basic interviewing

Sections: Assignment #2 Reaction Story due this week per section instructor’s instructions. Suggest lead exercises in class, use AP Guide to News Writing as appropriate and/or Quotes good and Bad and Quotes Attribution. Finally note Commas, Quotes and Other Little Marks reference (all in ICON)

Week 6: Mock News Conference

Assigned Reading:
WRN Chapter 20 Speeches, News Conferences and Meetings (ICON)

2/20 Mock news conference guest or TBD (2/27 alternate date)

Sections: Instructors assign Assignment #3 Mock Presser due this week, based on 2/20 mock conference in big lecture or in section. Also exercises end of WRN Chapter 20.

Week 7: More Lead Styles

Assigned Reading:
WRN Ch. 8 Leads and Nut Graphs (ICON)

2/27 Finding the lead in a story

Sections: (Check exercises in Ch. 8), use as relevant. Also Good Time Gals lead exercise (ICON). Alternately have students research issues and people relevant to the City Council meeting next week.

Week 8: Press Conferences, Meetings

3/5 Press Conferences: Getting beyond canned statements

Sections: Assign students to cover the Tuesday, March 6th City Council Meeting. Assignment #4 City Council must be submitted on ICON by midnight March 6th.

(SPRING BREAK 3/12 to 3/19)
Week 9: Crime Reporting

Assigned Reading
WRN Ch. 22 Crime and Punishment (ICON)

3/19 Iowa City Police Spokesperson guest lecture or crime beat journalist. Reporting, use of police records

Sections: See Assignment Description list; more guidance on Crime/Cops/Court TBD. Due week 10 or 11. Suggest sections introduce students to public and court records available online and/or discuss crime reporting practices (Crime Reporting: Optional Sections) in ICON.

Week 10: Features

3/26 Defining the interest: Features

Sections TBD. Assignment #5 Crime/Cops/Court story due week 10 or week 11.
Do Map the story exercise and/or Features re-writes/discussion (Both in ICON)

Alternate: Suggested in-class assignment: Find the story: Pairs go to areas of campus to find a story. Following week (week 6) give oral reports on why it's a story in terms of impact, who it affects, audience interest.

Week 11: Features

Assigned Reading:
WRN Ch. 10 Story Forms (ICON)

4/2 Feature story methods

Sections: Suggest showing and discussing One in 8 Million: New York Times audio slideshows. Or assign other feature readings and discuss soft leads.

Week 12: Economics of the News Industry

Assigned Reading:
Free For All Ch. 7 (ICON)

4/9 Newspaper industry losses, the Internet and impact on international news coverage

Sections: suggest workshop for the first draft of Feature #1. Final draft due week 13.
Week 13: Profiles

Assigned Reading:
The Long War (ICON)

4/16  Profiles

Sections: Assignment #6 Feature 1 (Choice) due. Suggest writing exercises guidance TBD or discuss The Long War. (You can assign reading part of it in class to discuss).

Week 14: Ethics

4/23  News Media ethics

Sections: TBD.

Week 15: Final Week

4/30  Career Advice (possible guest lecture or TDB) last weekly lecture

Sections: Assignment #7 Feature 2 (Profile) due this week. Suggest workshop first draft of profiles to be due the end of this week.

Grade Allocation:

1. Seven main reporting and writing assignments are 10% each, for a total of 70% of the final grade.

2. Weekly news quizzes = 15% of total grade

3. In-Class Graded Exercises = 10% total of final grade.

4. Attendance for both weekly lectures and labs = 5% (More than 2 unexcused absences for either a weekly lecture or a section meeting will result in losing the entire 5% attendance allocation. So 0-2 = 5%, and more than 2 = 0%)
**Explanation of grading for the 7 main assignments**

The assignments will be graded on a scale of 100. The following attributes is what your instructor will be looking for:

- Quality of observational and/or interview-based reporting
- Clarity of writing, correct grammar, and demonstration of applying AP Style
- Structure of story, as evident in the thought process about storytelling method

In terms of letter grades for the major assignments, they are assessed as follows:

**A:** Very well written both in terms of clarity, grammar and AP style, research strengthens the reporting, interviews representing a range of viewpoints as relevant for the story. Publishable with minor edits.

**B:** Basically well written in terms of clarity, grammar and proper AP style, research somewhat deficient in terms of helping the reporting, meets minimum requirement for the number of interviews but quotes are not used effectively, requires some further revision and additional material before publication.

**C:** Poorly written both in logical flow and grammar and style, little or no organization or story structure, inadequate material including interviews and research. Several basic grammar and AP style mistakes, little apparent copy editing. A major rewrite and additional reporting required.

**D:** Serious deficits in terms of clarity and information, including research and interview material. No organization or story structure, major writing and grammar problems with no apparent effort at copy editing.

**F:** Any evidence of plagiarism with intent, including cutting and pasting several paragraphs from another source, will result in an F grade. Otherwise, seriously incomplete in terms of the assignment parameters, confusing or erroneous information.

**Policy on missed deadlines, emergency circumstances.**

In general, late assignments will not be accepted. There will be no reduced credit for turning something in after the deadline. You simply loose the allocated percentage (10 % of the total grade) for the missed paper. Instructors will judge emergency situations on a per-case basis, and may propose an alternate deadline. The key here is to communicate with your instructor in advance of the deadline. In the case of a medical emergency, documentation verifying a visit to student health or other medical services is highly advisable to help your case for an extension.

It’s up to each instructor to determine whether he or she wants the assignments in electronic form in ICON, a hard copy, or both.

**Weekly quizzes:**
Starting from the second Monday weekly lecture (Jan. 30th), quizzes will be given at the beginning of the lecture. The material covered in the quizzes will come from the three sources listed below, based on the major stories published during the previous week. (The previous Monday through Friday.) Your completed quiz will be taken as evidence of your attendance at the Monday lecture. You will not be permitted to take a missed quiz after the fact.

1. The New York Times (actual front page on hard copy, The Front Page link for online)
2. The Daily Iowan (actual front page on hard copy, top large font headline stories for online)
**Grading scale for major assignments and for the final grade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95% and greater</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 to 94%</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 to 89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>80% to 84%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% to 79%</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% to 74%</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>65% to 69%</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% to 64%</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55% to 59%</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54% and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
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**The Iowa Dozen (practices specific to the School of Journalism and Communication)**

As one of more than 104 programs in journalism and mass communication accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), we must assess student learning to assure that each of our graduates meets the following standards.

Note that the first 3 points will be a part of how the mid-term paper, final paper and in-class presentations will be evaluated. Points 6 onward are values that the course aspires to support.

We learn to ...  
1. Write correctly, clearly and well. (papers, presentations)  
2. Conduct research and gather information responsibly. (papers, presentations)  
3. Edit and evaluate carefully. (papers, presentations)

We value ...  
6. Free speech and First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups.  
7. A diverse global community.  
8. Creativity and independence.  

We explore ...  
10. Theories and concepts.  
11. The history, structure and economy of media institutions  
12. The role of media in shaping cultures.
Administrative Home

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook [www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml].

Electronic Communication

University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)

Academic Fraud

Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the departmental DEO and to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum. Instructors and DEOs decide on appropriate consequences at the departmental level while the Associate Dean enforces additional consequences at the collegiate level. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint

Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

Accommodations for Disabilities

A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Understanding Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment at www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather

In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. (Operations Manual, Part IV, 16. See items e, h, and i.)

*The CLAS policy statements have been summarized from the web pages of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.