Policies relating to this course are governed by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

**Building/time:** Online, 7-9:30 p.m., Thursdays

**Instructor:** Dave Schwartz  
**Office hours:** By email or in person: Tuesdays 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Wednesdays 11 a.m.-noon, AJB Room E346B. And by appointment.  
**Phone:** 319-335-3318  
**Email address:** david-schwartz@uiowa.edu

**Description of Course**  
This writing and survey course helps students focus their skills by exploring different forms of writing online and in print. We will develop strong basic reporting and writing skills. Using different story forms – including but not limited to journalistic news – students will learn how to write a diverse set of stories and embrace the freedom and responsibilities of web journalism. Students will learn Associated Press style and various journalistic reporting and writing techniques. They will learn the basics of writing press releases and other journalistic and communication forms. You will be critiqued by the instructor. Expect practical and historical lessons.

**Objectives and Goals of the Course**  
To learn the basics of journalistic reporting, writing and editing. And to acquire basic skills in other forms of written communication. You also will learn how to use current technologies to reach, communicate with and increase your audience.

**Required Texts**  
- The Associated Press Stylebook 2011

**All remaining texts …**  
… On reserve on the class website, or as assigned from online sources.

Grading System and the Use of +/-  
*Please note that the grade of A+ is very rarely given in this course and only in extraordinary situations.*

Assignments and Percentage of Final Grade  
*Final grades are based out of 1,000 possible points, broken down as follow:*  
55% **The main stories for the course include:**
• Local government news story from city council, school board or another
government agency: 10 percent of final grade
• Magazine-style feature story on someone from your town: 20 percent of final
grade
• Web-driven/PR feature on things to do in your town: 10 percent of final
grade
• Press release: 10 percent of your final grade
• Editorial: 5 percent of final grade

(See Iowa Dozen – included – for standards)

10%  AP style and grammar

Ten quizzes throughout the semester.

15%  Class participation

Participate in weekly online discussions. … Engage in weekly current-event
discussions as well as those born from the reading. … Come prepared with
questions for guest presenters, if applicable. You can learn more from them in 30-
45 minutes than in a week’s worth of class.

More about the readings:
• Doing and discussing the readings are a major component of this class.
When you read, think not only about the subject matter but how the author
constructed the story. The instructor will be monitoring the class online
discussions heavily. Be sure to contribute constructively.

20%  Final project
The final, an enterprise story or a media study, will be a longer project pitched by
the student and approved by the instructor. We will discuss more at the beginning
of the semester. Length of the story should run between 1,000-1,500 words.
Project timeline:
    Feb. 23 – Topic due. Written as an outline. At the end, include a list of at
least eight potential sources
    IN ADDITION TO YOUR TOPIC, TURN IN A BACKUP TOPIC.
Things sometimes fall through. In case they do, be prepared to go a
different direction.
    May 3 – Final project due by noon. (May 3 is a Thursday, the last day of
class)

Course Policies

Course attendance and timeliness
Except in cases of death in the family, illness serious enough to keep you home,
or other genuine emergencies or crises, you are expected to view all class
sessions. If you have a valid reason for missing, notify the instructor by e-mail
ahead of time, and provide relevant documentation. Missing sessions greatly reduces your opportunity for scoring an above-average grade in the course.

**Participation in class discussions**
This is essential both to the function of the class and to your final grade.

**Timely completion of assignments**
Except in cases of death in the family, illness serious enough to keep you home, or other genuine emergencies or crises, you are expected to complete all assignments as scheduled. If you have a valid reason for not completing something on time, notify the instructor by e-mail ahead of time, and provide relevant documentation.

### Calendar of Course Assignments
(subject to change)

**WEEK ONE**
**TOPICS**
- Introductions
- Class expectations
- Definitions and AP style introduction
- Ungraded AP style quiz (taken online during class)
- Jobs in journalism and professional communication - survey

**READINGS**
- None

**WEEK TWO**
**TOPIC**
- Different story forms: magazine, blogs, newspapers, long-form and visually driven
- How we got here: The briefest of histories of American journalism
- What’s next? The briefest of prognostications on the future of American journalism

**READINGS**
- Listed on ICON, by week

**WEEK THREE – No class Feb. 2**

**WEEK FOUR**
**TOPICS**
- Writing about your community for your community
- Getting read: The different options to publish your stories

**READINGS**
- Listed on ICON, by week
WEEK FIVE
TOPICS
• Hard news stories
• Local event coverage
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week
DUE!!! In ICON dropbox before start of class – News story from local government meeting

WEEK SIX
TOPICS
• Magazine writing – an introduction
• Magazine writing
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week
DUE!!! In ICON dropbox before start of class – Topic, outline, sources and a backup topic for your final project

WEEK SEVEN
TOPICS
• Ethics and practices
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week
DUE!!! In ICON dropbox before start of class – Magazine-style feature story

WEEK EIGHT
TOPICS
• Editorials and columns
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week

SPRING BREAK – MARCH 12-16

WEEK NINE
TOPICS
• Writing for the web
• Column writing
• Beyond news writing: sports, entertainment, culinary writing, etc.
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week
DUE!!! In ICON dropbox before start of class – Editorial
WEEK 10
TOPICS
• Writing for the web
• Working with editors and collaborating with other writers
• Modern-day issues: anonymous sources; censorship in schools and government; publicly traded media companies
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week

WEEK 11
TOPICS
• Alternative media and the dissident press
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week
DUE!!! In ICON dropbox before start of class – Web PR story on your town

WEEK 12
TOPICS
• Blogging
• Public relations and corporate writing – an introduction
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week

WEEK 13
TOPICS
• Public relations and corporate writing – various forms
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week
DUE!!! In ICON dropbox before start of class – Press release

WEEK 14 – No class April 26

WEEK 15
TOPICS
• Making yourself a brand
• End-of-semester review
READINGS
• Listed on ICON, by week
DUE!!! In ICON dropbox before start of class – Final project

WEEK 16 - FINALS WEEK / Nothing due

***Final project is due before the start of our last class of the semester, Thursday, May 3, in the ICON dropbox
About your instructor
Prior to joining the UI in 2007, David Schwartz was a national leader in digital media innovation. He served as managing editor for news and photography for Shaw Suburban Media in Chicago, overseeing the news operations for three websites and two daily newspapers. Previous to that he was sports editor for three years, including 2007, when the Northwest Herald was one of nine news sites in the country to be named Top 10 nationally for daily coverage, Sunday coverage, and coverage in a special section. As editor of McHenryCountySports.com, he increased unique visitors by more than 120 percent in one year and later went on to present his work at the APSE national convention, where sports editors from the L.A. Times, Washington Post, Dallas Morning News and other publications attended Schwartz’s sessions to learn about online prep sports innovation.

Prior to becoming an editor, Schwartz was a beat writer in Chicago covering Major League Baseball, college football and basketball, and high schools, and he provided coverage in a supporting role for the NBA, NHL, NFL and PGA.

Schwartz earned his B.A. from the University of Iowa and his M.S. from Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism. He held internships at the Dallas Morning News, Arizona Republic and Chicago Tribune and worked part time at The Washington Post before landing his first job at The Sporting News, where he worked as an editor for the publication’s weekly and annual publications as well as its fledgling online coverage. His current position at the University of Iowa School of Journalism and Mass Communication includes overseeing all of the school’s scholastic outreach efforts, including the Iowa High School Press Association, Iowa Summer Journalism Workshops, the Iowa Journalism Academies, and serving as the school’s liaison to UI Admissions. He is president of the board of directors for the Iowa Center for Public Affairs Journalism.

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The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Policies and Procedures

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 Academic Handbook.

www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml

Academic Fraud
Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is reported to the departmental DEO and to the
Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Services who enforces the appropriate consequences. www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtm

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor and the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml#5

Accommodations for Disabilities
A student seeking academic accommodations should register with Student Disability Services and meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. For more information, visit this site: www.uiowa.edu/~sds/

Understanding Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. Visit www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu for definitions, assistance, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather
In severe weather, the class members should seek shelter in the innermost part of the building, if possible at the lowest level, staying clear of windows and free-standing expanses. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. (Operations Manual 16.14. i.)

Important University of Iowa Deadlines for Off-Cycle Courses
(Note: Use only for off-cycle courses. To find the deadlines for a particular course, visit this Registrar site and type in the course number and title: www.registrar.uiowa.edu/more/coursedeadlines.aspx)
Since this course begins or ends at a time different from other courses, please be aware of these deadlines:
Last day to add: Monday, Sept. 8
Last day to drop: Monday, Nov. 3

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

The Iowa Dozen

As one of more than 100 programs in journalism and mass communication accredited by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), we assess student learning to assure that each of our graduates meets the following standards.

We learn to ...
1. Write correctly, clearly and well.
2. Conduct research and gather information responsibly.
3. Edit and evaluate carefully.
4. Use media technologies thoughtfully.
5. Apply statistical concepts accurately.

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.