Instructor: John Haman (doctoral candidate)  
Email: john-haman@uiowa.edu

Meeting Time: Mon-Fri: 11:00AM – 12:15PM.  
Section Meeting Room: W332 AJB

Office Hours: E327 AJB, 12:15-1:00, Monday – Friday. Or by appointment.

Course Overview

Welcome to Journalistic Writing and Reporting. As you know, students are required to take JRW and Multimedia at the same time. While time-intensive, these are the foundational skill classes in the journalism curriculum. They are designed to enable the formation of a skillset that will encompass both the written and technological components of the new journalism environment we find ourselves in today. Students who take the material in these classes seriously will be rewarded with the tools to succeed in upper-level journalism courses and the professional world. This cannot be understated: proficiency in JRW and multimedia will make your lives much easier both in the immediate and long-term future.

The primary objectives of JRW are to assist you in developing rudimentary journalistic writing skills, introduce you to the culture and professional expectations of journalism, and help you become a more critical and informed consumer of news. Additional goals include working cooperatively with your colleagues to provide feedback on story ideas and rough drafts, discussing journalism ethics, and becoming comfortable with the article-creation process.

Instructor Responsibilities: Every course enacts an implicit contract between the student and the instructor. As such, each has responsibilities within the context of the class. My primary duties include being prepared each day, ensuring student progress by devising practice activities for our lab, providing useful feedback on assignments, and clarifying questions you may have. If you are confused about assignment expectations or need guidance formulating your stories, please ask during class or email me (see my email address above).

Student Responsibilities: This class will be challenging, but also rewarding and thought-provoking. Like many things in life, what you get out of a course depends largely on what you put in. Start by bringing a positive attitude to class and be willing to contribute to discussions. Communication is also essential; if you have a question, ask. If you would like to clarify aspects
of the assignment, ask. Almost all of you are at the same level of journalistic development, if you have a question it is likely others do too. Finally, be professional in your conduct.

**Attendance:** is a big deal in this class due to the condensed nature of summer classes. We will cover important material each day so missing a class means missing out on information that you need, try to be here every day. If you will miss a class, please email me beforehand letting me know the reason. More than one unexcused absence will impact your grade.

**Course outcomes:**

1. Gather facts for news accounts by interviewing people, analyzing written material, developing personal sources, and interpreting what you see and hear in the world around you.

2. Conceptualize news stories in the context of both event and enterprise coverage opportunities.

3. Judge news values for an intended audience.

4. Critically assess your reporting and writing and that of others.

5. Tell stories across multiple media that are clear, concise, and correct

**Required texts & other supplies:**

1. The Associated Press Stylebook 2012. Available at the University Bookstore

2. Reporter’s notebook and/or an audio recorder

**Grading**

This class is designed to help students develop basic proficiency in journalistic skills. Like any skillset, the routine of practice, correction, and more practice enables successful development. My job is to assign practice and subsequently provide feedback that highlights weaknesses (and strengths) in your work that will allow you to continually improve your writing ability and increase your proficiency as a producer and consumer of journalism. To facilitate this process, and for your success in this course, it is imperative that you carefully review comments I leave on your assignments. Paper feedback is pragmatic and designed to stimulate your writing progress; do not be discouraged by comments but instead use them as a stepping stones to becoming a more “journalistic” writer. Final class grades are broken down as follows:

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<th>Grade</th>
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The point values of assignments, attendance and class-related activities are broken down as follows:

1. **Five assignments: each worth 100 points, for a total of 500 points**  
   (50% of the final grade)

2. **Skills I and Skills II: each worth 50 points, for a total of 100 points**  
   (10% of final grade)

3. **In-class exercises: each worth 10 points, for a total of 400 points**  
   (40% of final grade: approximately one each day, for eight weeks)

**Policy on late assignments:** For every 24 hours the assignment is late, 15% of the grade is dropped. If there are medical emergencies, etc. please let me know ahead of time and those can be taken into consideration. For all absences or deadline extension requests, documentation verifying a visit to student health or other medical services is required.

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**Assignment Descriptions**

**Assignment #1: Interview/Reaction Story (Due Friday June 21)**

*word count: 500+
*interviews: minimum 3
*notes: include headline, dateline and byline.

The goal of this assignment is to write a story that has an expert’s perspective on an issue that has local interest. The expert’s views will be supplemented by opinions of those who are not experts themselves but may be impacted by the issue and can discuss possible ramifications. If your topic is new regulations on student loans, perhaps you would interview someone in the UI Financial Aid office who works with students applying for assistance. Then, you may interview students who have loans themselves or are thinking about getting loans to see what their reaction to the new rules are. Newsworthy issue + Expert opinion + local relevant reaction
Assignment #2: Event Story (Due Sunday June 23)

*word count: 500-600
*interviews: minimum 3-4
*notes: include headline, dateline and byline.

This article will be written about a newsworthy aspect of an event that will be announced in class. You will be expected to develop an idea, pitch it to the class to receive feedback, and then attend the event to get the interviews you need. This assignment will enhance your creative ability to “see” smaller stories within large events, research your idea(s), and target potential interview subjects. Conducting interviews at the event will also be effective interviewing practice and allow you to “get out there” and talk to people. This assignment is designed to be both fun and educational!

Assignment #3: Skills One - Press Briefing (Due Friday June 28)

*word count: 450-500
*interviews: none
*notes: include headline, dateline and byline.

This assignment simulates a press briefing and will test your ability to listen carefully and isolate important statements, while taking fast and accurate notes. After the briefing is over, you will compile the information and quotes you gathered into a news story and submit it before the end of the day. We will complete most of this assignment in class.

Assignment #4: Public Records Assignment (Due Friday July 12)

*word count: two pages double spaced
*interviews: none
*notes: this assignment is not a news story but a short guided research paper

Before writing effective stories about the city council or crime/court, a reporter must know how to access public documents to gather facts like names, addresses, pending charges, previous legal trouble, etc. It is imperative students leave this class with the ability to utilize these sources in their own stories. This assignment is designed to familiarize students with various official sources of information that are public record. We will complete most of this assignment in class.
Assignment #5: City Council Meeting (Due July 16 @ midnight)

*word count: 550+
*interviews: minimum 3
*notes: include headline, dateline, byline and documentation page

Covering public meetings is a routine, but not glamorous, part of being a journalist. This assignment will require students to utilize the City Council meeting agenda posted a few days before the meeting to identify potential news stories and research them enough to attend the meeting with the ability to gather relevant information and ask informed questions. This story is on deadline, and will be due at midnight after the meeting.

Assignment #6: Crime/Courts (Due July 26)

*word count: 800-1000
*interviews: minimum 4
*notes: include headline, dateline, byline, documentation page

This story will be in-depth coverage of a current or ongoing issue relating to crime, cops, or the courts. Students will be expected to do a considerable amount of research, utilizing public records as needed, to develop a newsworthy story relevant to a local audience. In-class practice of research techniques to find and explore potential stories will greatly help students through the process.

Assignment #7: Feature Story (Due August 4)

*word count: 800+
*interviews: minimum 5
*notes: include headline, dateline, byline, documentation page.

The feature story has unique characteristics that differ from the hard news topics that compose the bulk of work in this class. Instead of focusing on facts/events, feature stories often move at a slower pace that allows the incorporation of details that help convey emotion or environmental characteristics. Features tend to have strong leads, rely heavily on interviews, and emphasize human interest topics. Although it is recommended you write about something that interests you, avoid topics too close to your own personal experience to avoid potential bias.
The Iowa Dozen

In this class we will learn the following principles that form the foundational concepts of our school of journalism, called the “Iowa Dozen.”

We will learn:

1. to write correctly and clearly
2. to conduct research and gather information responsibly
3. to edit and evaluate carefully
4. to use media technologies thoughtfully
5. to apply statistical concepts appropriately

We will value:

6. First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups
7. a diverse global community
8. creativity and independence
9. truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity

We will explore:

10. mass communication theories and concepts
11. media institutions and practices
12. the role of media in shaping cultures.

Administrative Details

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 Academic Policies Handbook at http://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook.

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, k.11).
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.

Academic Honesty
All CLAS students have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

CLAS Final Examination Policies
The final examination schedule for each class is announced around the fifth week of the semester by the Registrar. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the dates and times of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit with the instructor (and the course supervisor), and then with the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

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 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. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Department of Public Safety website.

DEO Information: Before July 1: David Perlmutter (E305 – Front Office)

After July 1: Julie Andsager (E305 – Front Office)
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| **Week 1** | June 11-14 | **Course Introduction & Reporting Basics**  
  1. Introduction and Course Overview  
  2. JRW Basics (structure, content, AP style, vocab.)  
  3. What is news? |
| **Week 2** | June 17-21 | **Interviewing**  
  1. Guest Lecture (s) & additional multimedia time  
  2. Interview/Reaction Story Due Friday June 21st at 5:00PM in ICON dropbox |
| **Week 3** | June 24-28 | **Covering Events on deadline**  
  1. Interviewing techniques, preparation  
  2. Leads, leads, leads!  
  3. Event Story (Due Sunday June 26th at 5:00PM in ICON dropbox) |
| **Week 4** | July 1-5 | **Course Introduction**  
  1. Effective note taking and accurate quoting  
  2. Quoting vs. paraphrasing  
  3. (In class)Press Briefing Due Friday June 28th at 5:00PM in ICON dropbox |
| **Week 5** | July 8-12 | **Public Records**  
  1. Iowa public records primer  
  2. Using official sources in news stories  
  3. (In class) Public Records Assignment Due Friday July 12th at 5:00PM in ICON dropbox |
| Week 6 | July 15-19 | **Public Meeting**  
3. Investigative Reporting  
4. Pitch Crime/Courts story & feature story  
5. Iowa City City Council Meeting Assignment Due July 16th at midnight in ICON dropbox |
|--------|------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 7 | July 22-26 | **Beat Reporting: Crime/Courts**  
1. Covering beats & developing sources  
2. Media ethics  
3. Crime/Courts Assignment Due July 26th at 5PM in ICON dropbox |
| Week 8 | July 29-August 2 | **Feature Writing**  
1. The future of journalism/economics of news  
2. Discuss & workshop drafts  
3. Feature Assignment Due August 4th at 5PM in ICON dropbox |