Journalistic Reporting and Writing

JMC: 2010:0AAA/ 019:098:AAA

Fall 2013

Weekly lecture for all sections: Monday 9:30 a.m. to 10:20 a.m. 101 BCSB

Weekly section meeting: All sections meet in Adler W336

Section 001: Natalia Mielczarek 10:30 a.m. to 1:20 p.m. Mondays
Section 002: Christina Smith 1:30 to 4:20 p.m. Mondays
Section 003: Natalia Mielczarek 9:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. Tuesdays
Section 004: Christina Smith 12:30 to 3:20 p.m. Tuesdays
Section 005: Professor Gigi Durham 3:30 to 6:20 p.m. Tuesdays

Contact for lead instructor:
Lisa Rose Weaver, coordinator: W311 Adler Journalism Building
Office phone: 319-335-3415 or voice/text: 319-333-9966
lisa-weaver@uiowa.edu

Office hours:
Lisa Rose Weaver: Mondays, Wednesdays 10:30 to 1:30 or by appointment.

Interim Director Contact:
Dr. Julie Andsager
W329 AJB
Julie-andsager@uiowa.edu
Office phone: 319-335-3428

Course Overview:

Journalistic Reporting and Writing (JMC: 2010/019:098) teaches the basics of the journalistic mindset, which includes an understanding of what defines news as opposed to other information, and the basic professional practices critical to journalism.

This is a 4-credit course with two components: The Monday lectures meet each week in 101 BCSB from 9:30 a.m. to 10:20 a.m. The lecture provides an overview of enduring questions and issues in journalism as well as current ethical problems that arise in the coverage of news.

The weekly section schedule for each instructor is listed above. All sections meet in W336. In your sections you will practice the conventions of lead writing, story structure, interviewing and
clear writing. The content of the weekly lecture and the skills you will practice in your section are designed to prepare you for the major assignments.

Consistent attendance for both the Monday lecture and your section is required in order to get full attendance credit. You may not make up section exercises and activities after the section has met if you did not attend. This class will require a significant time commitment in order to succeed, and you should expect to spend at least six hours a week on this course apart from time spent in class. Although section time may sometimes be allocated to allow you to work on assignments, you should not expect to complete the six main assignments during the sections.

**Course Objectives:**

- You will learn to apply news values to identify topics with enough impact to constitute news.
- You will develop a basic understanding of news media ethics
- You will apply the basics of reporting.
- You will apply the basics of journalistic writing

**Journalistic Reporting and Writing and Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling co-requisite:**

The multimedia co-requisite is designed to introduce you to the basics of presenting journalism in different mediums, and distinguishing the best mediums to serve different types of stories. Employers now assume that entry-level journalists will have multimedia skills and are able to utilize them along with basic reporting, writing and AP style.

In order to better coordinate Journalistic Reporting and Writing with Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling, four of the assignments share the same reporting topic and interview sources across both courses. This means that while the topic, approach and some sources may be the same, what you produce for each course will be distinct in medium and format. These assignments are graded separately, per the requirements of each course. See the individual assignment descriptions at the end of the syllabus for details.

**Required Texts:**

*The Associated Press Stylebook 2013*. On order at the University Bookstore, and cross-listed under both JMC: 2010:0AAA/019:098 Reporting and Writing and JMC: 2020:0AAA/019:088 Multimedia. This is the reference book of record for the professional news industry in the United States. You will be expected to consult it frequently and learn the AP Style basics for all the written assignments in Reporting and Writing as well as Multimedia.
Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method, 7th Edition  You have the option of renting or buying this text directly from the publisher (Wadsworth, Cengage Learning). Instructions for how to do this will be provided the first two Monday lectures, as well as through email via ICON.

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.

A weekly news quiz will be given at the start of the Monday lecture, based on the front page of The New York Times and The Daily Iowan from the preceding week, Monday through Friday. (Weekend papers not included) The first news quiz will be given in the third week, September 9th. The quiz is evidence of your attendance at the Monday lecture. Only with advance email notice to your section instructor will you be allowed to take the quiz if you miss the Monday lecture. You need to provide your section instructor with a valid reason.

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 Monday lecture. Assigned for Monday Lecture appears under assigned readings for those weeks when you need to read material for the Monday lecture. All assigned readings (other than the daily newspapers) are either posted in the content area of ICON for this course, or are in your assigned texts.

A note on section activities: This syllabus designates recommended activities for your sections. Important exercises to prepare you for major assignments will be used in common across all the sections. However your section instructors are authorized to have you do exercises that may vary from what is listed here. You may not make up section exercises and activities after the section has met if you did not attend.

Plagiarism: In the real world of journalism, plagiarism will get you fired. In this course, documented proof of plagiarism with intent will get you a zero for the assignment to which it applies. Note this is not a failing grade of 59 points or below. It is zero. Documented proof includes finding several paragraphs or a significant portion of a story published elsewhere; falsified interview sources and/or quotes; other evidence of falsified reporting. Furthermore, we as instructors are required to report plagiarism, supported by documentation, to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Collaboration: Collaboration among students is not allowed on the major assignments. Students are expected to work independently on these assignments. Of course, there may be overlap in the topic or sources if more than one student are covering the same story or meeting or event. However, the reporting, use of quotes, and writing should be distinct. Clear cases of sharing information will be interpreted as a failure to follow directions and may affect the assignment’s grade.

Collaboration is encouraged for some of the group in-section activities.
**Writing Resources:** This course is designed to teach journalistic writing, but we assume you already have basic grasp of grammatical writing coming into this course. Students having trouble with basic writing are encouraged to use the Writing Assistance Center in the Adler Journalism Building Resource Center, on the 3rd floor.

**SJMC Resource Center and Writing Assistance**

http://clas.uiowa.edu/sjmc/resources/sjmc-resource-center

**Final Exam:**

This class does not meet during finals week for a written final exam. Instead, your final feature for this course and the final multimedia package for Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling will be due during finals week. Exact date TBD pending the finals schedule.

**Week 1: Introduction**

**Monday Lecture 8.26 (Wk1PPT)**

Introduction to the course. Include instructions for buying or renting the main text direct from publisher.

**Sections:**

- Section instructors introduce themselves, review syllabus and ICON.
- Review buying or renting the main text.
- Explain Assignment #1 First-Person Story.
- Suggest reading, discussing in class Covering the 21 Debate as an example of a newspaper’s function in a community.
- Also discuss Measuring News Values.
- News Values Exercise based on the Measuring News Values document

**Week 2: What is News**

**Monday 9.2  University Holiday No Lecture and No Sections 1 and 2**

**Sections:**

- Note that the Monday, Sept. 6th lecture as well as sections 1 and 2 will not meet because of the national holiday. The first assignment is due a week later later for those sections. (See below)
• Sections 3, 4 and 5 will meet as scheduled. Be sure to repeat explanation of Assignment #1 First-Person story.
• What To Lead With (Exercise focused on story and interest, less on mechanics)
• Leads: Lead drills. Start with Dispute/Mail/Drive, having students rank the order of importance of facts in a story. Then continue as per instructors in weeks 2 and 3. See ICON exercises.

Assignment #1 First Person story due dates (Joint assignment with Multimedia Personalizing the e-portfolio)
  Sections 3, 4 and 5: Due Friday Sept. 6th  8:00 p.m.
  Sections 1 and 2: Due Friday Sept. 13th  8:00 p.m.

Week 3: Verification, Objectivity and Intro to Leads

Assigned Reading:
Blur Chapter 3 Assigned for Monday Lecture (ICON)

Monday lecture 9.9
Verification discussion based on reading, followed by discussion of tone and objectivity across the different types of journalism.

Sections 1 and 2
• Be sure to repeat explanation of Assignment #1 First Person Story.
• What To Lead With (Exercise focused on story and interest, less on mechanics)
• Leads: Lead drills. Start with Dispute/Mail/Drive, having students rank the order of importance of facts in a story. Then continue as per instructors in weeks 2 and 3. See ICON exercises.

Assignment #1 First Person story: Sections 1 and 2: Due Friday Sept. 13th  8:00 p.m.

Week 4: Lead Types

Assigned Reading:
WRN Ch. 2 The Basic News Story. Read the chapter by the time your section meets.

Monday lecture 9.16 Leads.
Pyramid or hard news summary lead, Bottom-up editing (Wk4LeadsPPT)
  • Exercise: AP hard news and feature leads on the same story. TBD
• Suggest exercises at end of WRN Ch. 2 The Basic News Story. Stick to lead exercises 1 through 4 (or choice therein). Avoid quotes & attribution ex. 5; that’s for week 6.
• AP Guide to News Writing Ch. 3 and AP Guide Newswriting Exercise. (ICON)

Assignment #2 Event Story is due Friday, Sept. 20th 5:00 p.m.

Week 5: Basic Interviewing, Reaction Story

Assigned Reading:
• AP Stylebook, punctuation section, under quotation marks
• Review WRN Ch. 2 pp. 38-42 to review quotes.

Monday lecture 9.23 The reaction story and basic interviewing. (Wk5Reax,BasicIntPPT)

Sections:
• Assigned reading is designed to have students review quote format: suggest brief review in section.
• Have the class look at and discuss Quotes good and Bad and Quotes Attribution. (ICON)
• This serves as a jumping off point for good quote selection for Skills I: Each section will view a video clip of a press conference. Resources to be provided instructors in advance. Students will file exercise in ICON digital drop box during section. (Allow 1 hr 30 minutes to complete Skills I)

Skills I: Begin and finish in section

Week 6: News Conferences, Quoting

Assigned Reading:
WRN Ch. 7 Leads and Nut Graphs. Read start of chapter to pg. 134 (Stop at soft leads) Be prepared to do timed exercises in section based on the chapter.

Monday lecture 9.30 Guest TBD mock presser.
• Sections 1 and 2 write up their presser stories in section after the lecture.
• Sections 3, 4 and 5 have until 8 p.m. Monday to file, and then bring copies to section.
Sections

- Re-hash the best quotes of the mock presser during section
- Exercise: Choosing direct quotes or paraphrase.
- Review WRN Ch. 2 exercise 5: quotes and attribution. Discuss in class.
- Review WRN Ch. 7 exercise 7: similar attribution exercise
- Choose other exercises from WRN Ch. 7 or other material

Reminder: If you plan on doing the Shoe Box Exercise for week 7, instruct students what they need to bring to class.

Assignment #3 Interview/Reaction story due Friday, October 4th at 8:00 p.m. (Joint assignment with Multimedia Audio Story)

Week 7: Working with Sources

Assigned Reading:
WRN Ch. 7 Pg. 134 to end, soft leads.

Monday Lecture 10.7  Guest lecture: TBD

Sections:

1. Do the Shoe Box Exercise or prepare for following week
2. Do the Good Time Gals exercise in section. Time to 30 minutes.
3. Alternatively WRN Ch. 7 ex 8, 9 and 10 (or selection) in section.
4. Other activities are up to instructors

Week 8: Covering Meetings

Assigned Reading:
WRN Chapter 18 Speeches, News Conferences and Meetings. Read the chapter by the time your section meets.

Monday lecture 10.14  Covering Meetings, Approaching Sources and Questioning with Intent (Wk8QuestionIntentPPT)

Sections:

- Quiz based on WRN Chapter 18. (Instructors select from question bank. Choose 5 questions, assign 2 points each for a total of 10 points.)
• Look at the City Council meeting agenda for the scheduled October 15th meeting, as well as the document packet if there is one. Identify items with likely news value and discuss why.
• See the City Council Online Exercise link and devise an in-section exercise. Suggest identifying the relative news value of agenda items and then having the students write a story. Link is in ICON as well as below.


Note: The City Council is a recommended, but not required, public meeting. Students who do not cover the meeting are expected to find an appropriate government meeting no later than the end of week nine (Friday, Oct. 25th) You need to tell your section instructor in advance when the meeting is scheduled, and what type of meeting it is. Then the assignment must be filed three hours after the end of the meeting. Acceptable meetings include the Coralville or University Heights City Council, Johnson County, or UI Student Government. Student organizations other than student government such as clubs, Greek Life or other non-governmental meetings are not acceptable.

Assignment #4: City Council Due by midnight on Tuesday, Oct. 14th. Other government meeting stories are due within three hours after the end of the meeting. Friday, Oct. 25th 5 p.m. is the very latest that this assignment will be accepted.

Week 9: Beat and/or Crime Reporting

Monday lecture 10.21 Guest lecture: local journalist TBD. Focus on using the public record.

Sections:
• Skills II: Public Record Exercise. (Complete in section or by 8 p.m. the same day)
• Explain the exercise and the choices for Skills II: (In ICON)
• All section instructors use the same assignment guideline. The goal is for the students to complete the exercise in section, but you can extend it to 8 p.m. the same day.

Week 10: The Investigative Mindset

Monday lecture 10.28 Homeless Man investigative interactive (Handout)
Sections:

- **Preliminary story pitch for the Crime/Courts/Cops assignment.** Students prepare a 2-3 paragraph written pitch detailing what the story idea is, who is impacted and what types of sources are planned. Use the time in section to pitch, revise, or abandon the ideas based on instructor and student peer comments. *This takes at least 1.5 hours or up to 2.*
- Read and discuss features in ICON (soft leads I, II or re-write bad features)
- Map the Story activity
- Alternatively, active writing and redundancy lessons in ICON (under writing, grammar)
- Or choose exercises from WRN Ch. 9 Story Forms

**Week 11: Features**

**Monday lecture 11.4** Defining the interest & Feature Leads (Wk11FeaturesPPT) Natalia Mielczarek guest lecture.

Sections:

- **Formal Story progress report for Crime/Courts/Cops due in section.** This is a more researched version of the story pitch from the previous week, and ideally you are well into your background research and have begun preliminary reporting. If you needed to change your topic, by now it should be changed! The progress report includes:
  
  - One to two paragraphs summarizing the story, including impact.
  - A separate paragraph or series of bullet points summarizing which interviews you have done and how they contribute to your story, which interviews remain, and what background research, including the public record, you have done.

Instructors may decide whether to respond to progress report during section or later via ICON giving individual comments on the report.

**Week 12: Intro to Media Ethics**

**Monday lecture 11.11** News Media Ethics. (Wk12EthicsPPT) Read and discuss *You Be the Judge.* (Hard copy handout in lecture)

Sections:

- **Preliminary pitch for Feature Assignment #7.** Suggest Map the Story Have students work in teams of 2 to 3, and spend time in section researching and mapping out possible story branches. File in ICON during section, discuss.
- Choose from ICON week 12 Ethics to discuss in section
Assignment #5 Crime/Courts/Cops due Friday, Nov. 15th, 8:00 p.m. (Joint assignment with Multimedia Data Visualization)

Week 13: Freedom of Information in the Age of Intelligence

Monday lecture 11.18 Revealing state secrets or government missteps?

Sections:

- **Formal story pitch for Feature Assignment #7** is due by the time your section meets. The pitch should include the following.
  
  1. One to two paragraphs summarizing the story, including impact, what the news values are and why this is a story.
  2. A separate paragraph or series of bullet points summarizing which interviews you have done and how they contribute to your story, which interviews remain, and what background research, including the public record, you have done.

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 14: News Industry Economics, Trends

Monday lecture 12.2 Newspaper industry losses, newsroom cutbacks, impact on international news coverage and new business models.

Sections:

- **In-class workshop for the first draft of Assignment #7 Feature**. This should take close to the entire section time. Have everyone bring two hard copies of their draft, one for you and another for a classmate who will make suggestions. Teams of 2 to 3 students take turns editing each other’s drafts, focusing on the lead and nut paragraph. They should have questions for each other. There may be time to begin revisions.
Week 15: Final Week

Monday lecture 12.9  Final Lecture. Career advice, student surveys, etc.

Sections:

- Open section for working on Feature Assignment, one-on-one with instructors, etc. Attendance still counts!

**Assignment #6 Feature due date TBD pending finals schedule.** *(Joint assignment with final Multimedia package)*

Assignments: Detailed Descriptions

**Assignment #1 First-person story:** From 500 to 550 words. No interviews or quotes.

The purpose of this assignment is to get used to the idea of starting a story at the most interesting part, and maintaining focus throughout on facts that support or back up the beginning of your story. Your story should have a lead paragraph that engages the reader. One way to do this is to expand on the “About Me” section of your personalized multimedia blog by describing a watershed life event that had an impact on you. **Do not write the story of your life chronologically;** instead start with that watershed event or circumstance. Summarize the impact, relevance or importance of the event in a lead, then use the rest of the story to fill in the details of how the event happened. Use detail in your writing. Convey impact. Describe how you and others reacted, how you felt, etc. You can paraphrase what people said at the time, but don’t use quotation marks, as you will not be interviewing anyone for this assignment. This is the only assignment for which you may write in the first person.

**First-Person Story Due:**

- Sections 1 and 2: Friday Sept. 13th 8 p.m.
- Sections 3, 4 and 5: Friday Sept. 6th 8 p.m.

**Assignment #2: Event Story:** From 500 to 600 words. A minimum of three interviews. Includes a headline, dateline and byline.

Use a hard news summary, or pyramid lead, to cover the event that you live blogged for multimedia. Cover the “who, what, where, when and why” of the event in the lead paragraph or
paragraphs. Unlike the live blog, this requires not using a chronological approach. Instead, start with a summary of what was most important, including impact or outcome. At about the third or fourth paragraph, you should include some background about the event or the organization hosting it, its purpose, etc. Everything else follows in descending order of importance. An editor should be able to chop the last few paragraphs without changing the basic understanding of the event. (Bottom-up editing).

**Event Story Due Friday Sept. 20th 5 p.m.**

**Skills I: Accurate Quoting.** From 400 to 500 words. Includes several quotes from the material provided. Includes a headline, dateline and byline.

This is an exercise in accurate quoting, which includes the accuracy of the words spoken as well as proper quotation format. It is also an exercise in deciding which material is better paraphrased than quoted. Your material will come from a video press briefing that you will watch in your section. You only need to quote the person giving the press briefing. Don’t direct quote the questions that the journalists ask; instead construct a paraphrase that makes clear what the question was without spelling it out.

*For example:* //Jones gave no explanation when asked why the minutes of the meeting were not made public, instead saying that premature publicity would derail the investigation. //

Use a hard news summary lead of the most important quote or idea expressed at the briefing. Take care to attribute every statement, whether it’s a direct quote or a paraphrase. As with the event story, assume bottom-up editing.

**Skills I: Accurate Quoting** due in section

**Assignment #3: Interview Reaction Story** From 500 to 550 words. A minimum of four interviews. Includes a headline, dateline and byline.

The purpose of this assignment is to write a story on the same topic as your multimedia expert audio interview story. You may use the expert interview for both Multimedia and Reporting & Writing, but for R&W you also need three additional interviews. This means a total of four different sources. All of your sources, expert and otherwise, are reacting to the same topic or event. Your first step is to think about a recent issue or event that has been covered in news media, has news value, and about which you can find both an expert as well as others to comment. The lead can be a summary of reactions or a focus on one reaction.
Make sure to have a nut paragraph referring to what event or issue people are reacting to, and why we are reading the story. Include in this any relevant detail or background that the quotes do not provide. You may collect background on the issue from other news sources, but please include a list of the sources and links at the end.

Interview Reaction Story Due Friday, Oct. 4th 8 p.m.

Assignment #4: City Council or other government meeting story: From 500 to 550 words. A minimum of three sources for quotes or paraphrased comments. Includes a headline, dateline and byline.

This is your initiation into covering a public meeting, applying the skills of differentiating strong direct quotes from material that is better paraphrased. Use a hard news summary lead, being sure to get impact either in the lead paragraph or soon thereafter. An example of impact is how members voted, and on what issues. Use relevant quotes from the meeting itself, or from interviews that you do with people after the meeting. Avoid chronology! You are reporting, not repeating. Lead with what has the most impact, or at least potential impact, on the community. Time in your sections will be allocated to do look at the meeting agenda and familiarize yourselves with the city councilors. A copy of the City Council meeting agenda will be available on the City of Iowa City website a few days beforehand.) http://www.icgov.org/

City Council Story due Tuesday, Oct. 14th midnight

Other government meeting stories are due within three hours after the end of the meeting. Friday, Oct. 25th 5 p.m. is the very latest that this assignment will be accepted.

Skills II: Using the public record. From 400 to 500 words depending on selection. The purpose of this exercise is to find examples of the public record and describe how your examples would contribute to a story. (You are not writing a story based on the public record). This is a preparation for the type of research you will need to do for the Cops/Crime/Courts assignment. Section instructors will provide you with a worksheet of choices from which to choose.

Skills II: Using the Public Record is due in section or by 8 p.m. the same day as section

Assignment #5: Cops/Crime/Courts 700 to 900 words. A minimum of four interviews. Includes headline, dateline and byline. *Includes documentation page* (See pg. 15 below)

Crime/Courts/Cops due Friday, Nov. 15th, 8 p.m.
**Crime/Courts/Cops Planning:** This story may revolve around a current or historical crime incident; a broader crime topic or issue; some aspect of the law enforcement/courts/criminal justice system; or another relevant focus, subject to your instructor’s approval.

Starting with the resource links on ICON, look for police/crime/courts items or topics that puzzle or intrigue you, e.g., news that raises questions in your mind, incidents that suggest patterns, information that poses problems or challenges, or national issues that play out locally. In consultation with your instructor and classmates, determine a potential focus and line of inquiry that will result in a detailed news story, an examination of a larger issue, or both.

Your story is due by the end of week 12, so ideally you should complete your research and most of the reporting by week 11 so that you have time for drafting, filling in reporting gaps, revising, editing, etc.

The preliminary story pitch and formal progress report for this assignment is crucial, and is calculated as part of the assignment grade. See week 11 and 12 for descriptions of what this entails.

**Reporting:** You are getting into complex territory, and need to accomplish the following:

- Define (and continue to refine) your topic in the preliminary pitch and formal progress report.
- Research and read other news stories and features that may help you develop both content and format.
- Acquire further knowledge through journal and Web searches, consulting experts, etc., that will help you understand the subject matter.
- Identify original sources and do background reporting to build your story, using documents, interviews and investigation to establish facts, reconstruct key events, and grasp the context and background of the story.

**Assignment #6: Feature Story** 700 to 900 words. A minimum of five interviews. Includes headline, dateline and byline. *Includes documentation* page. (See pg. 15 below)

**Deadline:** TBD pending finals schedule

**Feature Story Planning:** For this assignment you will write a feature story on the topic of your choice. Possible approaches include finding a local angle to a regional or national story, or
developing an enterprise feature with no particular news hook. One thing all approaches have in common is that the topic must be something with potential impact on a community, whether that’s students or the broader community beyond the University. From the time you begin to plan and pitch the story, be prepared to describe the news value. Avoid topics too close to your personal experience; the point is to delve into something new, not to stay within your circumstantial comfort zone. Avoid interviewing your friends and roommates, or stories that rely heavily on quoting people you already know. Your instructors will discourage topics with news values that are limited to an event. Student groups and Greek activities are generally event based, and often these stories simply lack impact and news values to a wider audience.

Use a soft or delayed lead for the feature. There must be context in the form of a nut graph, not to exclude background and context in other parts of the story.

Qualities of a Feature Story

• Feature stories are descriptive and full of detail.

• Feature stories generally have a strong narrative (storytelling) line.

• Feature stories have a strong lead that grabs readers and makes them want to read on.

• Feature stories often depend on interviews.

• Feature stories include quotations from the person(s) involved.

* Documentation Page: (Assignments #5 and #6) At the end of your story, provide a documentation page including:

1. A reporting log listing what you did when, being sure to include the dates. This includes research about the topic, talking to people you don’t quote, as well as the dates for reporting and interviewing.

2. Full names and titles (if applicable), phone numbers and email addresses of all sources interviewed for the story. Even if you speak to someone in person, get the phone numbers and emails.

3. A list of documents, resources, and other news reports that you used. Be sure to title these if you are including a link with a URL address. All links must have a title or description for full credit.
COURSE GRADE ALLOCATION

1. The six main reporting and writing assignments are 10% each, for a total of 60% of the final grade.

2. Skills I and II: Each are worth 5% of the total grade. Total 10%.

3. Weekly news quizzes = 15% of total grade

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

5. 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 six 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

Instructors may use their own grading rubrics, or one that I provide. Below is a general description of what constitutes various grades.

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:** (Zero or 0 grade) 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.

**Deadline policy:** No extensions will be given unless you have truly extenuating circumstances. In these cases, you must speak with your section instructor before the assignment is due to make an arrangement. Assignments turned in late without an approved extension will be marked down a letter grade for every day late. (Plus and minus grades count as a single letter, so A – is one letter grade, B+ is another letter grade, etc.)

At the five-day mark or later, the assignment will earn a zero.

**Grading scale for major assignments and for the final grade***

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*This scale does not assume that in all cases an instructor must round up a letter grade for the final course grade. In cases where the percentage falls short of the higher letter grade by less than five-tenths of a percent, the decision to round up rests with the instructor, who will consider other aspects of the student’s performance and demonstrated effort in the class. There is no such grade as an A+ for this course.*
The Iowa Dozen

In this class we will learn the following principles, which—when spelled out—become the “Iowa Dozen.”

We will learn: (bold indicates the principles most relevant to this course)

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 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 or students taking classes offered by CLAS 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 by the Registrar generally by the tenth day of classes. 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 date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar's web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

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.