Journalistic Reporting and Writing

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

Spring 2013

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

Weekly section meeting:

Section 001: John Carpenter  Monday 10:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. W236 AJB
Section 002: Lisa Weaver  Monday 12:30 to 2:20 p.m. W236 AJB
Section 003: Natalia Mielczarek  Tuesday 9:30 to 11:20 a.m. W236 AJB
Section 004: John Haman  Tuesday 1:30 to 3:20 p.m. W236 AJB
Section 005: Christina Smith  Tuesday 3:30 to 5:20 p.m. W236 AJB

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

Office hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays 9 a.m. to noon, or by appointment

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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 3-credit course with two components: the weekly Monday lectures meet in 101 BCSB from 9:30 a.m. to 10:20 a.m., and provide 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 W236. In your sections you will practice the conventions of lead writing, story structure, interviewing and clear writing for a variety of news story styles. The content of the weekly lecture and the skills you will practice in your section are designed to prepare you for the assignments in this class.
specifically, as well as subsequent courses you will take at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication more generally.

Consistent attendance for both the weekly lecture and your section is required in order to get full attendance credit, as well as credit for in-section exercises. This class will require a significant time commitment in order to succeed. To succeed, you should expect to spend a minimum of six hours a week on this course, in addition to time spent in class. It is not a reasonable expectation that you will complete your assignments during the sections.

Course Objectives:

- You will learn to apply news values to identify topics with enough impact and import 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 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 learn.

In order to better coordinate Journalistic Reporting and Writing with Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling, five of the main assignments share the same reporting topic and some interview sources. This means that while the topic, approach and some sources are the same, what you produce for each course will be distinct in medium and format. The particular requirements differ for each course, and the effort and time

Required Texts:

*The Associated Press Stylebook 2012*. On order at the University Bookstore, and cross listed both under JMC: 2010:0AAA/019:098 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 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 2011 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.

A weekly news quiz will be given at the start of the Monday lecture, based on front page of The New York Times and The Daily Iowan from the preceding week. The quiz is evidence of your attendance at the Monday lecture, which is mandatory to receive full credit for attendance across the lecture and the section. Only in special circumstances and with advance notice to your section instructor will you be allowed to take the quiz if you miss the Monday lecture.

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 posted in the content area of ICON for this course, arranged by week to correspond with the syllabus. 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 section instructor.

The deadlines for the major assignments are indicated on the schedule part of the syllabus, as well as listed in the Assignments: Deadlines at a Glance section. Your instructors may change the deadline, but will only make it due later that posted here, not earlier.

A note on section activities: Your section instructor’s activities and exercises may vary somewhat from the syllabus.

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:

There is no final exam for either the Monday lecture or for your section, so there is no test during finals week. As such, the last assignment is due during the last week of class.
Week 1: Introduction (week of January 21)

Sections: Note that the Monday, Jan. 21st lecture as well as sections 1 and 2 will not meet because of the national holiday. In consideration of this, the first assignment is a few days later for those sections. (See below)

Sections 3, 4 and 5 will meet as scheduled. Section instructors introduce themselves, review the syllabus, show the ICON site and discuss assignment #1. Time allowing, read and discuss Covering the 21 Debate, as an example of the function of news media. Discuss Measuring News Values.

**Assignment #1 due dates:**
- Sections 3, 4 and 5: Due Friday Feb. 1st 5:00 p.m.
- Sections 1 and 2: Due Monday Feb. 4th 5:00 p.m.

Week 2: What is News

Monday lecture 1/28  Course Introduction, What is News lecture. (Wk1PPT)

Sections: (1 and 2) Section instructors introduce themselves, review syllabus and ICON. **Explain and assign 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.

Sections 3, 4 and 5 begin basic lead writing exercises. (Refer to exercises in ICON week 3)

Week 3: Verification, Objectivity and Intro to Leads

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

Monday lecture 2/4  Verification discussion based on reading. Then tone and objectivity across the different types of journalism.
Sections: Lead drills both week 3 and 4. Start with Dispute/Mail/Drive, having students rank the order of importance of facts in a story. Then use Week 3 exercises in ICON as you like during section in weeks 3 and 4.

Sections 1 and 2 do basic lead writing drills. (Dispute/Mail/Drive, Short Leads, AP Guide Newswriting Exercise.) Assertion, attribution exercise in section TBD.

Week 4: More Leads

Assigned Reading: WRN Ch. 3 The Basic News Story (ICON) Read the chapter by the time your section meets.

Monday lecture 2/11 Leads. Pyramid or hard news summary lead, Bottom-up editing (Wk4LeadsPPT)

Suggest exercises using WRN Ch. 3 The Basic News Story exercises at end of chapter, and/or AP Guide to News Writing Ch. 3 and AP Guide Newswriting Exercise. Note lead exercises posted in Week 3 may be used this week and into Week 4.

#2 Event Story is due the week of 2/11 or of 2/18. No later than Friday, Feb. 22 5:00 p.m.

Week 5: Basic Interviewing, Reaction Story

Assigned Reading: AP Stylebook, punctuation section, under quotation marks AND WRN Ch. 3 pp. 50-55 to review quotes.

Monday lecture 2/18 The reaction story and basic interviewing. (Wk5Reax,BasicIntPPT)

Sections: Skills I: do in section. Have the class look at and discuss Quotes good and Bad and Quotes Attribution. 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. (Assigned reading is designed to have students review quote format: no need to review in section)

**Assignment #3 Skills I: Begin and finish in section this week.**

### Week 6: News Conferences, Quoting

**Assigned Reading:**
WRN Ch. 8 Leads and Nut Graphs (ICON) Read pp. 131 to 144 of the chapter, including the convergence coach section. Do exercises 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 and have them filed in ICON by the time your section meets.

**Monday lecture 2/25** Guest TBD or lecture on news conferences, and deciding whether to direct quote or paraphrase.

**Sections:** Review WRN Ch. 8 assigned exercises (briefly). Do the Good Time Gals exercise in section. Time and grade.

**Assignment #4 Interview/Reaction story due Friday, March 1st at 5:00 p.m.**

### Week 7: Covering Meetings

**Assigned Reading:**
WRN Chapter 20 Speeches, News Conferences and Meetings (ICON) Read the chapter by the time your section meets. Don’t do the exercises, but be prepared for a short quiz in section based on the reading.

**Monday lecture 3/4** Covering Meetings, Approaching Sources and Questioning with Intent (Wk7QuestionIntentPPT)

**Sections:** Short quiz based on WRN Chapter 20. Use as a point of departure for looking at the Iowa City City Council meeting agenda for the scheduled March 5th meeting, as well as the document packet if any. Time allowing, take a look at the Covering Public Meeting in ICON links and devise an in-section exercise.
**Note:** Iowa City City Council is a recommended, but not required, public meeting. Students who do not cover the meeting are expected to find, on their own, an appropriate government meeting. You need to tell your section instructor what you will cover and when the meeting will occur. Then the assignment must be filed three hours after the end of the meeting. Acceptable meetings include the Coralville or University Heights City Councils, Johnson County, or UI Student Government. Student organizations *other* than student government, clubs, Greek Life or other non-governmental meetings are not acceptable.

**Week 8: Working with Sources**

*Assigned Reading:*
WRN Ch. 8 Pg. 145 to end, soft leads. Do exercises 8, 9 and 10 and have it loaded in ICON by the time your section meets.

**Monday Lecture 3/11**  Guest lecture: TBD or alternate topic

**Sections:** Begin work on feature leads. Suggest review WRN Ch. 8 section on feature/soft leads and nut graphs. Use the rest of the section to do the Shoe Box Exercise (assign preparation in advance for interviewing in section). Other approaches as per instructors.

**Assignment #5 Government Meeting. Last possible filing time is Friday, March 15th, 5:00 p.m.**

**SPRING BREAK**

**Week 9: Beat and/or Crime Reporting**

**Monday lecture 3/25**  Guest lecture: local journalist TBD. Focus on using the public record.

**Sections:**  **Skills II: Public Record Exercise.** All section instructors use the same assignment guideline. Instructors give some time in section this week, making the deadline for the completed exercise

**Skills II: Due Friday March 29th by 5:00 p.m.**
Week 10: Investigative Journalism

Monday lecture 4/1  Steve Berry lecture

Sections: Suggest 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.

Week 11: Features

Monday lecture 4/8  Defining the interest: Features (Wk11FeaturesPPT)

Sections: 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: Media Ethics

Monday lecture 4/15  News Media Ethics. (Wk12EthicsPPT) Read and discuss You Be the Judge. (Hard copy handout in lecture)
Section: Skills work or activities relevant to Crime/Cops/Court assignment. TBD.

Assignment #6 Crime/Courts/Cops due Friday, April 19th, 5:00 p.m.

Week 13: Economics of the News Industry

Monday lecture 4/22   Newspaper industry losses, newsroom cutbacks, impact on international news coverage and new business models. Alternate flip with week 14.

Sections: Looking ahead to Feature Assignment: Suggest Map the Story exercise and/or Features re-writes/discussion. 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 with names of all team members.

Alternate: Feature story field trip: Pairs go to areas of campus or downtown to find a story. Each student in the pair must have their own 3-4 paragraphs written and filed in ICON by 5:00 p.m. the same day. Then the following week in section, each group gives a short oral report on why it’s a story in terms of impact, who is it affects, audience interest, etc.

Discuss WRN Ch. 10 story structure, including the Wall Street Journal method, in the first few pages of the chapter. Otherwise, show and discuss One in 8 Million: New York Times audio slideshows. Alternate activities as per instructors.

Week 14: Public Relations and News Media

Monday lecture 4/29    Guest lecture TBD. How news training is relevant to a career in strategic communication. Alternate flip with week 13.

Sections: In-class workshop for the first draft of Assignment #7 Feature. This generally takes the entire section time. Teams of 2 to 3 students take turns editing each other’s drafts, focusing on the lead and nut paragraph
Week 15: Final Week

Monday lecture 5/6  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 #7 Feature at the end of the final exam slot allocated for this course, TBD.

Assignments: Deadlines at a Glance.

#1 First-person story. This is a story focused on what got you interested in your multimedia site blogroll topics, or an elaboration on the “about me” narrative on your site.

Sections 3, 4 and 5: Due Friday Feb. 1st 5:00 p.m.
Sections 1 and 2: Due Monday Feb. 4th 5:00 p.m.

#2 Event story. This is a write up of the Live Blog event in the multimedia class. The write-up for this class is due 72 hours after the event you cover for multimedia. Exact due date depends on live blog event schedule. (Week of 2/11 or week of 2/18. No later than Friday, Feb. 22 5:00 p.m.)

#3 (Skills I) Quoting, paraphrasing and attribution exercise. No overlap with multimedia. Do in section either week of 2/18 using a press briefing that instructors will provide during section.

#4 Interview/reaction story on the same topic or issue as the expert interview you conduct for the multimedia audio story, with additional sources. Includes documentation page ** Due Friday March 1st 5:00 p.m.

#5 City Council or other government meeting story. Due three hours after the meeting you cover. At the very latest, it’s due before Spring Break, or Friday March 15th at 5:00 p.m. But that assumes you covered a Friday afternoon public meeting. Strongly suggest covering the Tuesday, March 5th Iowa City City Council meeting in order to avoid a conflict with the multimedia audio
slideshow. If you cover the City Council, it’s due by midnight, March 5th in ICON digital drop box.

Students who do not cover the City Council meeting are expected to find, on their own, an appropriate government meeting. You need to tell your section instructor what you will cover and when the meeting will occur. Then the assignment must be filed three hours after the end of the meeting. Acceptable meetings include the Coralville or University Heights City Councils, Johnson County, or UI Student Government. Student organizations other than student government, clubs, Greek Life or other non-governmental meetings are not acceptable.

#3 (Skills II) Using the public record exercise. All section instructors use the same assignment guideline. Instructors give some time in section during the week of 3/25, making the deadline for the completed exercise Friday March 29th by 5:00 p.m.

#6 Crime/Courts/Cops story. Due Friday April 19th 5:00 p.m. Public record documents you use for this assignment should also be a part of your IDV multimedia assignment. Includes documentation page.

#7 Feature on a choice of topics. This may share reporting and sources with the final multimedia package. The feature for this class is due by the end of our scheduled exam time, TBD. Includes documentation page.

* Due dates are subject to change, but will only be due later, not earlier, than posted here.

** Documentation means a research page, included at the end of your story, listing whom you interviewed and the date, full name and title if relevant, email address and phone contact. Also list the website hyperlinks for news media stories, government websites and other sources of background information. All hyperlinks must have titles to receive full credit.
Assignments: Detailed Descriptions

Assignment #1 First-person story: 500 to 550 words. No interviews.

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. You will do this by writing a lead as the first paragraph. Choose the moment or circumstances that led you to become interested in the topic of your blogroll for one event in your life that stands out and start with that. Alternately, expand on the “about me” section of your 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.

Assignment #2: Event story: 500 to 600 words. Minimum 3 interviews. Include 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). There are some elements of this story that may not be in your live blog, such as quotes from interviews and background information. Of your three sources for quotes, two may be the same quotes as in the live blog. The third is an interview that does not appear in the live blog. You are encouraged to interview someone before or after the live blogging event. If not, get a reliable contact like a cell phone number (not just email) and conduct the interview later.

Assignment #3: Skills I Accurate quoting. 450 to 500 words. Include 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. //</p>

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.

**Assignment #4: Interview Reaction Story** 500 to 600 words. Minimum four interviews. Include headline, dateline and byline.

The purpose of this assignment is to do a story on the same topic as your multimedia expert audio interview story. You may use the expert interview in common across both assignments, but for this course you also need three new interviews, or sources. All of your interviewees are reacting to the same topic or event that is the focus of the expert. Your first step is to think about a recent issue or event that has been covered recently in news media, and about which you can find both an expert as well as others to comment. The Social Security tax increase is a good example, because you can find an expert as well as people to react. Something more obscure like a recent discovery in high-level mathematics might not work as well; while you can find the expert who wrote the study, it may be hard to find people to react to it in a meaningful way. 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 research this using other news media sources.

**Assignment #5: City Council or other government meeting story:** 550 to 600 words. Minimum three sources for quotes or paraphrased comments. Include 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/](http://www.icgov.org/)

Suggest covering the Tuesday, March 5th Iowa City City Council Meeting. That way you can have this assignment done well before your multimedia Audio Slideshow is due in Week 8.

**Assignment # 3 (Skills II) Using the public record.** The purpose of this exercise is to continue on the idea of using a public record such as a meeting agenda or material, mainly as 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.

**Assignment #6: Cops/Crime/Courts** 800 to 1,000 words. Minimum 4 interviews. Includes headline, dateline and byline.

**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 you’ll want to complete your research and reporting by week 11 at the latest so that you have time for drafting, filling in reporting gaps, revising, editing, etc.

Notify your section instructor of your topic (and any backups) by e-mail, drop box and/or other method as set by your instructor as early as possible. Provide details of your research and reporting plans: How will you inform yourself about key information and issues, whom will you interview, what problems might you anticipate, etc.?

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

(a) Define (and continue to refine) your topic;
(b) Research and read other news stories and features that may help you develop both content and format.

(c) Acquire further knowledge through journal and Web searches, consulting experts, etc., that will help you understand the subject matter.

(d) Identify original sources and do local background reporting to build your story, using documents, interviews and investigation to establish facts, reconstruct key events, grasp the context and background of the story, place specific incidents in a broader framework, etc.

**DOCUMENTATION:** Along with your article, provide a documentation page including:

- A reporting log listing what you did when
- A list of phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses of everyone interviewed for the story
- A list of key documents and other resources and references used.

**Assignment #7:** Feature 600 to 800 words. *Minimum 5 interviews.* Includes headline, dateline and byline.

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. Avoid topics too close to your personal experience; the point is to delve into something new, not to stay within your circumstantial comfort zone. Beware of interviewing your friends and roommates. Your instructors will discourage Dance Marathon and other Greek activities or charities, not based on an anti-Greek bias but because far too often these stories end up being essentially promotional in nature and narrowly focused around events with limited impact.

Use Soft or delayed lead. There must be context in the form of a *nut graph*, not to exclude background and context in other parts of the story. This is not a profile.
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.

• Feature stories combine facts and opinion*, with a focus on the human interest side of the story. While they can report news, the news content is not of primary importance. *Opinion expressed by the people you are interviewing, not your own.

• Feature stories both educate and entertain. They can include colorful detail as well as humor.

• Feature stories can be organized in a variety of ways (i.e., chronologically if relevant, or in narrative fashion).

• Feature stories often put the “meat” on the “skeletal bones” of a news story.

COURSE GRADE ALLOCATION

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

2. Skills I and Skills II: are each 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 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

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: 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.

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

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>94 and above</td>
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*This scale does not assume rounding up or down for the final course grade. In cases where the percentage falls short by less than five-tenths of a percent, the decision to round up to a higher grade rests with the instructor, who will consider other aspects of the student’s performance and demonstrated effort it the class.
The Iowa Dozen

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