Journalistic Reporting and Writing (JMC:2010:0AAA)  
Fall 2017  
W151 Pappajohn Business Building (PBB)  
9:30-10:20 a.m. Monday

Instructor: Lillian Zier Martell  
Email: lillian-martell@uiowa.edu  
Phone: 319-335-5961

Office location and hours: W343 AJB 1:30-2:30 p.m. Monday, variable hours between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Friday, and by appointment  
SJMC DEO: David Ryfe, david-ryfe@uiowa.edu Office: E305 AJB, Phone: 335-3486

Discussion sections and instructors:  
0A01: Lillian Martell, 10:30 a.m.-1:20 p.m. Monday, W336 AJB  
0A02: Shawn Harmsen, 10:30 a.m.-1:20 p.m. Monday, W340 AJB  
0A03: Christopher Clough-Hunter 9:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Tuesday, W336 AJB  
0A04: Christopher Clough-Hunter 12:30 p.m.-3:20 p.m. Tuesday, W336 AJB

Course catalog description: “Students examine and practice journalistic reporting and writing. Course format includes one lecture and one lab session each week. Students complete both in-class and out-of-class reporting and writing assignments. Out-of-class assignments include covering campus and city events, as well as reporting and writing enterprise stories. Grades are based on performance and student initiative. This course is required of all journalism majors.”

Further description: The lecture will introduce students to journalism concepts that they will apply through in-class assignments in their lab sections and major out-of-class assignments. Lectures and assignments are designed to prepare students for careers in any field of communication and establish a strong basis for more advanced work in the journalism major. An emphasis will be placed on learning to write with clarity, brevity and accuracy along with collecting reliable, compelling information through interviews and research.

Journalistic Reporting and Writing is a four credit hour course and is a co-requisite with Introduction to Multimedia Storytelling (JMC:2020:0AAA). Although the co-requisite courses share some of the reporting and sources, the expectations and grading are separate and distinct.

Required reading:  
- The New York Times  
- The Daily Iowan  
- Other readings assigned throughout the session.

The textbook is available at the University of Iowa Bookstore. Students must acquire the 12th edition. It will be used regularly as supplemental material to the lectures and for exercises in the
sections. The textbook will be used extensively for graded assignments, and students who do not purchase it will find it difficult to complete these assignments, which will negatively affect their grades.

Students also will need the Associated Press Stylebook, which may be purchased in print, or the online version may be used. Students also will have access to a shared online account for the AP Stylebook at http://purl.lib.uiowa.edu/APstylebook.

Students have full online access to The New York Times by registering at nytimes.com/passes. Passes are renewable every 24 hours.

SJMC Learning Outcomes

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified particular learning outcomes that every student should obtain by the time they earn a JMC degree. We regularly assess the curriculum to determine whether students are achieving these outcomes. This course contributes to these learning outcomes by helping you develop the abilities to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media messages across multiple media domains and to communicate effectively with the highest, professionally-accepted standards in all work. Achieving these outcomes means:

- You will demonstrate an ability to anticipate and recognize ethical issues when they arise and to reason through them taking multiple perspectives and contexts into account.
- You will demonstrate knowledge of the basic tenets of media literacy and how media literacy relates to your personal media habits and professional development.
- You will develop critical thinking skills to analyze and interpret media messages through an understanding of media practices and institutions.
- You will learn how to create and disseminate media messages in various forms.
- You will demonstrate the ability to gather factual story elements, and to evaluate and express them in logical, narrative forms for multiple media and audiences.
- You will display the ability to access and analyze data, report facts accurately, research and edit information responsibly and in a manner commensurate with professional standards.
- You will demonstrate the ability to apply above concepts in a manner that is sensitive to audiences across all media.

Course-specific objectives:

By the end of this course students will demonstrate:

- The ability to use journalistic techniques in writing.
- The ability to communicate effectively.
- The ability to research and gather information.
- An understanding of the elements of news.
- An understanding of the basic ethical and professional standards of journalism.
- An appreciation for journalism’s role in democracy and society in general.
- An ability to meet deadlines.
**Course requirements:** All assignments, quizzes and exams are designed to support the learning objectives listed above.

- Students will complete five major writing assignments that are worth a total of 600 points: a single-person interview story worth 50 points, an event story worth 75 points, an interview/reaction piece worth 125 points, a public affairs story worth 150 points and a final feature story worth 200 points. Rubrics will be used to grade each of these assignments. Students will post each assignment to a WordPress site and will not receive a grade until the work has been posted.

- News quizzes worth 10 points each will be given at the beginning of the 13 lecture sessions after the first week. The lowest score will be dropped. Students will receive five points for taking the quiz and one point for each correct answer on five news questions each week. In other words, students receive five points each week for attending the lectures and signing their names to the quizzes as a way to reward attendance.
  The news quizzes will be given promptly at 9:30 a.m. Students who arrive late cannot make up the quiz but can still receive attendance points by turning in their names on a card to the Teaching Assistants until 9:40 a.m. After that time, the students cannot turn in their names and will not receive attendance points. The Teaching Assistants will take note of those who leave early, and they will not receive attendance points for that date.
  The five news questions will measure students’ involvement in monitoring the news, a habit they should cultivate diligently as communications practitioners and participants in or observers of a democracy. The news quizzes are worth a total of 120 points.

- Students will complete 13 in-class exercises and quizzes in the discussion sections. Of these, 10 exercises are worth 10 points each and three are worth 20 points for a total of 160 points from in-class work. Exercises are done in class so that students can receive help from the instructors and maximize the opportunity to build professional-level writing skills. Students who rush through in-class exercises without accepting instruction or advice should not expect to receive full credit if their work does not meet professional standards.

- The section leaders will grant up to five points for participation at each section meeting. Students will receive a minimum of one point for being on time and staying the entire session. The section leaders will award the remaining four points based on students’ participation in discussions and practice exercises. The practice exercises will be turned in but will not be graded individually; the section leaders will assign participation points based on the level of effort demonstrated in the exercises. These exercises will help students understand the concepts covered in the lectures and will improve their performance on the in-class and out-of-class graded assignments.
  During some section meetings, discussion will be emphasized. Students who do not participate will not receive credit. Students who are the most active in the discussions will receive full credit.
  The total for participation/attendance at section meeting is 70 points.

- Two lecture review quizzes worth 25 points each will be given. The total for lecture review quizzes will be 50 points.

**Summary of points:**

Major assignments: 600 points (60 percent)
News quizzes/lecture attendance: 120 points (12 percent)
Section in-class assignments: 160 points (16 percent)
Section attendance/participation: 70 points (7 percent)
Lecture review quizzes: 50 points (5 percent)
Total: 1,000 points

Academic honesty and grading: Professional communication is fact-based. Aside from selected mock assignments given by the instructors, students’ work will be original and factual. The instructors may randomly check sources used by students to ensure the sources were contacted and quoted accurately. Plagiarism and fabrication are treated with the utmost seriousness in professional workplaces and will be regarded the same way for this course. Any student who plagiarizes or fabricates information will receive a “zero” on the assignment and will be reported to the college for further disciplinary action. See the paragraph on Academic Honesty in the last section of the syllabus for further information. In addition, collaboration is not permitted unless instructors give specific assignments that require teamwork. In situations where students are covering the same event or issue, they must work independently and may not share notes, recordings, or any other material or information related to that assignment. Students who engage in collaboration will receive a “zero” on the assignment.

Students will turn in a log for each major assignment. The log will include the time, date and place of all interviews; contact information including email addresses and phone numbers for all people interviewed; and a bibliography and website addresses for all research used. Students also must produce all notes or recordings upon request. Students must not interview relatives or friends, and instructors may randomly check with sources to inquire about their relationship to the student journalist. The use of relatives or friends as sources is considered an unethical conflict of interest in the field of journalism and will reflect negatively on the student’s grade for that assignment.

Missed assignment policy: In-class assignments, quizzes and so forth cannot be made up unless the student is attending a University-excused activity or provides a doctor’s note verifying illness. The instructors will not repeat lecture information or in-class announcements. Students who must be absent should arrange to get lecture and discussion notes from classmates. When students are absent for excused activities that are scheduled in advance, they must turn in assignments before the deadlines. Students who provide verification of illness may be allowed an extension without penalty until the Monday that follows the deadline. For students who miss discussion sections with an excused absence, the instructors may allow up to one week for students to take quizzes or turn in exercises. Students should be aware that absences will not be excused for minor illnesses, internships, job duties, etc. Excused absences will be rare, so plan accordingly. Participation points for missed sections can only be made up for excused absences as noted above and not for personal schedule conflicts.

The ability to meet deadlines is a critical skill in the communications industry and will be strictly enforced in this class. Students will begin losing points immediately after missing the assignment deadline and will lose a full letter grade for each 24-hour period that the assignment is turned in late. After five days, the assignment will not be accepted and the student will receive
a “zero” on that assignment. Students are responsible for checking to make sure their assignments have been turned in. Technology failures, mistakes or lack of access to Wi-Fi cannot be used as an excuse for missed deadlines.

Students will not be allowed to make up the news quizzes given during the lectures for any reason as they are allowed to drop the lowest score.

Grading:

A = 93 percent to 100 percent
A- = 90 to 92 percent
B+ = 87 percent to 89 percent
B = 83 percent to 86 percent
B- = 80 percent to 82 percent
C+ = 77 percent to 79 percent
C = 73 percent to 76 percent
C- = 70 percent to 72 percent
D = 60 percent to 69 percent
F = 59 percent and below

Percentages will be rounded to the nearest whole number when grades are assigned at the end of the semester.

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General expectations

- Read assigned chapters before the lectures.
- Be prepared to do mountains of writing. In the discussion sections, you will participate in exercises that will build your skills and help you succeed on the major writing assignments. The vast majority of your work on the major assignments will take place outside class time. For a four-credit hour course, students should expect to spend at least eight hours a week working outside class.
- Be prepared to share assignments with others in class. Professional writing is public and subject to scrutiny. Get accustomed to this.
- Do not interview relatives or friends for assignments. Professional communicators must talk with a diverse range of people in a wide variety of situations. Start to develop these skills now.
- Likewise, do not rely on email, texting or other forms of electronic communication for interviews. In-person or, secondly, telephone interviews remain the best methods of obtaining fresh, first-hand information.
- Good writers are voracious readers. Set aside at least 30 minutes a day to read news stories. Along with the New York Times, the Des Moines Register and the Daily Iowan, try Time magazine (time.com), cnn.com and npr.org among others.
- Turn off cell phones, laptops and other electronic devices during lectures. Students who violate this policy may be asked to turn in their devices until the end of the class period.
Electronic devices may be used during the discussion sections when permitted by the instructors for classroom work only.

- Take notes. Aside from eliminating the temptation to be distracted by the latest app, turning off your electronics forces you to hone the skill of note-taking. You might not believe this, but technology can fail and often does at the most inconvenient times. Good notes are an acceptable back-up to produce written journalism.
- Do record interviews and take notes, even for stories intended only for print. The equipment checkout procedure is posted on ICON.
- Check ICON and campus email before each class period for announcements or last-minute schedule changes. Chrome is the recommended browser for ICON.

**Tentative course schedule:** The instructor may extend discussion of certain topics if needed for the students’ benefit, or interject discussion of high-profile breaking news stories if they occur during the semester. Check ICON before each class period for assignment updates.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 21-22</td>
<td>The current state of journalism and the elements of news. Read Chapters 1 and 2 in the text before the lecture.</td>
<td>-- Review the syllabus in detail. -- Analyze news values of current stories in print and online. -- Go over the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics (Appendix 3 in the text). -- Textbook chapter review</td>
<td>The first major assignment for this class requires students to do an in-depth interview. Students should identify someone who is not a relative or friend that they can interview at length. Students must get approval from their section leader for the person they plan to interview. <strong>No graded assignment this week, but section leaders will begin assigning participation points.</strong></td>
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<td>Aug. 28-29</td>
<td>Interviewing. Read Chapters 3 and 4 in the text before the lecture.</td>
<td>-- Introduce AP Stylebook. -- Discuss expectations for the one-person interview due Friday, Sept. 15. Get approval for the interview by noon on Friday, Sept. 8. -- Textbook chapter review and news story analysis. -- Exercises on developing questions for sources, writing direct quotes and paraphrasing. -- Peer interviews</td>
<td>In-class exercise for a grade: Description of what is newsworthy about your classmate and lead paragraphs of a story about your classmate.</td>
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<td>Sept. 4</td>
<td><strong>Labor Day: No JRW lecture, no JRW section meetings</strong></td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Weekly Activities</td>
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| Sept. 11-12 | Newswriting style and the inverted pyramid. Read Chapter 8 in the text before the lecture. | -- Review peer interviews  
-- Textbook chapter review  
-- Analyze current news stories written in inverted pyramid style.  
-- Work on inverted pyramid exercises.  
In-class exercise for a grade: inverted pyramid leads  
Pitch for the interview/reaction story due by noon, Friday, Sept. 15.  
**One-person interview story due by 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15.** |
| Sept. 18-19 | Feature leads and narrative writing. Read Chapters 9 and 10 in the text. | -- Review highs and lows from the one-person interview stories.  
-- Review last week’s in-class exercise.  
-- Textbook chapter review and current news story analysis.  
-- Ungraded exercises in preparation for the graded exercise.  
In-class exercise for a grade: Writing a feature lead and nut graf. |
| Sept. 25-26 | Writing for digital media. Read Chapter 11 in the text. | -- Review last week’s in-class assignment.  
-- Discuss the event story due Oct. 27.  
-- Textbook chapter review and current news story analysis.  
-- Ungraded exercises in preparation for the graded exercise.  
In-class assignment: Writing professionally for social media. |
| Oct. 2-3   | Sources and online research.               | -- Review last week’s graded assignment.  
-- Textbook chapter review  
-- Ungraded exercise analyzing a website in preparation for the graded exercise.  
In-class exercise for a grade: website analysis. |
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>In-class Exercise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 9-10</td>
<td>Refining your writing and self-editing.</td>
<td>-- Lecture review quiz 1 covering lectures through Oct. 2.</td>
<td>In-class exercise for a grade: editing for grammar, style, brevity and clarity. <strong>Interview/reaction story due by 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 13.</strong></td>
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<td>Review portions of Chapter 9 in the text.</td>
<td>-- Textbook chapter review</td>
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<td>Read Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 in the text.</td>
<td>-- Ungraded exercises in preparation for graded exercise.</td>
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<td>Oct. 16-17</td>
<td>Journalism and Public Relations.</td>
<td>-- Review the highs and lows of the interview/reaction stories.</td>
<td>In-class exercise for grade: news release (20 points)</td>
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<td>Read Chapter 18 in the text before the lecture.</td>
<td>-- Review last week's in-class exercise.</td>
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<td>-- Review expectations for the public affairs story due Friday, Nov. 17.</td>
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<td>-- Practice responding professionally to social media comments.</td>
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<td>-- Write practice news release.</td>
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<td>Oct. 23-24</td>
<td>Public affairs reporting and investigative journalism. Reach Chapters 16 and 17 in the text before the lecture.</td>
<td>-- Review last week’s in-class exercise.</td>
<td><strong>Event story due at 8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 27.</strong></td>
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<td>-- Textbook chapter review and current news story analysis.</td>
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<td>-- Discussion of the role of journalism in U.S. democracy, business and culture. Verbal participation will be required to earn full participation points for this section meeting.</td>
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<td>Oct. 30-31</td>
<td>Reporting with numbers. Read Chapter 7 in the text.</td>
<td>-- Review highs and lows of the event stories.</td>
<td>In-class assignment for grade: Writing with numbers.</td>
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<td>-- Textbook chapter review and current news story analysis.</td>
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<td>-- Exercises in preparation for in-class assignment.</td>
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<td>Nov. 6-7</td>
<td>Speeches, meetings and news conferences. Read Chapter 14 in the text.</td>
<td>-- Review expectations for final story due during finals week. Advise them that most of the reporting for their final stories should be finished before the week of Dec. 4 so that students can participate in peer editing during that week’s sections. -- Review last week’s in-class assignment. -- Textbook chapter review and current news story analysis.</td>
<td>In-class assignment: Inverted pyramid style lead and supporting paragraphs covering a speech.</td>
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<td>Nov. 13-14</td>
<td>Writing for radio and television. Read Chapter 12 in the Bender text before lecture.</td>
<td>-- Lecture review quiz covering Oct. 9 through Nov. 6. -- Textbook chapter review and current news story analysis -- Radio and TV script practice exercise -- Advise students that the law and ethics quiz Nov. 27-28 will be based on the chapters and the lecture, and they will take the quiz at the end of their section meetings. -- Exercises in preparation for the graded in-class assignment.</td>
<td>Radio and TV script exercise for grade. Work will be done during the discussion section. (20 points) <strong>Public affairs story due at 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 17.</strong></td>
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<td>Nov. 20-21</td>
<td>No class, no section meetings</td>
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<td>Nov. 27-28</td>
<td>Legal and ethical issues in news gathering. Read Chapters 19 and 20 in the text.</td>
<td>-- Exchange and read TV scripts aloud to the class. -- Remind students that they must bring materials to next week’s section meetings to receive points for the in-class assignment. They are encouraged to bring a rough draft of the top part of their stories. -- Discuss legal and ethical issues and share concerns students may have encountered. Verbal participation will be emphasized to earn participation points for today.</td>
<td>20-point quiz to be given at the end of the section meetings over the law and ethics lecture and chapters.</td>
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<td>Dec. 4-5</td>
<td>Semester wrap-up and review of key elements needed to succeed on the final story. Read story samples posted to ICON before the lecture.</td>
<td>-- Students should have substantial portions of the reporting completed before the section meetings and bring their materials.</td>
<td>In-class graded assignment: Work with peer editor on the lead and supporting paragraphs of the final story. Students are encouraged to bring a rough draft of their leads and supporting paragraphs. By the end of the section meeting, students will submit the first few paragraphs of the final story and notes summarizing their comments and edits of their peer’s story.</td>
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<td>-Finals</td>
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<td>Final feature story. Due date: TBD</td>
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### Major and Joint Assignments for MMS and JRW*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>MMS assignments</th>
<th>JRW assignments</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
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<td>One interview story</td>
<td>8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
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<td>Data story</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td><strong>Audio story</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interview/reaction story</strong></td>
<td>8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 13</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
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<td>Photo</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td><strong>Photo Story</strong></td>
<td><strong>Event story</strong></td>
<td>8 p.m. Friday, Oct. 27</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td><strong>Video</strong></td>
<td><strong>Public affairs story</strong></td>
<td>8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 17</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
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<td>Finals</td>
<td><strong>Final MM package</strong></td>
<td><strong>Final story (deadline may differ from MMS)</strong></td>
<td>TBD</td>
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*Highlighted assignments are joint assignments between Multimedia Storytelling and Journalistic Reporting and Writing, which means they rely on the same reporting but produce distinct outcomes for each class.
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 https://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
The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/ for information.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University's Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, diversity@uiowa.edu, or visit diversity.uiowa.edu.

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 fifth week 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 Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator 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.