

Journalism 110: Writing, Reporting and Ethics I

SATURDAYS 12 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

CSU NORTHRIDGE, FALL 2014

ROOM MZ 211

Office Hours and Instructor Contact Information



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Course overview: What is J110 all about?

This course is designed to teach you the fundamentals of news writing and reporting.

You will have an opportunity to learn and put into practice the essential skills of journalism, such as information gathering, note taking, interviewing, news writing, ethics and news judgment.

Due to the hands-on nature of the class, you will be expected to do a substantial amount of work outside of class to complete your writing assignments successfully and on time.

You will also have in-class exercises, quizzes, lectures and group discussions.

Journalists often have to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines. As aspiring reporters you will be expected to do the same by turning in your

Your full participation is critical to getting the most out of this class.

assignments on time and attending every class session.

This class meets only once a week and we have a

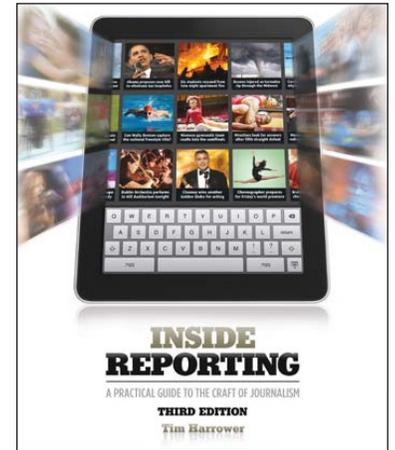
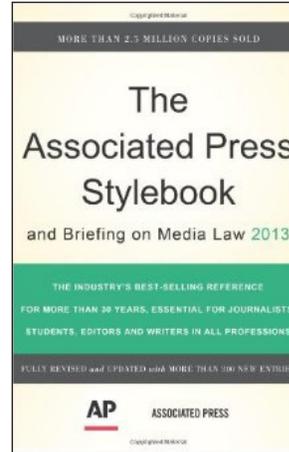
lot of ground to cover in a short span of time. Therefore, your full participation is critical to getting the most out of this class.

Journalism 110 student learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of JOUR 110:

- Students will know how to identify good news stories and sources.
- Students will be able to write news and feature stories, profiles and obituaries.

REQUIRED READING: TEXTS AND NEWS



- *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism, Third Edition*, by Tim Harrower
- *The Associated Press Stylebook* (a recent edition)
- *The New York Times* (daily)
- *BBC World News Online* (daily)

Attendance rules and class preparation



If you are absent, you will not be able to make up missed in-class exercises and quizzes.

If you cannot make it to class due to a medical issue or a family emergency, you should notify the instructor prior to the start of class.

You are expected to come to class fully prepared. This entails doing your reading and writing assignments, studying for quizzes and staying current with the latest news in *The New York Times* and on *BBC World News*.

Attendance is mandatory and constitutes a part of your final grade in this class.

Attendance will be recorded at the start of every class.

You are expected to arrive on time and remain in class for the duration of the session.

You must bring your textbook and the AP style book to class every week.

Program Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to report and write for diverse publics, using proper grammar and punctuation, word usage and spelling, sentence and storytelling structures across multiple journalistic formats.
- Students will be able to gather and analyze information, including basic numerical concepts, using reporting techniques, such as interviewing, observation, and researching primary and secondary sources.
- Students will be able to think critically, creatively and independently.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- Students will apply tools and technologies appropriate for the news media professions in which they work to communicate for and with diverse publics.
- Students will be able to understand and apply the historical, theoretical, legal and societal contexts for producing and consuming news media for consumers, ranging from local to global publics.

For more information about the Journalism Program and its mission, visit the Journalism Department web site at <http://www.csun.edu/mike-curb-arts-media-communication/journalism>

Course Assignments: News stories, activities and quizzes

News and feature stories

You will be writing the following four stories out of class:

- A one-source profile feature
- A campus speech news story
- A public meeting news story (e.g. Associated Students proceeding)
- An issues-based news story

Detailed instructions for each assignment will be discussed in class. All stories must be submitted at the beginning of class on the assigned due date. All stories must be printed on regular copy paper, in Times New Roman 12pt font and double-spaced. Stories will not be accepted by email. Every assignment should have your name, class number, date and word count in the top-left corner of the first page.

Stories containing gross factual errors will be automatically marked down to a “C” before any additional deductions are made for other errors. Gross factual errors include misspelled names, incorrect dates and figures, and other factual inaccuracies that significantly alter the meaning of a story. Excessive misspellings and grammatical errors will also impact your grade.

You must turn in your raw notes and/or recordings for every story, along with the names of all quoted sources and a way to reach them by phone or email. Occasionally the instructor will randomly choose to contact a source to confirm whether a student has interviewed him or her. Friends, family members, neighbors or co-workers cannot be used as sources.

In-class activities

Each week you will be doing in-class writing assignments and/or activities. In-class work cannot be made up. All in-class writing assignments will be due at the end of class. These assignments and activities will count toward your final grade, so attendance is critical.

Quizzes

There will be a total of 10 in-class quizzes on the week’s assigned readings, current news events and the AP style. You will know about the quizzes ahead of time. Students cannot make up missed quizzes.

Final exam

There will be a final exam on Dec. 13 from 12:45 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. Additional details will be discussed in class.

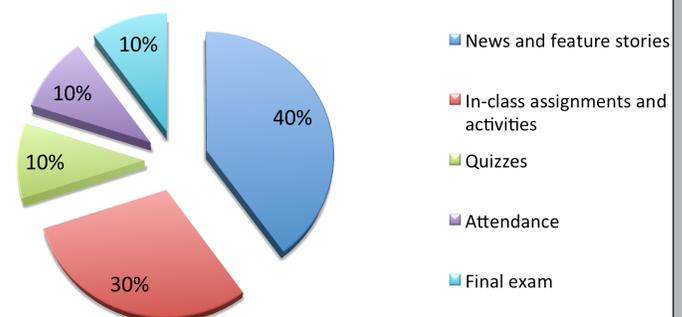
Grading policies: Grade breakdown, scale and class prerequisites

Grades will be assigned using the “+” and “-” system on the A-F scale.

The approximate course grading structure is shown in the figure to the right, but might vary slightly.

See **Grading**, Next Page

J110 grade components



Grading policies (continued)

The grade breakdown:

| | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------------|
| +94%= A | 89-87%= B+ | 79-77%= C+ | 69-67%= D+ | 59% and below= F |
| 93-90%= A- | 86-83%= B | 76-74%= C | 66-64%= D | |
| | 82-80%= B- | 73-70%= C- | 63-60%= D- | |

To move on to JOUR 210, JOUR 310 and/or JOUR 315, you must pass JOUR 110 with a “C” or better. A grade of “C-” does not meet the pre-requisite. See the Journalism Department Major Requirements handout for details on other courses with prerequisites.



Newsies selling newspapers in saloons and stores. Public Domain, Library of Congress

Late Assignments

All out-of-class assignments that are turned in late will incur an automatic penalty of one grade level for every day they are past due, up to a maximum of one week, in addition to any deductions for gross factual errors and/or other errors. For instance, if a “B” paper is turned in four days late, it will receive a grade of “C-”. Assignments that are late more than one week, or missing, will receive a failing grade.

Students who receive a grade of “D+” or lower on an out-of-class writing assignment can rewrite their story within one week to improve the score up to the highest possible grade of “C+”.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

The Journalism Department is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity.

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone caught cheating will receive a failing grade in the class and will be reported to the University for possible further disciplinary action.

For a further explanation of the behavior defined as cheating, and a more detailed discussion of disciplinary procedures, consult the CSUN Academic Catalog, available online.

Please also remember that much of the information posted on the Internet is protected by U. S. copyright laws. Passing this information off as your own is a violation of CSUN’s plagiarism policy, and carries the penalties outlined above.

Class conduct and other considerations

Cultural Diversity

Students in this course are strongly encouraged to broaden their journalistic experiences, with the instructor’s help, by including in their work people and subjects such as ethnic, racial and religious minorities; the elderly, disabled and poor; gay men and lesbians; and other similar groups. The intent is to ensure that student work reflects the diversity of the community.

Respect

You are expected to treat your classmates and the instructor with respect. All viewpoints are welcomed during class discussions but inappropriate and derogatory language will not be tolerated. Please avoid monopolizing the attention of the class during group discussions and keep your comments on point so that everyone has an opportunity to voice his or her opinions.

Phones, Computers and Other Devices

Please turn off your phone when you enter the classroom and refrain from using it during class.

Tablets, laptops, lab computers and all other devices should remain locked or turned off during class unless you are taking notes or working on an in-class assignment.

Using electronic devices to check social media during class time is not acceptable. Ringing phones, texting and the use of electronic devices at inappropriate times is distracting to you and your peers, and is disrespectful of the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

Students who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Disability Resources and Educational Services, which is located in Bayramian Hall, Room 110. Contact: (818) 677-2684



Creative Commons photo courtesy Jeff Werner on Flickr <https://flic.kr/p/4iBkJQ>

J110 Class Schedule

| | |
|----------|---|
| Aug. 23 | Introduction: Course and syllabus overview; What is news; State of the media and the future of journalism; |
| Aug. 30 | Labor Day – no class Read Chapter 2 |
| Sept. 6 | News leads and nut graphs; The inverted pyramid; AP Style Read Chapter 3 |
| Sept. 13 | Interviewing, observation and note-taking Read Chapter 4, pp. 68-85 |
| Sept. 20 | Storytelling and profiles Read Chapter 6, pp. 116-125 |
| Sept. 27 | Sources of information, attribution and story ideas ***Profile story due*** |
| Oct. 4 | Beat reporting: disasters and crime Read Chapter 5 |
| Oct. 11 | Beat reporting (cont'd): speeches, meetings and press conferences |
| Oct. 18 | Investigative reporting, opinions, reviews and editorials Read Chapter 6, pp. 126-137 ***Campus Speech news story due*** |
| Oct. 25 | Media law: accuracy and libel Read Chapter 7, pp. 140-147 |
| Nov. 1 | Journalistic ethics Read Chapter 7, pp. 148-155 |
| Nov. 8 | Digital journalism Read Chapter 8 ***Public Meeting news story due*** |
| Nov. 15 | Math for journalists and diversity in news coverage Read Chapter 4, pp. 86-91 |
| Nov. 22 | PR, broadcast journalism and media jobs Read Chapters 9 and 10 |
| Nov. 29 | Thanksgiving Recess - no class |
| Dec. 6 | Semester review ***Issues-based news story due*** |
| Dec. 13 | Final Exam |

Note: This syllabus is subject to updates and changes at professor's discretion.

Syllabus Appendix

Pre-submission story assignment checklist

This checklist is a tool designed to assist you in making sure each of your stories is properly formatted and edited, and is ready for submission to the instructor. The use of this tool is completely voluntary, but highly desirable to ensure you get the best possible grade on all of your assignments. Once you've reviewed each of the checklist items, simply put a check mark or an "X" in a corresponding box.

| Check list items | One-source Profile feature | Campus Speech news story | Public Meeting news story | Issues-based news story |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Your name, date, class number and word count are on the first page, top left corner | | | | |
| Pages are numbered | | | | |
| Times New Roman 12pt font | | | | |
| Double-spaced & first sentence of each paragraph indented 2 spaces from the left | | | | |
| All names, dates and facts double-checked | | | | |
| Grammar checked | | | | |
| Spelling checked | | | | |
| Punctuation checked | | | | |
| AP Style checked | | | | |
| Raw notes/interviews/recordings attached | | | | |
| Sources' contact info included | | | | |
| Printed on regular copy paper, 1-inch margins | | | | |
| Stapled in the top left corner | | | | |