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MORAVIAN COLLEGE
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

LINC 101 O
Fall 2014
Journalism 101

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This course will focus on the skills required for creating non-fiction narrative journalism, with an emphasis on long-form stories. We will examine the essential tools needed for accurate and engaging narrative storytelling, from reporting to researching to interviewing to sourcing to writing.

Goals

- * Students will be able to write analytic essays on various examples of journalism
- * Students will be able to research a topic for a final paper which will demonstrate skills in both journalism and academic paper-writing.
- * Students will be able to write a research paper that will be both academic and journalistic
- * Students will be able to freely debate and discuss current topics in class, backing up their assertions with intellectual rigor.
- * Students will be able to find sites on the internet which will cater to their interests in current events.

Assignments

There will be several assignments. We will read works of journalism out of class, and you will be asked to write about them in class. There will be infrequent out of classroom writing assignments. Each student will produce a multi-modal review of a feature story from a national magazine. This will entail a "report" on the story done by any mode but the written word (song, poem, artwork, etc. We will discuss). There will be a midterm exam: a take-home essay based on the first half of the term: What makes for a good non-

fiction story? The final exam will be an original reported article about a subject for which the writer has some passion. (We will discuss.)

Regular grammar reviews -- readings in the Yagoda book -- will be assigned. They are not indicated on this syllabus. They'll be used as brush-ups when necessary.

Assignments are due as indicated below. Please note that unless a mutually agreeable revised due date is negotiated with the instructor, any late assignment will lose percentage points for each calendar day it is late, and any assignment not submitted within two weeks of the due date will receive a "0." It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment or for a course.

Grading guidelines

Grades will be determined by mutual decision between instructor and students, based on attendance, effort, class participation, completion of assignments and overall effort.

The rubric:

Effort in class 25%
Writings in class 25%
Out-of-class readings 15%
Attendance 10%
Research paper 20%
Extracurricular activities 5%

Attendance...

...is crucial. If you are going to miss a session, you must e-mail me at richmondp@moravian.edu to explain. When an absence is unavoidable, a written response to the assigned readings must be submitted on or before the next regularly scheduled session. A missing or incomplete written response to readings following an absence will reduce the final grade. More than two class absences or a pattern of late arrivals to class may, at the discretion of the instructor, result in a failing grade for the seminar.

Academic honesty...

...Is Essential. In other words, all work that you submit must be your own. Be certain to cite the sources that you used, and take care to avoid plagiarism, which the *Moravian College Student Handbook* defines as "the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgement. Academic dishonesty will result in a zero for the assignment and notification of the Academic Dean, in accordance with Moravian College policy.

On top of which: You don't need to use other peoples' stuff!

Course Schedule

While every effort will be made to follow the schedule indicated below, the syllabus is subject to change as the instructor deems necessary to help students meet the objectives of the course. In other words, sometimes we'll be winging it, as the instructor and students see fit.

Writing Center

Each student is expected to visit the Writing Center, bringing an example of her or his work. Note: The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of The Writing Center, please call 610-861-1632.

Accommodations

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability must contact Ms. Elaine Mara, assistant director of academic and disability support, at the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

Groups 1-3

For purpose of the multi-modal reports and the final paper, the class will be divided into three sections, alphabetically.

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Texts:

"The Yellow Birds: A Novel," Kevin Powers

**"The Art of Fact: A Historical Anthology of Literary Journalism,"
Kevin Kerrane, Ben Yagoda, eds.**

How to Not Write Bad, Ben Yagoda

http://chronicle.com/blogs/linguafranca/2014/08/08/humanizing-academic-citation/?cid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en

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8/26:

In Class:

Opening nuts and bolts. Intros.

Why learning journalism is like learning how to be in a society.

What role has journalism played in your life? If any?

What are your thoughts about the media?

Finding the story

Where to look. Matching the story with the writer's sensibility (music? religion? Art? sports? outdoors? Elements to look for. Expanding the writer's radar. Choosing subjects/topics that resonate on a larger scale and speak to a larger issue.

8/28:**Due in class:**

Multi-media example: [http://voicethread.com/?#q.b69839.i359105 ...](http://voicethread.com/?#q.b69839.i359105)

Martha Gellhorn: The Third Winter

In Class:

Writing: compare to Yellow Birds

Early Background Reporting

How to surround the facts and thus surround your topic. Everything ever written. Any DVDs or YouTube Phone, print, web, courthouse, anywhere and everywhere. The groundwork, before the real reporting begins.

9/2 Due in class:

The Tragedy of Britney Spears

<http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/the-tragedy-of-britney-spears-rolling-stones-2008-cover-story-20110329>

and

Here's What Happens When You Cast Lindsay Lohan in Your Movie

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/13/magazine/here-is-what-happens-when-you-cast-lindsay-lohan-in-your-movie.html?pagewanted=all>

In Class:

Writing

Are celebrity profiles "journalism"?

Why do we care?

Sources

How to find them, how to cultivate them; how to use them. Who's important?

What documents count? Who to trust? How do you approach the key sources? How can you gain the trust of your source? Which obscure source will turn out to unlock the power of your tale?

9/4

Due in class:

Peter Richmond: Tangled Up in Blue

<http://thestacks.deadspin.com/the-brief-life-and-complicated-death-of-tommy-lasordas-485999366>

In Class:

<http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/journalism-education/251048/the-pyramid-of-journalism-competence-what-journalists-need-to-know/#.U3FVxgClgoY.twitter>

Beginning Reporting

What to do once you're finally in the world of your subject/topic: strategies, resources, following your instincts and your reporter's radar. Painting the picture, finding the context, exploring and mining the setting. Interviewing the principals.

9/9

Due in class:

Preface of "The Art of Fact"

In class:

Discuss Reading

Storytelling

How to tell a story – plot flow, detail. What makes a story riveting? How can you make a detail bring a character to life? What elements of the tale make it jump off the page? What are the three acts of the drama? And most importantly: how do you write it? In what style?

9/11

Due in class:

The Falling Man

http://www.esquire.com/features/ESQ0903-SEP_FALLINGMAN

In class:

Skype with author

9/16

Due in Class:

First Writing Assignment:

"500 words on something you've noticed on campus."

In Class:

Discuss Essays

9/18

Due in Class:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/06/magazine/george-saunders-just-wrote-the-best-book-youll-read-this-year.html?pagewanted=all>

In class:

Writing...Discuss Reading

9/23

Due in class:

John McPhee: Pine Barrens

In class

Discuss Reading

Voice

Esquire attitude vs. *The New Yorker's* omniscience. Junod vs. McPhee.
The role of the writer's point of view. First person vs. third person. Quotes vs. narration.
How does the writer's stance enhance the story? How much of the writer's perspective should inform the narrative? How to establish a point of view without interfering with the telling of the tale.

9/25

Due in class:

Tom Wolfe: The Girl of the Year

In Class:

Write a riffy essay about riffy writing.

The edit

Knowing how to rein in the story. What elements are speed-bumps in your tale? Where have you inserted irrelevant scene/detail? How can you pare your story down so that every word counts, and propels your story?

9/30

Due in class

Bill Buford: Among the Thugs

In class

Writing: Mob rules

10/2

Due in Class:

Justin Heckert: Lost in the Wav

In Class:

Discuss Reading

Finding The Story Arc

How to connect the dots from a to z without having to worship at the shrine of chronology; where to stick in info that makes your topic more universal without interrupting the narrative

10/7

Due in class:

Chris Dittrich: Tonight on Dateline This Man Will Die
<http://www.esquire.com/features/predator0907>

In class:

Discuss Reading

Morality

What are our obligations as journalists? As citizens? Where do we find that boundary? When do we cross it?

10/9

Due in Class:

Peter Richmond: Bill Murray
<http://deadspin.com/5986709/the-sports-fan-what-i-learned-from-three-days-of-watching-baseball-with-bill-murray>

In class:

Writing.

You

What role do you play in your piece? What've we learned about voice.

10/14

NO CLASS: FALL BREAK

10/16

Due in class:

Nothing.

In class:

Writing: 500 words: The strangest thing that happened on break

10/21

Due in class:

Joan Didion The Los Angeles Notebook

Prose vs. Pomposity

How to make your writing lucid without hitting us over the head with it.

10/23

Due in Class:

Max Potter: The Vineyard assassin

<http://www.vanityfair.com/culture/features/2011/05/vineyard-poisoning-201105>

In class:

Skype with author

10/28

Due in class:

Multi-media book reports Group 1

In class:

Reports

10/30

Due In class:

Multi-media report, Group 1

In Class

Reports

11/4

Due in class:

Multi-media book reports, Group 2

In class

Reports

11/6

Due in Class:

Topic for final story

In class

Discuss topics, Group 1

11/11

Due in Class:

From Homicide, Davis Simons

In class

Writing: On a crime in yr life.

Crime: Why does it compel us?

11/13

Due in Class:

"The Food Fighter," Nick Paumgarten, The New Yorker.

In class

Writing

11/18

Due in class

From Dispatches, Michel Herr

In class

Multi-modal book reports Group 3

11/20

Due in class:

Irish Women Coming of Age, Rosemary Mahoney.

In class:

Discuss topics Group Two

11/25

Due in class

The Wall Street Journal feature of the day before

In class:

Discuss topics Group 3

12/2

Due in class

"Spoiled Rotten," Elizabeth Kolbert

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/07/02/spoiled-rotten?currentPage=all>

In class

Discuss: How true does this ring?

12/4

Take home final: Your story....due 12/18