

NEWS AND FEATURE WRITING
ENGL 297 PM
Fall 2015

Instructor: Mary Ellen Alu

Office Hours: Mondays, 5:45 p.m. - 6:15 p.m., Zinzendorf 302 and by appointment. If you have questions about assignments, please text or email me and I will respond as promptly as I can.

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Course Information:

Credit Hours: 3 credits

Class Meeting: Mondays, Room 331, Priscilla Payne Hurd Academic Complex, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Course Description: An integrative journalism course in which students will learn how to write, edit, pitch and publish news and features for a variety of media outlets. **Prerequisite:** Sophomore class standing; B or higher in LINC 101 or Writing 100 (or equivalent).

Required Texts and Materials:

- *News Reporting and Writing*, 11th Edition, The Missouri Group
(Always bring your book to class.)
- NYT NOW App / New York Times
- Selected readings (Galvanized); The Morning Call; The Los Angeles Times; Other Handouts
- Binder, notebook. pocket-size notebook (for interviews); pens, pencil
- Flash drive (to save your work).

Course Goals:

This course will introduce you to the way journalists do their jobs -- how they think, report and write and act. You will also learn:

- How convergence and technology are reshaping journalism.
- Interviewing techniques
- Effective headline writing and the value of SEO (Search Engine Optimization).
- Journalism terminology and editing symbols.
- How social media (Facebook, Twitter) can help you harness an online audience.
- AP style of writing.

Requirements

- **Reporting/Writing.** You must report, interview, write and edit, and revise news stories virtually every week of the semester for potential use in print or online. Much of the work will be done in class, but you must produce at least five stories outside of class. You must suggest topics for stories as reporters are expected to do. Rewrites will be due one week after the originals are graded and handed back to you.

- **Team learning.** You must, at times, work with two or three other students to review each other's work and suggest ways stories can be improved. Journalism is a collaborative effort among reporters, editors, designers and web producers.
- **Current Events.** You must read daily online site (NYT NOW) and/or daily newspaper (NYT).
- **Quizzes.** You must complete periodic quizzes on elements of style from the Associated Press, current events, lecture and book material. These quizzes are intended to help you keep up with the news, learn AP style rules and journalism standards.
- **Computers.** You must use the computers for writing, editing and research.

NOTE: You can have strong opinions and disagreements but they must be expressed with respect for others' views. No texting, no cellphone use, no Facebook or Twitter use in class, UNLESS part of the day's assignment.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

- **Attendance is mandatory.** The only acceptable excuses for missing class are religious observances, documented illness, death of family member, pre-approved school-related activities. Provide official written documentation to receive an excused absence.
- **You are expected to arrive to class on time,** and you are expected to **actively participate** in discussions, assignments and in-class workshops. To actively participate, you must not only attend class but regularly work on articles, work in teams and volunteer thoughtful answers. Points will be deducted if you have more than one absence, arrive late, leave early or do not participate in class. Students who miss class are responsible for all material covered in that class, including deadlines related to that material. There will be no make-up for quizzes. Partial credit may be available for other graded, in-class work if you miss class without an excused absence but you must discuss the matter with your instructor within one week of missing class.
- **ALL writing assignments** must be typed and double-spaced. They are due at start of class. As backup, e-mail articles to your instructor. Five points will be deducted for any late papers.
- **Cellphones and laptops:** Cellphones must be put away during class, unless needed for an assignment. No web surfing during in-class workshops, unless required as part of the assignment. Please be respectful.

DEADLINES

- Five points will be deducted for any late papers. Deadlines are critical in a journalism class, since journalists live by their deadlines and could find themselves without a job if they miss them. With e-mail submissions, you must confirm that your instructor received it.

DISABILITY STATEMENT:

Moravian encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact the event sponsor at least one week prior to the event. Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic and Disability Support at [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401) (office located on the first floor of Monocacy Hall). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic & Disability Support Office.

*****Note to English Majors:** In preparation for creating an English Major Portfolio in your senior capstone seminar, please save both digital and hard copies of your work for this class, including drafts with peer and instructor comments.

ACADMEIC HONESTY POLICY:

Journalists are expected to uphold the highest ethical standards. Any instance of academic dishonesty will be reported to the department chair and provost’s office. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagerism, which is copying work written or published by others. See Student Handbook.

GRADING/ASSIGNMENTS

- | Out of Class Assignments 55 percent
- | Three Graded In-Class Assignments 20 percent
- | Five Quizzes/exercises 15 percent
- | Rewrites 10 percent

Assignment	Points
Out of Class Assignments	5 @ 55 points each 275 points
Rewrites	5 @ 10 points each 50 points
Graded In-Class Assignments	3 @ 33 points each (weighted) 100 points
Quizzes/Exercises	5 @ 15 points each 75 points
Total	500 points

Final Course Grade:

(465-500) 93.0-100% A	(450-464) 90.0-92.9% A-	(435-449) 87.0-89.9% B+	(415-434) 83.0-86.9% B	(400-414) 80.0-82.9% B-	
(385-399) 77.0-79.9% C+	(365-384) 73.0-76.9% C	(350-364) 70.0-72.9% C-	(335-349) 67.0-69.9% D+	(300-334) 60.0-66.9% D	0-299 <60.0% F

COURSE OUTLINE
 ^ (Subject to Change)

Week	Readings	Assignments
Week 1 Aug. 31 Introduction: What is News? Journalism Basics Syllabus/Course Overview		
Week 2 Sept. 7 Finding Information Leads The Inverted Pyramid	Read: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 9 Review Appendix 2	
Week 3 Sept. 14 Getting the Story/ Interviewing	Read Chapter 4, 5, 15 Review Appendix 2	Quiz: AP Style/Curr. Events In-Class: Student Interview/ Profile
Week 4 Sept. 21 Civics for Journalists	Read Ch. 10, 11 Review Appendix 2 Selected Nazario Excerpt	Quiz: AP Style/Curr. Events IMPORTANT: Attend/Cover as Assignment Poverty/ InFocus Thursday, Sept. 24
Week 5 Sept. 28 Sonia Nazario/Enrique's Journey	No readings this week. We will be attending Nazario presentation as a class in HUB/Prosser	Due: Writing Assignment 1. News Article (InFocus/ Poverty/Karen Armstrong)
Week 6 Oct. 5 Breaking News/Crime Reporting	Read: Ch. 16	Due Writing Assignment 2: Speech/Presentation: Nazario Make Profile Pitch (Submit 2 ideas)
Week 7 Oct. 12 (No Classes)		
Week 8 Oct. 19 Breaking News/Crime Reporting Continued Writing for web, radio, TV	Read Ch. 12, 13 Review Appendix 2	Quiz: AP Style/Curr. Events Deadline In-Class Assignment: Crime Story

Week	Readings	Assignments
Week 9 Oct. 26 Advanced Sourcing/ Interviewing	Read Ch. 6, 7, 8	Due: Writing Assignment 3. Profile Story Make Localization Pitch (Submit 2 ideas)
Week 10 Nov. 2 Ethics Civics II Writing Effective Headlines (SEO)	Read: Ch. 22 Review Appendix 3	Quiz: AP Style/Curr. Events Due: Make General Assignment Pitch (Submit 2 ideas)
Week 11 Nov. 9 Advanced Story Structure Guest Speaker: Morning Call Reporter Matt Assad	Read: Ch. 7 Selected Assad Articles	Due: Writing Assignment 4. Localization
Week 12 Nov. 16 Press Conferences/ Advanced story Structure	Review Ch. 10, 11	Deadling In-Class Assignment: Meeting/Press Conference
Week 13 Nov. 23 Reporting the Big Story	Review Ch. 11, 16	Due: Writing Assignment 5: General Assignment
Week 14 Nov. 30 Telling the Big Story Slow down and write		Quiz: AP Style and Current Events
Week 15 Dec. 7 Key Concepts	Journalism Today: Submit three questions by email.	Due: Rewrite Writing Assignment 5

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