



"We listen. We observe. We ask questions. We try to understand. We document. We report what we see. We are professionals, bound by ethics and a commitment to the power of truth. "

-JCCF Reporters' Code

Loyola University Chicago
Fall 2014
COMM 205: Reporting and Writing
Wednesday, 4:15-6:45pm

Instructor: Richelle F. Rogers

E-mail: rrogers2@luc.edu

Please allow up to 24 hours for a response to e-mail. Remember to include your name and the course number on your subject line. Please use your Loyola e-mail account when sending e-mails. Please limit your email inquiries to 7a.m. – 6 p.m. CST.

Office: SOC 204 - Second Floor

Office Hours: W, 11-3pm and by appointment

(All appointments should be scheduled through the class Sakai page)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines current issues in U.S. journalism with strong emphasis on developing skills in news reporting, interviewing, and writing. This class is writing intensive.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Learn the fundamentals of news gathering, writing and editing
- Learn the skills essential to accurate and informed reporting and writing.
- Apply principles of accuracy and fairness and how to avoid bias in reporting
- Learn how to deliver a quality news story on deadline

IDEA COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing
- Learning to *apply* course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)

TEXT AND ASSIGNED READING:

Inside Reporting, A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism; Third Edition; By Tim Harrower

Associated Press Stylebook

Webster's Dictionary (recommended)

In addition to the required text, students are required to read additional publications as part of their coursework.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

Students are required to purchase [Reporters Notebooks](#) and a [Voice Recorder](#) for class assignments.

STORY MEETINGS

We will begin each class with a twenty-minute story meeting. Each student is required to pitch a story they want to cover for the week during the meeting. Students will have to intelligently present and in some cases, defend their selection, so adequate preparation is essential. If your pitch is not approved, you will have 24 hours to resubmit a revised pitch to my email address (rrogers2@luc.edu). If a pitch is not submitted in a timely manner, you will receive an incomplete for the week.

CURRENT EVENTS DISCUSSIONS

Story meetings will also include a discussion about national and local events. Students are graded weekly on the quality of their contribution. It's imperative each student read at least one newspaper and watch a local television newscast daily. The following resources are recommended to monitor local and national events:

NEWSPAPERS

<http://www.chicagotribune.com>
<http://www.suntimes.com>
<http://www.nytimes.com>
<http://www.washingtonpost.com>
<http://www.usatoday.com>

TELEVISION

<http://chicago.cbslocal.com/>
<http://www.nbcchicago.com/>
<http://www.abc7chicago.com/>

CLASS ATTENDANCE

It's imperative that students attend every class and arrive on time. When you miss a class, or arrive late you miss important information that can easily place your grade in serious jeopardy.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS/ WEEKLY UPDATES AVAILABLE VIA SAKAI

The syllabus and updated class assignments are available via Sakai.

DRESS CODE FOR REPORTING FIELD TRIPS

For the duration of this course, you are professional reporters and writers. Occasionally, I will require the class to wear casual business attire for reporting field trips. Students represent Loyola University at all times and are expected to look and act as a professional.

GUEST SPEAKERS

This course will often feature guest speakers. Students are required to be well prepared for all discussions and participate in question and answer sessions.

SOC EQUIPMENT

The School of Communication has a variety of equipment that we can use for class-related projects. This equipment may be checked out through Andi Pacheco in SOC 004 (contact apacheco@luc.edu; phone 312-915-8830).

GRADING

Reporting, writing and editing exercises: 40 percent

Story meeting participation/preparation: 30 percent

Final reporting and writing project: 30 percent (grade based 1/2 reporting and 1/2 writing)

ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC

Grade	Description
A range	Story is ready for print. The story addresses the six basic questions (who, what, when, where, why and how). The story is written in AP style. The details in the story are clear and well structured. Thorough research and documentation of ideas. The story is balanced and objective, The story is free of mistakes: no typos; no misspellings; no punctuation or grammatical glitches; no errors of fact. All the necessary details, documentation, quotes, are accurate and properly sourced.
B range	Story needs minor revisions. The story addresses the six basic questions. The story is written in AP style. The details in the story require additional clarity. The writing may need to be streamlined. Story structure needs minimal editing. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, source, or date, etc.) show inattention to detail/accuracy although content is above average.
C range	The story needs considerable editorial revisions. The story is missing more than two of the six basic questions. The story is poorly organized and confusing. Although basic facts most likely are there, the story lacks appropriate attribution or quotes. Story is not written in AP style and has multiple style, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word usage. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, wrong source, date, or page number, etc.) show inattention to detail and accuracy.
D –F range	Weak, unfocused work. Student needs to rethink the execution of the assignment. The story is missing several of the six basic questions. Story structure, organization and clarity are below average. The story is not written in AP style and has numerous grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. The story is inaccurate or libelous.

WRITING/PROOFREADING SUBMITTED ASSIGNMENTS

It's important that all submitted assignments are free of typos, misspellings and grammatical errors. Please consult the assignment rubric and the deadline checklist (page 59) from Harrower's text as a guide before submitting your work.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will not be accepted. UNLESS INSTRUCTED, DO NOT EMAIL ASSIGNMENTS

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Loyola University and the School of Communication expect academic integrity and have policies regarding academic dishonesty. Specifically for the SOC:

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused

- absences or extensions of deadlines or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper. The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism.

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g., failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours). This is an academic community; being uninformed or naive is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing sources.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

You can find Loyola's policies regarding academic integrity at:

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students are urged to contact the instructor should they have questions concerning course materials and procedures. If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the instructor early in the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD).

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

THE COURSE (Subject to change)

Week 1: Introductions/ Crafting the Lead/ AP style/Story selection

August 27: Crafting the Lead/ Becoming familiar with AP style/Story selection

Assignment: Read pages 36-60 and 68-76 from text/Prepare for first story meeting by researching/selecting two 500-600 word stories you would like to cover. Each student will pitch his or her respective story selections during next week's meeting.

Week 2: Story Structure/Finding, Cultivating and Using Sources

September 3: First story meeting- please be prepared

Students will craft and edit two separate 500-600-word stories in class

The Deadline Checklist

Gabrielle Annala library visit

Assignment: Read pages 78-84, 124-128, 270-275 from text /Prepare to pitch your first news story in next week's story meeting. Students will write stories in class.

Week 3: Interviewing/Handling Quotations and Attribution

September 10: Story Meeting

Students write stories in class

Assignment: Craft 600-700-word news story about a Loyola campus event. Your story must reflect appropriate research before and after the event and include at

least two interviews. Stories are due at the beginning of class, September 17, 2014/Read pages 106-110 from text.

Week 4: Mock Press Conference/Observation/Taking Notes

September 17: Loyola News Event class discussion and revisions
Mock Press Conference - Students will craft a straight news story based on a MCA press conference. Length 600 -700 words.

*Casual business attire required

Assignment: Students will craft a story from the press conference and submit polished stories at the beginning of class, September 24, 2014. Story Length 600-800 words.

Week 5: Covering a Beat/Story Ideas Workshop Part I

September 24: Current events discussion

Press conference story discussion

Beat Scavenger Hunt -Students will select a beat and cover it for the remainder of the course

Assignment: Craft a story within a beat you are considering, stories are due at the beginning of class, October 1, 2014. Story Length 600-800 words/ Read pages 20-21 and 94-95, 100-105 from text.

Week 6: Covering a Beat/Story Ideas Workshop Part II

October 1: Beat story meeting /Editing session

Class exercise - Ethics survey and checklist

Assignment: Read pages 116-123, 128-129 from text

Visit the following link and read Reporter Sara Ganim's feature reporting series:

<http://saraganim.wordpress.com/the-jerry-sandusky-scandal/>

Week 7: Spring Break – Class does not meet

Week 8: Beyond Breaking News – Features Part I

October 15: Current events discussion

Review of various kinds of leads

Students begin to research feature story ideas

Week 9: Beyond Breaking News – Features Part II

October 22: Feature story topics meeting

Students will work on feature stories in class

Assignment: Feature stories due at the beginning of class, October 29th.

Week 10: Beyond Breaking News – Features Part II

October 29: Current events discussion

Feature stories due - feedback/revisions

Assignment: Read pages 158-178 from text

Read the NYTimes Snowfall project:

<http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/#/?part=tunnel-creek>

Read the NYTimes Invisible Child Project:

<http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/invisible-child/#/?chapt=1>

Week 11: From Print to the Web

November 5: Illinois General Election discussion

NYTimes digital story case study

Students will rewrite two previously submitted stories for various online platforms

Assignment: Prepare for final project brainstorming session.

Week 12: Final Project Brainstorming Session

November 12: Final project brainstorming session

Students will begin to research/craft their final project. An early, rough draft of the project is due at the beginning of class, Wednesday, November 19th, 2014. Length 900-1000 words.

Week 13: Final Project Rough Draft Due

November 19: Current events discussion

Students will review an early rough draft on their project with the instructor and use class time to make suggested revisions.

Week 14: Thanksgiving Break – Class does not meet

Week 15: Final Projects Due

December 3: Current events discussion

Final projects due

Week 16: Final Grade Discussion

December 10: Final grade discussion