

Online Course Information

JOUR JOUR-201-10 Intro to Journalism (Online):

Syllabus

Objective

You will learn how to write compelling news stories that could be published in a daily newspaper.

Required Texts

[News Reporting and Writing. Melvin Mencher, 10th edition.](#)

[The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law, Norm Goldstein](#)

Recommended

The Elements of Style, by Strunk & White.

Read the *Morning Meeting* daily at www.poynter.org.

Read *The New York Times* (www.nyt.com), your local AP wire (www.ap.org), and *The Washington Post* (www.washingtonpost.com).

Assignments

- Read the lesson each week, posted Monday morning, on Blackboard
- Assignments (**stories and lesson questions**) are due the following Tuesday morning at 9 a.m CST. They will be marked late otherwise.
- Everything you file **must be e-mailed to pheltzel@tulane.edu**.
- For the subject line of your message, put your name and a one-word description of the story in brackets, like so: [Your Name-Robbery]. We call this short description a *slug*. Put your name and the slug at the top of your message.
- Send your file in the body of the text message. **Do not send attachments.**
- If you have a problem getting an assignment in on time, talk to me or send e-mail (well) before the assignment is due. At a newspaper or magazine, there might be flexibility on a deadline, or there might not. If your assignment is late, someone else on staff has to take up the slack--your editor, a designer, or the production staff. Find out before the assignment is due. Late assignments are marked down one letter grade.
- If you submit a story that is published in a daily newspaper, *your assignment will receive an automatic 'A'*.

Stories

- Review the Story Checklist (Under Course Information in Blackboard) **before you file any assignments.**
- **Important:** **Keep copies of your stories on your computer.** It's best to save them to a hard drive. You can also e-mail them to yourself, though it's not advisable to compose in an e-mail message without saving it along the way.

In General

Approach your work with professionalism and enthusiasm. Treat this class as a news organization that counts on you to submit your best work.

Plagiarism

From *Merriam-Webster: Plagiarize*: to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own: use (another's production) without crediting the source. All the work you turn in must be your own, without collaboration, unless you are specifically told to work with another student in the class.

Grades

Story assignments	50 percent
Exercises and tests	40 percent
Class participation (make sure to answer all the questions in the online lessons).	10 percent

Grade Scale

A	91-100 percent
B	81-90 percent
C	71-80 percent
D	61-70 percent
F	60 percent and below

Story grading largely has to do with getting your facts right. Misspellings cost 2 points as do grammatical errors. **Most importantly: Mistakes of fact, such as misspelling someone's name, writing down the wrong street address, or otherwise making a factual error, will automatically take off 20 points.** If you are not sure about a fact, don't guess. Make sure you've got it right.

Late assignments drop 10 points each day after they are due.

E-mail

You can schedule time to talk, by phone or instant messaging (IM) during the semester by e-mailing me: pheltzel@tulane.edu.

Important: Do not count on e-mail to contact me about an extension. You can e-mail me any time, but sending an e-mail does not mean you can turn in a late story. **If you don't have a response, you don't have an extension.** Remember: *You can't make assumptions, about deadlines or class work, based on e-mails that you send.*

SCHEDULE

There will be changes, and it's your responsibility stay up to date. An up-to-date schedule is maintained online in Blackboard.

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Date	Topic		
Week 1	Intro to reporting and writing. What is news?		Chapter 7
Week 2	Writing leads.		Chapter 5 Start Story 1
Week 3	Associated Press (AP) style.		Chapter 15
Week 4	Conducting Interviews.		Chapter 6
Week 5	Good writing and structure.		Chapter 4

Week 6	Researching stories.	Chapter 8
Week 7	Writing a feature story.	
Week 8	Organizing material. Creating visual leads.	Chapter 16
Week 9	Writing a feature and localized news story.	Chapter 20,
Week 10	Covering a beat.	Chapter 23
Week 11	Covering business.	Chapter 25
Week 12	The ethics of journalism.	Chapter 27
Week 13	Libel	
Week 14	Exam Review	
Dec. 10	Final exam	
Other important dates:	http://www.scs.tulane.edu/calendar/calendar.htm	