**Reporting II**

**Course code:** JRN 201

**Term and year:** Spring 2021

**Day and time:** Tuesdays 14:45-17:30

**Instructor:** David Vaughan

**Instructor contact:** [david.vaughan@auuni.edu](mailto:david.vaughan@auuni.edu)

**Consultation hours:** Half an hour after class in the classroom

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Credits US/ECTS** | 3/6 | **Level** | Intermediate |
| **Length** | 15 weeks | **Pre-requisite** | Composition II, Reporting I |
| **Contact hours** | 42 hours | **Course type** | HSC el, PS el, JC req, CEA |

# Course Description

The course moves beyond the introduction to journalistic reporting and writing of JRN 200. Presuming basic skills like leads, story organization and use of quotes, it immerses students in reporting, writing, editing and pitching articles. We’ll work on the reporting skills necessary to produce good copy, and the writing and editing skills necessary to make it shine. The course material is applicable to all forms of journalistic writing, including for audio and video.

# Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

* Apply the practical and professional skills necessary to perform as news reporters
* Apply editing priorities and techniques to news copy
* Carry out research and write their own stories
* Find story ideas and conduct interviews and do investigative research
* Be aware of different types of writing for different media
* Be able to pitch stories and write for the University's print and online student magazine, *The Lennon Wall.*

# Reading Material

## Required Materials

1. Carole Rich, *Writing and Reporting News,*4th Edition (2004). **Most of our assigned reading is here, in this older textbook. Individual student copies** **must be signed out for the semester** **at AAU Library** **and brought to every class unless otherwise instructed**.
2. The Missouri Group, *News Reporting and Writing*, 11th ed. (2013), ISBN 978-1457653544. **We just have two copies of this newer textbook, which will have some individual chapters as assigned reading on the NEO site. The two hard copies will be on reserve at AAU Library.**

Students should also keep up with current events. At a minimum, they should read [*The Lennon Wall*](http://lennonwall.aauni.edu/), follow events in the Czech Republic through *Radio Prague International* and other news publications, and should follow news from their home country, if available, or from Europe or North America. Particularly recommended for international issues and commentary are [*The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/), [*The Economist*](http://www.economist.com/) and *The Guardian.* [*Transitions Online*](http://www.tol.org/client/)is often a good source of story ideas within the Czech Republic and eastern-central Europe.

# Teaching Methodology

The class will run like a newsroom; it will be informal and interactive, a “newswriting lab.” Students will learn by doing. Their stories will be discussed in class by the instructor and by the students themselves. The instructor will also provide feedback to students individually about their work. Please also be ready to do in-class writing assignments on deadline. These in-class writing exercises will help acquaint you with common reporting situations and writing formulas.

We’ll develop story ideas and discuss how your stories can be effectively reported and written. Your stories will be critiqued in class, and often you will be asked to acquire more information or to do rewriting.

# Course Schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Class Agenda** |
| Class 1  Feb 7 | **Topic:** Review of Reporting I.  **Description:** Recap of reporting basic concepts, leads, inverted pyramid, nut graph, use of quotes, sources, attribution, article structure, hard news vs. long-form, etc.  **Reading:** “The Inverted Pyramid.” The Missouri Group, *News Reporting and Writing* 2014 (11th ed.), pp. 176-75. (handout) |
| Class 2  Feb 14 | **Topic:** Reporting skills  **Description:** Getting the details, covering events, interviewing tricks and techniques |
| Class 3  Feb 21 | **Topic:** Sources/Quoting  **Description:** Formatting quotes, quoting for character |
| Class 4  Feb 28 | **Topic:** Elements of good writing  **Description:** What to avoid, cliches, etc.  **Assignments/deadlines: in class assignment/test** |
| Class 5  March 7 | **Topic:** Reporting/writing under pressure  **Description:** Breaking news - writing workshop  **Assignments/deadlines:** Leads and nut graphs exercise |
| Class 6  March 14 | **Topic:** Editing  **Description:** editing, less is more, writing in pictures |
| Class 7  March 21 | **Topic:** Editing  **Description:** Editing workshop  **Reading:** “Covering A Beat” **in** The Missouri Group, *News Reporting and Writing* 2014 (11th ed.), pp. 287-312 |
| Class 8  March 28 | **Topic:** Covering a beat  **Description:** Beats, topics and angles  **Assignments/deadlines:** **midterm article DUE!** |
| Class 9 -  April 4 | **Topic:** Finding stories  **Description:** Life of a freelancer: looking for the story that has not yet been told, finding your angle |
| **April 11** | **MIDTERM BREAK – NO CLASS** |
| Class 10 –  April 18 | **Topic:** Pitching stories  **Description:** How to “sell” your story to your editor, pitch-writing exercise |
| Class 11 –  April 25 | **Topic:** Online journalism  **Description:** Headlines, clickbait, using video and audio |
| Class 12 –  May 2 | **Topic:** Reporting in the field  **Description:** Observation/description skills/recording material  **Assignments/deadlines:** Rough draft of final article due **Topic:** Moral and  Ethical Issues, conundrums and conflict of interest |
| Class 13 –  May 9 | **Description:** Code of ethics  **Assignments/deadlines:** Final article submitted for peer review |
| Class 14 –  May 16 | **final article DUE!** |

# Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **Workload (hours)** | **Weight in Final Grade** | **Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes** | | **Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes\*** |
| Attendance and Class Participation | 42 | 25 | Apply the practical and professional skills necessary to perform as news reporters | 1, 2 | |
| Assignment 1:  In-class graded exercise | 25 | 15 | Apply the practical and professional skills necessary to perform as news reporters  Apply editing priorities and techniques to news copy | 1, 2, 3 | |
| Assignment 2:  Article | 30 | 20 | Carry out research and write their own stories  Find story ideas and conduct interviews and do investigative research  Be aware of different types of writing for different media | 1, 2, 3 | |
| Assignment 3:  Article | 33 | 20 | Carry out research and write their own stories  Find story ideas and conduct interviews and do investigative research  Be aware of different types of writing for different media  Be able to pitch stories and write for the University's print and online student magazine, *The Lennon Wall.* | 1, 2, 3 | |
| In-class graded exercises, pitches and writing lab | 20 | 25 | Apply the practical and professional skills necessary to perform as news reporters  Apply editing priorities and techniques to news copy  Carry out research and write their own stories  Be aware of different types of writing for different media | 1 | |
| TOTAL | 150 | 100% |  |  | |

\*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

# Detailed description of the assignments

## Assignment 1: In-class writing exercise

Rewriting a story as a newspaper article:

**Assessed area:** 50% on content, 50% for clarity of writing

## Assignment 2: Midterm Article

A 600-word newsworthy article with a clear lead, nut graph and at least three sources.

**Assessed area:** 50% on content, 25% for clarity of writing, 25% for creativity.

## Assignment 3: Final Article

A 600-word feature article with a clear lead, nut graph and at least three sources.

**Assessed area:** 50% on content, 25% for clarity of writing, 25% for creativity.

# General Requirements and School Policies

## General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU’s academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work.

## Electronic communication and submission

The university and instructors shall only use students’ university email address for communication, with additional communication via NEO LMS or Microsoft Teams.

Students sending e-mail to an instructor shall clearly state the course code and the topic in the subject heading, for example, “COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question”.

All electronic submissions are through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take-home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

## Attendance

Attendance, i.e., presence in class in real-time, at AAU courses is default mandatory; however, it is not graded as such. (Grades may be impacted by missed assignments or lack of participation.) Still, students must attend at least two thirds of classes to complete the course. If they do not meet this condition and most of their absences are excused, they will be administratively withdrawn from the course. If they do not meet this condition and most of their absences are not excused, they will receive a grade of “FW” (Failure to Withdraw). Students may also be marked absent if they miss a significant part of a class (for example by arriving late or leaving early).

## Absence excuse and make-up options

Should a student be absent from classes for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), s/he can submit to the Dean of Students an Absence Excuse Request Form supplemented with documents providing reasons for the absence. These must be submitted within one week of the absence. If possible, it is recommended the instructor be informed of the absence in advance. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if s/he submits an Absence Excuse Request Form along with the finalized add/drop form.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean of Students are entitled to make up assignments and exams provided their nature allows. Assignments missed due to unexcused absences which cannot be made up, may result in a decreased or failing grade as specified in the syllabus.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week of the date the absence was excused to arrange for make-up options.

## Late work: No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

## Electronic devices

Electronic devices (e.g. phones, tablets, laptops) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information, etc.). Any other use will result in the student being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during tests or exams unless required by the exam format and the instructor.

## Eating is not allowed during classes.

## Cheating and disruptive behavior

If a student engages in disruptive conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the class and shall report the behavior to the Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misconduct, the exam or assignment will be failed and the student will be expelled from the exam or class.

## Plagiarism and Academic Tutoring Center

Plagiarism is “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work.” (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993)

Turnitin’s White Paper ‘The Plagiarism Spectrum’ (available at http://go.turnitin.com/paper/plagiarism-spectrum) identifies 10 types of plagiarism ordered from most to least severe:

1. CLONE: An act of submitting another’s work, word-for-word, as one’s own.

2. CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.

3. FIND–REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.

4. REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.

5. RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one’s own previous work without citation; To self-plagiarize.

6. HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.

7. MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.

8. 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources

9. AGGREGATOR: The “Aggregator” includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.

10. RE-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text’s original wording and/or structure.

At minimum, plagiarism from types 1 through 8 will result in a failing grade for the assignment and shall be reported to the Dean. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Allegations of bought papers and intentional or consistent plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU.

If unsure about technical aspects of writing, students are encouraged to consult with the tutors of the AAU Academic Tutoring Center. For more information and/or to book a tutor, please contact the ATC at: http://atc.simplybook.me/sheduler/manage/event/1/.

## Course accessibility and inclusion

Students with disabilities are asked to contact the Dean of Students as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodations. Academic accommodations are not retroactive.

Students who will be absent from course activities due to religious holidays may seek reasonable accommodations by contacting the Dean of Students in writing within the first two weeks of the term. All requests must include specific dates for which the student requests accommodations.

# Grading Scale

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Percentage\*** | **Description** |
| A | 95–100 | **Excellent performance**. The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject. |
| A– | 90–94 |
| B+ | 87–89 | **Good performance**. The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort. |
| B | 83–86 |
| B– | 80–82 |
| C+ | 77–79 | **Fair performance**. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work. |
| C | 73–76 |
| C– | 70–72 |
| D+ | 65–69 | **Poor**. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student’s work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives. |
| D | 60–64 |
| F | 0–59 | **Fail**. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course. |

\* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Prepared by: David Vaughan

Date:30th January 2023

Approved by: Ted Turnau, Ph.D.

Date: 30th January, 2023