

PALOMAR COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD FOR
DEGREE CREDIT COURSE

__X__ Transfer course __X__ A.A. degree applicable course
(check all that apply)

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE: JOUR 101 News Writing and Reporting

UNIT VALUE: 3

MINIMUM NUMBER OF SEMESTER HOURS: 48

BASIC SKILLS REQUIREMENTS: (Appropriate language and computational skills)

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

PREREQUISITE: None

COREQUISITE: None

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION: None

SCOPE OF COURSE:

Principles of basic journalism. Development of news judgment and clear writing skills. Evaluation of news reporting techniques and sources, and ethical and legal considerations. Emphasis on practical application for newspaper journalism.

SPECIFIC COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Successful students will:

1. Identify and define the principles of journalism.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in basic journalistic skills through interpretive and accurate news writing and reporting.
3. In written news accounts, demonstrate the ability to evaluate and organize information.
4. Distinguish factual statements from judgmental statements and knowledge from opinion.
5. Effectively evaluate news sources and identify productive newsgathering techniques.
6. Draw sound inferences from data provided from news sources
7. Discover and evaluate outside sources for use in writing editorials for the print media.
8. Analyze and apply principles of press law and ethics.
9. Compare and contrast current journalistic theories, methods and techniques.

CONTENT IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC BODY OF KNOWLEDGE:

- I. Introduction to the news organization
 - A. Journalists as gatekeepers
 1. Role of the press in a democratic society
 2. Watchdog function of the press
 - B. Roles and Responsibilities
 1. Publishers

- 2. Editors
- 3. Reporters
- 4. Photojournalists
- C. The reporter in the news organization
 - 1. News channels
 - 2. Sources and beats
 - 3. The story process
- D. Strengths/weaknesses of newspaper coverage

II. Defining news

- A. News values
- B. Measuring the importance of news
- C. Story types
- D. News sources

III. Gathering news

- A. Research methods
- B. The beat system
- C. The necessity of multiple sources of evidence
 - 1. How to draw sound inferences from data
- D. Interview techniques
 - 1. Preparation
 - 2. Conducting concise, organized interviews
 - 3. Meaningful questions
 - 4. Pursuing unexpected avenues of inquiry
 - 5. Taking effective notes/taping interviews
- E. Quotations and attribution
 - 1. Identifying sources
 - 2. Fairness and objectivity.
 - a. Word choice in attributing statements
 - 3. Guidelines for granting sources anonymity
 - 4. Determining accuracy
- F. Computer Assisted Reporting
 - 1. Sources on the Internet
 - 2. Using spreadsheets
 - 3. Using data bases

IV. Evaluating news

- A. Assessing evidence, testimony and statistics
- B. Distinguishing fact from judgment and belief from knowledge
- C. Recognizing common logical errors or fallacies in language presented by sources, or presented in news
 - 1. Sufficient information?
 - 2. Relevance of information?
 - 3. Conclusions legitimately drawn from evidence supplied?
 - 4. Circular reasoning?
- D. Taking the motivation of the sources into account
- E. Truth, reliability and objectivity
- F. Fairness
 - 1. Providing context that gives news meaning and perspective
 - 2. Distortion of news
 - 3. Withholding news
 - 4. Consequences of news

V. Writing news

- A. Synthesizing data gathered in the reporting process
- B. The inverted pyramid
 - 1. Determining relative importance of news elements
 - 2. Ordering information for the reader
 - 3. Constraints of space
- C. Organizing facts logically and presenting them concisely
 - 1. Writing the news lead

- a. Types of leads
- b. Emphasizing news value
- c. Trends in lead writing
2. Using quotes
3. Use of detail and example
4. Variety and balance
5. Transitional devices
6. Keeping it interesting
7. Chronological order - when to use it

D. Story Types

1. Hard versus soft news
2. Meetings, speeches
3. Crime
4. Accidents/fires
5. Follow-up stories
6. Weather
7. Politics
8. Sports
9. Obituaries
10. Features
11. Investigative news
12. News analysis

E. Writing in the news style

1. Clarity - simple words, sentences and paragraphs
2. Writing concisely - eliminating unnecessary words
3. Precision
4. Newspaper English
 - a. The Stylebook
 - b. Preparing copy
 - c. Spelling
 - d. Punctuating
 - e. Capitalizing
 - f. Abbreviating
 - g. Titles
 - h. Figures

VI. Editorial Writing

- A. Identifying appropriate topics
- B. Locating and evaluating outside sources for use in arguments
- C. Evaluating the structure, validity, soundness of both sides of an issue
- D. Effective organization to hold attention of reader
- E. Persuasive language and argument techniques
- F. Use of examples

VII. Press Law

- A. Libel
 1. Definitions/common misconceptions
 2. Defenses against
 3. Identification of libelous statements
 4. Retractions
- B. Invasion of privacy
- C. Freedom of Information Act
- D. Open meeting laws
- E. Conflicts between the First Amendment and other Constitutional guarantees

VIII. Ethics

- A. Professional codes of ethics
- B. Invasion of privacy
- C. Sensationalism in writing and photography
- D. Payola

- E. Conflicts of interest
- F. Plagiarism

IX. Editing news

- A. Analyzing stories for missing information, faulty logic and poor ordering of information
- B. Assuring stories present balanced coverage of issues and supply sufficient support for claims
- C. Identifying and removing material that is libelous or in bad taste
- D. Finding and correcting errors of fact, spelling, grammar and style
- E. Polishing the story
- F. Trimming stories to a predetermined length without losing important information or changing meaning.

REQUIRED READING:

Twenty news stories from newspapers for the purpose of analyzing, critiquing and applying class principles.

Fedler, Fred. Reporting for the Print Media. 7th Ed. London: Oxford University Press, 2000.

SUGGESTED READING:

Goldstein, Norm. The Associated Press Stylebook. New York: Perseus Publishing, 2002.

REQUIRED WRITING:

1. Five two-page homework writing assignments, including one editorial suitable for publication.
2. Two fully developed news stories suitable for publication (2-4 pages each).
3. In-class writing of 15-20 news leads and short articles (2-3 paragraphs each).

OUTSIDE ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are expected to spend a minimum of three hours per unit per week in class and on outside assignments, prorated for short term classes.

1. Assigned homework and reading in text
2. Researching and interviewing for stories.

Students will spend a minimum of three hours per unit per week completing outside reading, writing and observation assignments and reviewing notes for exams.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY:

Check all that apply:

- lecture
- laboratory
- lecture-laboratory combination
- directed study

DISTANCE LEARNING:

This course may be offered as a distance learning course and meets Title 5 regulations 55370, 55372, 55374, 55376, 55378, and 55380.

Yes _____ No X

If yes, check all that apply.

- _____ Television Course (Video one-way, e.g. ITV, video cassette, etc.)
- _____ Online Course (Text one-way, e.g. newspaper, correspondence, electronic file, etc.)
- _____ Two-Way Video Conferencing (Two-way interactive video and audio)
- _____ One-Way Video Conferencing (One-way interactive video and two-way interactive audio)
- _____ Computer Assisted Instruction (A specialized form of mediated instruction relying primarily on student access to information and prepared lessons or teaching materials through a computer terminal, but not under immediate supervision of a qualified instructor.)

GRADING POLICY AND STANDARDS (include methods of determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students):

Five homework assignments:	20%	200 points
News story:	20%	200 points
Feature story:	20%	200 points
Midterm :	15%	150 points
Final exam:	20%	200 points
Class participation:	<u>5%</u>	<u>50 points</u>
Total:	100%	1000 points

IS COURSE REPEATABLE FOR REASON(S) OTHER THAN DEFICIENT GRADE?

Yes ___ No X Number of times course may be taken for credit: 1

If yes, identify specific provision of Title 5 Division 2 section(s), 55761-55763 and 58161 which qualifies course as repeatable:

58161 (c) (2) (A and B)

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SIGNATURES ON FILE