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JRNL 270.01: Reporting

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Reporting- JRNL 270-01

Syllabus – Fall 2014
(subject to change)

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:30-10:30 a.m.,
or by appointment.

Course Objectives: This course will introduce you to the fundamentals of reporting and writing news for print, online and broadcast, including the use of digital audio recording and editing equipment.

Class Meets: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 11:10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., in Don Anderson Hall-004.

Required textbooks: *News Writing and Reporting*, by Chip Scanlan and Richard Craig, Second Edition. I also expect you to read a newspaper, visit news web sites, listen to radio news and watch television news.

Successful JRNL 270 students will:

1. Develop sound news judgment.
2. Learn to write basic news stories with accuracy, clarity, logic and precision.
3. Learn to conduct interviews.
4. Understand and employ common story formats for print, broadcast and online.
5. Learn the basics of gathering and editing audio.
6. Understand basic legal and ethical principles of journalism.

There will be an assessment at the end of the semester to measure student proficiency in goals 1-2, 4-6.



Grading:

Writing assignments will be evaluated for news judgment, clarity, completeness, fairness, spelling, grammar and style, and individual grades will reflect a professional standard. The closer a piece of writing is to being publishable, the better the grade.

Misspelled names and other obvious factual mistakes will result in a lower grade for that assignment.

Final Grade Breakdown

Writing and reporting assignments	35%
Attendance and News of the Week	10%
Print and broadcast enterprise stories	40%
print and broadcast style quiz	5%
Final assessment	10%

Grading Scale:

A	100-93%
A-	92-90%
B+	89-88%
B	87-83%
B-	82-80%
C+	79-78%
C	77-73%
C-	72-70%
D	69-60%
F	Below 60%

Attendance and Participation

Pre-registered students who fail to attend the first meeting of the class may be dropped. You are expected to attend every class. You can't succeed if you miss critique sessions, lectures and labs.

Deadlines and Professionalism

Professionals are under constant pressure to produce high-quality work in a short time. A great story is of little value if it's finished too late to make the paper or get on the air. Therefore, *deadlines in this class will be strictly enforced*. Unless you make prior arrangements with me, an assignment submitted after the deadline will get an F. If you can't meet a deadline due to illness or some other emergency, *you must let me know before the deadline*. If you don't, you won't be allowed to make up the work. I will not accept any assignments more than a week after the original deadline.

Diversity Initiative

The School of Journalism has undertaken an initiative to create opportunities for students to tell stories of more varied and diverse groups of people. You will need to integrate one of these groups into an assignment. We will discuss this during the preparation for the assignment.

Academic Honesty

I expect your honesty in presenting your own work for this course. Academic misconduct at The University of Montana is subject to an academic penalty ranging from failing the assignment to expulsion from the university. Students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.

<http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPsA/index.cfm/page/1321>

Plagiarism

As defined by "The University of Montana Student Conduct Code" plagiarism is: "Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own." This is strictly prohibited in this class and any case of plagiarism in this course will be subject to the penalties outlined in the student code of conduct.

Double-dipping

You may not submit for this course any assignment that has previously, or will be concurrently, submitted for another class, unless you receive prior approval from the professor for this course. To do so without permission will result in an F for the assignment and could result in an F for the course.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

This course is accessible to and usable by otherwise qualified students with disabilities. To request reasonable program modifications, please consult with the instructor. Disability Services for Students will assist the instructor and student in the accommodation process. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at www.umt.edu/dss/.



Audio Recording Equipment:

Small teams of students will be responsible for a set of audio recording equipment for the semester. You will manage sharing the gear among your teammates.

As a group you are financially responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged equipment.

Be careful with all equipment you use. Don't leave any equipment in your car or anyplace it could be stolen. Do not lose your temper and take it out on the equipment. Problems will happen, whether you're at the network level or in college. Everything breaks down eventually. Batteries quit and computers don't always work. Be patient and learn to solve problems.

Access:

For after-hours access to Don Anderson Hall, you will be able to enter the building using the Griz Card swipe at the front door. You will also be given a key code for the door to DAH 009.

For after hours access to Don Anderson Hall, complete and submit this [form](#) online by Friday, September 5 at 5pm.

Students who miss the Sept. 5 deadline will not have after-hours access to Don Anderson Hall for the fall semester. Complete only one request form per semester – be sure to list all the Journalism courses you are taking. A door code will be assigned and provided to you via email. This request will also activate your Griz Card for the outside door and, if needed, Room 101. Codes will remain active until the last day of the semester.

Moodle

I will use Moodle for this course. Your grades will be available there, along with some handouts



Class-by-Class Topics and Assignments

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Week	Date	Class	Assignemnts	Read Before Class
1	8/26	What's News? News, the news audience and reporting	News Judgment Exercise	
	8/28	Who, What, When, Where, Why and How	In class- write a simple news story	Scanlan: Chapters 1 and 2
2	9/2	Planning stories		Scanlan: Chapters 4 and 5
	9/4	Grammar and Punctuation		Scanlan: Chapter 8
3	9/9	Language and Accuracy	Quotes and Attribution AP Style	
	9/11	Leads Elements of Leads News discussion	First lead exercise	Scanlan: Chapters 10
4	9/16	Leads 2	Second lead exercised	
	9/18	Story forms and Interviewing		Scanlan: Chapters 6 and 11
5	9/23	Covering Speeches	In class news conference	Scanlan: Chapter 17
	9/25	Covering other stories Fire story	Cover Pollner Lecture Monday, September 29- 7pm	
6	9/30	Feature and enterprise stories		
	10/2	Using Numbers		Scanlan: Chapter 9
7	10/7	Enterprise story pitches (You will write this story for both print and broadcast, so you will need to record all your interviews.		
	10/9	Broadcast writing basics	Correct sentences	Scanlan: Chapter 14
8	10/14	Broadcast leads Broadcast structure story formats, script formats personalization		
	10/16	Sound bites Gathering and working with sound Natural sound	Record natural sound	

Week	Date	Class	Assignments	Read Before Class
9	10/21	Obituaries		Scanlan: Chapter 19
	10/23	Interview and write obituary story	Obituary due at the end of class	
10	10/28	Check obits for factual errors POS Exercise- election diversity		Scanlan: Chapter 15
	10/30	Editing with Audacity		
11	11/4	Election Day- No Class		
	11/6	Reporting and Writing Online	Print enterprise story is due	Scanlan: Chapter 13
12	11/11	Veterans Day- No Class		
	11/13	Plane crash exercise	Short brief for web package for radio	
13	11/18	Plane crash exercise 2		
	11/20	Print and broadcast style quiz		
14	11/25	Ethics and libel		Scanlan: Chapter 16
	11/27	Thanksgiving- No Class		
15	12/2	Critique broadcast stories Class evaluations	Broadcast enterprise story is due	
	12/4	Assessment test		
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