



JOUR F201, News Writing for the Media

3 Credits

Fall 2023

General Information

Instructor:	Professor Lynne Snifka	Office Location:	Zoom + 704C Gruening
Email:	lmsnifka@alaska.edu	Office Hours:	By appointment
Course Location:	Canvas	Meeting Time:	Your choice! 😊

Prerequisites

WRTG F111X; WRTG F211X, WRTG F212X, WRTG F213X or WRTG F214X

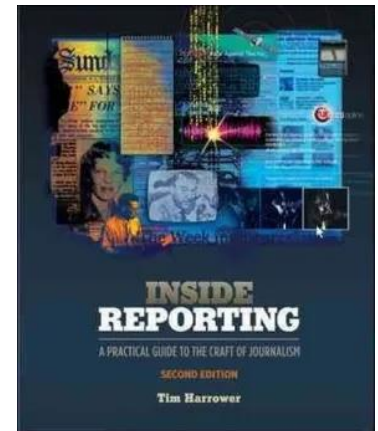
Course description

Identifying and focusing news stories, writing the lead, developing story structure, writing on deadline, editing copy, writing headlines and captions, writing styles for print, broadcast and online news presentations.

Course Readings/Materials

Required:

- *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*, by Tim Harrower (3rd Edition)
- *The Associated Press Stylebook*, 56th edition
- A regular source for local news, such as the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner or local newspaper/website, KUAC-FM (NPR affiliate), or a nightly television newscast
- Other reading as assigned



Technology Requirements

- Students must have regular access to a computer and the internet to download online materials and submit assignments in Canvas.*
- **Students must use Microsoft Word or a Word format (.docx, .doc) to submit assignments.** You MAY NOT submit work as a Google Doc. If you do not have a copy of Word, you may use your UA credentials to download one [here](#).
- Students need a mobile device capable of shooting photos and recording audio or a digital camera and audio recorder and/or video camera. Recording all interviews is recommended.

*Attempting to complete this course relying solely on a mobile phone is NOT recommended. Some material will not display or upload correctly.



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Course Goals

Students learn to identify news and produce short, factual stories meeting AP Stylebook guidelines. Basic concepts for broadcast script writing and digital publication are introduced.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students completing JOUR F201 will be able to:

- Collect information, via research and interviews, in order to compile basic news stories for print and digital platform reports
- Compose basic stories for print, broadcast and online platforms, understanding writing and presentation conventions for broadcast scripts.
- Practice introductory-level copyediting skills for print and online formats, including the use of *The Associated Press Stylebook* as an open-book reference.
- Discuss current events and their news coverage across a variety of outlets.

Explanation of Student Effort

Students should expect to spend 10-12 hours per week on this course. This includes reading assignments, reporting and writing stories, consuming news media on a daily basis, deepening their knowledge of current events, and other homework.

Note: Everything you do in this class (stories, etc.) should be *original work*. That is, you must complete interviews yourself and submit stories that haven't been written previously, either for another class or by someone else.

Course Calendar

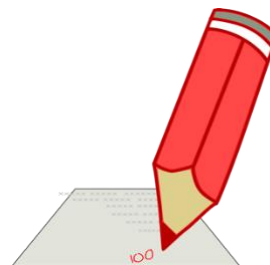
Provided in a separate document posted on Canvas.

Evaluation

My evaluation of your work includes spelling, usage, grammar, adherence to AP Style, and application and execution of the journalism principles taught in class.

COJO 202 GRADING BREAKDOWN

News Stories:	30%*
Exercises:	25%**
Quizzes:	15%
Midterm Exam:	10%
Final Exam:	10%
Discussion:	10%





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*Rewrites are weighted more heavily than initial story drafts.

**Points vary on exercises.

I do not grade on a curve. To me, each student begins the semester as an “average” student; that is, at a “C” level. If you complete all of the assignments and participate in discussion – that is, do what is expected – you will likely earn a “C.” To earn a higher grade, you must be prepared to work hard, follow through, and participate generously.

EXTRA CREDIT

I may provide opportunities to earn extra credit throughout the semester. One way to *ensure* extra credit is to get one of your stories published. Publication of any news story resulting from this class earns extra credit *commensurate with the outlet* and significance of the report. Commercial publication in, for example, the Anchorage Daily News might raise a student’s final grade by a letter or more!

Course Policies

1.) Expectations On Progress In Coursework

WHAT TO EXPECT

Writing and rewriting (which is a great habit to get into). You will have to leave your bedroom, or wherever you work on this class. You will have to talk to strangers. You will have quizzes each week that cover current events, AP Style, and readings from the textbook. Exams will be a mix of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions.

KEEPING UP

Some asynchronous courses at UAF allow students to set their own pace. THIS IS **NOT** ONE OF THOSE COURSES. It is essential that you work on this course each week and meet the deadlines listed on the class schedule. Almost all of the assignments build on those before them. You’ll need time to do the class exercises, absorb the information and lessons and apply your newfound knowledge to the story assignments. If you have extraordinary circumstances that prevent you from meeting a deadline, it

is your responsibility to contact me **BEFORE** the deadline has passed. Otherwise, you will receive the point deductions detailed under “Deadlines” below.



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ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

Coursework should be typed, double-spaced and in an easy-to-read 12-point font such as Times New Roman, Calibri, or Helvetica. Assignments should be submitted in .docx or .doc format. I use the “track changes” feature in Word to provide feedback. If you are unfamiliar with how this system works, please refer to [this tutorial](#).

The first page of your assignment should look like this:

Jane Doe – **your name**

JOUR 201 – **course**

Story One Draft – **assignment name as it appears on the assignment instructions**

October 11, 2023 – **date**

Uploaded file names should be your last name and the name of the assignment.

Example: J.Doe Story One.Draft.docx

Pay attention to assignment formatting. The consistency aids me in grading, and you in organization and revision. You know how some professors are sticklers for a couple of small, perhaps seemingly insignificant, things? This is one of mine. If either your assignment or file name is not properly formatted, you will lose five points. Keep in mind that some exercises are worth only 10 points.

DEADLINES

Each exercise and assignment in this course builds on those before it. It is essential that you keep current. Deadlines are crucial in journalism. Miss a deadline and you could lose your job. *Unless otherwise noted* on the class schedule, **assignments are due on Sundays at 11:59 p.m. Alaska time**. Any assignment submitted after the deadline will receive an automatic 25% deduction. If another day passes, the automatic deduction increases to 50%. For example, let’s say an assignment is worth 100 points. Due to errors in reporting and grammar, you earn 86 points. If that assignment is turned in two days late, your grade drops to 43 points. Keep in mind that if you do miss a deadline, it is still to your advantage to turn an assignment in (an “F” of 50 points is better than an “F” of zero).

AP STYLEBOOK

As in newsrooms, keep your AP Stylebook handy. **You may use this reference for all writing exercises, quizzes and exams.** The goal is for you to build familiarity with the style. The book works much like a dictionary, but sometimes things aren’t exactly intuitive. For example, if you wanted to know if you’re supposed to capitalize all the words in a book title, or put them in italics, you might look up “titles.” But

there you would find the rules on professional titles, such as “Senator.” The rules for book titles are under “composition titles.” (FYI, book titles are capitalized except for articles and prepositions of three letters or fewer, and there should be quotation marks around them.) The AP Stylebook also helps with common usage questions, such as the choice between “that” and “which.”

2.) Class Participation

Two things help you become a better writer: writing and reading. It’s important for you to a) prepare for the week by reading any assigned materials, and b) contribute generously to discussions when required.



In this course, discussion takes place on video using an application called Flip. In the weeks we have a discussion topic, you must a) participate by adding your own short video, and b) respond to **at least one** classmate’s contribution. Keep in mind that doing the minimum (that is, responding to just one classmate) is average, or “C,” work.

I will evaluate your participation in the class using the following general guidelines. These should help you understand my expectations.

Content, understanding: Do you follow the class discussion and build on others’ ideas? When you don’t understand something, do you ask questions?

Creativity: Do you generate your own insights and examples and share them?

Curiosity and interest: Do you bring enthusiasm to the discussion? Are you following class every week so you can be a consistent contributor? Do you share ideas or issues you’ve come across in outside reading, current events, or through personal experience?

3.) Plagiarism And Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty applies to examinations, assignments, laboratory reports, fieldwork, practicums, creative projects, or other academic activities. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a) presenting as their own the ideas or works of others without proper citation of sources;
- b) utilizing devices not authorized by the faculty member;
- c) using sources (including but not limited to text, images, computer code, and audio/video files) not authorized by the faculty member;
- d) providing assistance without the faculty member’s permission to another student, or receiving assistance not authorized by the faculty member from anyone (with or without their knowledge);



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- e) submitting work done for academic credit in previous classes, without the knowledge and advance permission of the current faculty member;
- f) acting as a substitute or utilizing a substitute;

- g) deceiving faculty members or other representatives of the university to affect a grade or to gain admission to a program or course;
- h) fabricating or misrepresenting data;
- i) possessing, buying, selling, obtaining, or using a copy of any material intended to be used as an instrument of assessment in advance of its administration;
- j) altering grade records of their own or another student's work;
- k) offering a monetary payment or other remuneration in exchange for a grade; or
- l) violating the ethical guidelines or professional standards of a given program.

For more, see [Students Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Any student found plagiarizing will receive a minimum penalty of an F for the course.

4.) Extended Absence Policy

Extended absences are defined as missed classes or course work by students beyond what is permissible by the instructor's written course policies. Students may need to miss class and/or course work for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to:

- bereavement
- personal illness or injury
- serious illness of a friend, family member or loved one
- military obligations
- jury service
- other emergency or obligatory situations

For more information, go to the student handbook or the Center for Students Rights and Responsibilities.

5.) UAF Incomplete Grade Policy:

Your instructor follows the University of Alaska Fairbanks Incomplete Grade Policy:

"The letter "I" (Incomplete) is a temporary grade used to indicate that the student has satisfactorily completed (C- or better) the majority of work in a course but for personal reasons beyond the student's control, such as sickness, has not been able to complete the course during the regular semester.

Negligence or indifference are not acceptable reasons for an "I" grade." For more information, see [the UAF regulations regarding grades](#).



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I do not grant INC (incomplete) or NB (no basis) grades, save for extreme circumstances. If you don't intend to complete the course, drop it. Otherwise, even if you haven't participated in a single week, you'll get an "F."

Student Protections Statement

UAF embraces and grows a culture of respect, diversity, inclusion, and caring. Students at this university are protected against sexual harassment and discrimination (Title IX). Faculty members are designated as responsible employees which means they are required to report sexual misconduct. Graduate teaching assistants do not share the same reporting obligations. For more information on your rights as a student

and the resources available to you to resolve problems, please go to the following site:

<https://catalog.uaf.edu/academics-regulations/students-rights-responsibilities/>.

COVID-19 statement

Students should keep up-to-date on the university's policies, practices, and mandates related to COVID-19 by regularly checking [this website](#). Further, students are expected to adhere to the university's policies, practices, and mandates and are subject to disciplinary actions if they do not comply.

Disabilities Services Statement

I will work with the Office of Disability Services to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and ensures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. I will work with the Office of Disabilities Services (208 Whitaker, 907-474-5655) to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities uaf.edu/disability/

ASUAF advocacy statement

The Associated Students of the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the student government of UAF, offers advocacy services to students who feel they are facing issues with staff, faculty, and/or other students specifically if these issues are hindering the ability of the student to succeed in their academics or go about their lives at the university. Students who wish to utilize these services can contact the Student Advocacy Director by visiting the ASUAF office or emailing asuaf.office@alaska.edu.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The University of Alaska is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and educational institution. The University of Alaska does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, citizenship, age, sex, physical or mental disability, status as a protected veteran, marital status, changes



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in marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, parenthood, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation or belief, genetic information, or other legally protected status. The University's commitment to nondiscrimination, including against sex discrimination, applies to students, employees, and applicants for admission and employment. Contact information, applicable laws, and

complaint procedures are included on UA's statement of nondiscrimination available at www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination. For more information, contact:

UAF Department of Equity and Compliance
1760 Tanana Loop, 355 Duckering Building, Fairbanks, AK 99775
907-474-7300
uaf-deo@alaska.edu

Student Academic Support

- **[Speaking Center](#)**
 - 907-474-5470
 - uaf-speakingcenter@alaska.edu
 - Gruening 507
- **[Writing Center](#)**
 - 907-474-5314
 - uaf-writing-center@alaska.edu
 - Gruening 8th floor
- **[The Debbie Moses Learning Center](#)** at CTC
 - 907-455-2860
 - 604 Barnette St, Room 120
- **[Elmer E. Rasmuson Library](#)** (help with research)
 - 907-474-7481 (phone)
 - 907-341-4404 (text)
 - AskRasmusonLibrary@uaf.libanswers.com
 - 1732 Tanana Loop
- **[Rural Student Services](#)**
 - uaf-rss@alaska.edu
 - [Tutoring Services](#)
 - Main floor Brooks Building
- **[Student Support Services](#)**
 - (907) 474-6844
- **[eCampus Student Services](#)**
 - 907-479-3444
 - toll free 1-800-277-8060
 - [contact staff directly](#)



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- [Veterans Resources Center](#)
- 907-474-2475
- Rm 111, Eielson Building.
- [Academic Advising Resource List](#)

Other Student Resources:

- [Disability Services](#)
- 907-474-5655
- uaf-disability-services@alaska.edu
- Whitaker 208
- [Student Health & Counseling](#) [6 free counseling sessions]
- 907-474-7043
- [Appointments](#)
- Whitaker 203
- [Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- 907-474-7317
- uaf-studentrights@alaska.edu
- Eielson 110
- [ASUAF Student Government](#)
- 907-474-7355
- asuaf.office@alaska.edu

Title IX

University of Alaska Board of Regents have clearly stated in BOR Policy that discrimination, harassment and violence will not be tolerated on any campus of the University of Alaska. If you believe you are experiencing discrimination or any form of harassment including sexual harassment/misconduct/assault, you are encouraged to report that behavior. If you report to a faculty member or any university employee, they must notify the UAF Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident.

Your choices for reporting include:

1. You may access confidential counseling by contacting the UAF Health & Counseling Center at 907-474-7043;
2. You may access support and file a Title IX report by contacting the UAF Title IX Coordinator at 907-474-6600;
3. You may file a criminal complaint by contacting the University Police Department at 907-474-7721. For more information please visit the [UAF Department of Equity and Compliance](#) webpage.



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Any UAF employee or volunteer who reasonably suspects or observes minor abuse or maltreatment is required to report the incident. Reporting procedures are available on the UAF Protection of Minors. Violation of this policy by employees shall be reported as well.

Emergency Notification Plan

Students will receive emergency notifications via phone or email. Please check your uaonline account to confirm your emergency notification settings. for more information, please refer to the student handbook. In cases where you do not have access to your devices, as your instructor, I will take responsibility to relay any emergency notifications.