
JOURNALISM: WRITING & REPORTING in Fall 2020 (CM1011)

Course Code	CM1011	Professor(s)	Hannah Westley
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-306
Class Schedule	F: 16:20-17:55 in PL-1 T: 10:50-12:25 in PL-1	Office Hours	By appointment
Credits	4	Email	hwestley@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2020	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

COURSE DESCRIPTION, STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND GRADING

What opportunities does this course offer you?

Taking this course will offer you foundational skills that will help you in your other university courses and in life. Studying journalism means learning how to develop communication competences and sharpen critical thinking. From learning how to sift information, to identifying what is important and working in a cross-platform environment, you will learn how to make judgements on how to filter the quality, integrity and importance of the material being provided to you, what are the crucial questions to ask of a source, and how to present issues to audiences in engaging and innovative ways. The world of journalism offers something new and different every day; with each new assignment comes a new sector of life to capture. If you are curious, have an open mind and a strong desire to learn new things, journalism will come naturally.

What will you be doing in class?

Each week you will be engaged in learning about journalism, how it functions, where it comes from and the role it plays in our social, political and cultural lives. We will think about journalism in a comparative context, locally and globally, about journalists who cross borders and about the impact of journalism throughout history. We will consider the future of journalism, how we got to the digital age and where we go next. Thinking independently, you will become your own best editor and help others evaluate their writing. You will learn how to identify news, source stories, gather information and write accurately under deadline pressure. You will get a taste of all

aspects of journalistic writing which will allow you to demonstrate and develop your writing skills and learn how to communicate complex ideas in clear and correct English across diverse media platforms.

Tuesday's class will take the form of a lecture and discussion based on the week's reading. Friday's session will be student-led: there will be a short quiz devised and marked by students; there will be a student presentation related to the week's topic, followed by a respondent; we will also conduct peer review of the weekly blog.

How will you know if you're making progress?

Every week, you will be producing written work in class which you will post to the class blog. This will allow you to receive immediate feedback both from myself and your classmates. Class quizzes are an opportunity for you to show how much you've learnt about the discipline and we'll go over them in class to see what areas you still need to work on. Students will take turns to make presentations on areas of journalism they are particularly interested in. These exercises will make up 30% of your final grade. Another 20% will come from your regular attendance and participation in class discussions. Your midterm paper, worth 15%, will take the form of a feature article which you will research and write independently (with some advice from me). You will also sit a midterm exam, 15%, which will test you on your comprehension of the main concepts covered thus far in class. Your final piece of work, worth 20%, will be a two-part assignment: an original piece of reporting, sourced, researched and written by yourself, accompanied by a critical reflection focused on how and why you wrote the piece as you did.

In your written work, I will be looking for accuracy, grammar, spelling, AP style, clarity, deadlines, conciseness, structure, proper punctuation, quality of interviews/reporting and use of quotes (if applicable), use/number/quality of sources, attribution, research, objectivity, etc. You must abide by the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics (<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>), NPPA (<https://nppa.org/ethics>), and the RTNDA Code of Ethics (http://www.rtdna.org/content/rtdna_code_of_ethics#.VTNMjltAwUU). If you miss the deadline, your story won't run so grading will also be based on meeting deadlines. Late work is not accepted. Work of publishable quality will receive an A. Stories with minor errors will receive a B. Stories with several errors will receive a C. Stories with many errors will receive a D. Any assignment with a Gross Factual Error (GFE, such as a name misspelling or incorrect fact) will receive an F.

How can I improve my chances of success?

You should come to each class session prepared to work. A successful journalist is someone who is curious, thirsts for knowledge and new information. Before each class, you will have completed the readings outlined on the schedule as well as be abreast of the day's headlines. You already surf the Internet, have a strong social media presence and read interesting articles, now you will learn how to make your voice heard in new and innovative ways.

NB: You should bring your laptops and earphones to all Friday classes.

Course Learning Outcomes

Learn about the history and professional role of reporting from a culturally comparative perspective.

Be able to identify news, source stories, gather information and write to a deadline.

Be able to sift, prioritize and present complex information in a clear, accurate and engaging fashion.

Be able to make judgements about the quality, integrity and importance of source material.

Think independently, be your own best editor and help others evaluate their writing.

General Education

GLACC:

The Global Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (GLACC) degree requirements include the following categories of courses:

- *Integrative Inquiry (coded CCI)*
- *Experiential learning (coded CCX)*
- X *Research, Interpretation, and Writing (coded CCE)*
- *Digital Literacy and Communication (coded CCD)*
- *Disciplinary Research Methods and Writing (coded CCR)*
- *Quantitative Reasoning (coded CCM)*

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- *Experimental Reasoning Course with Lab (coded CCS)*
 - *Expression Française (coded FR)*
 - *AUP Capstone (coded CCC)]*

This course can be used to fulfil the CCE requirement and as such has the following learning outcomes (Learning Outcomes for GLACC components are defined on the [AUP GLACC Website](#)):

You will be able to engage in the writing practices and culture of your chosen major, adding to the skills you acquired in the Research, Interpretation, and Writing classes to develop a personal, authentic disciplinary voice.

Course Outline

CLASS SCHEDULE:

September

Week I – 23rd-25th

Friday 25th

Introductory class: syllabus, learning outcomes, hybrid teaching

Week II – 28th-2nd

Discovering Journalism

Student Learning Outcome (hereafter SLO): You will have a general overview of journalism, its history, future, and its role in a democratic society.

READINGS

- The Elements of Journalism, The American Press Institute

<https://www.americanpressinstitute.org/journalism-essentials/what-is-journalism/elements-journalism/>

- Alan Rusbridger: *Extract from Breaking News: The Remaking of Journalism and Why It Matters Now*, 2018 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2018/aug/31/alan-rusbridger-who-broke-the-news>
- Speaking Truth to Power: <http://niemanreports.org/articles/a-century-of-pulitzer-journalism-speaking-truth-to-power/>
- Reporters without Borders: <https://rsf.org/en>
- Susan Smith Richardson, *Making Black Lives Matter in the News*, 2015
- <https://niemanreports.org/articles/making-black-lives-matter-in-the-news/>

Tuesday 29th - Session I

Lecture and discussion based on readings

Friday 2nd - Session II

Student-led quiz

Presentation with respondent

September 30th – last day to drop/add courses online

OCTOBER

Week III – 5th – 9th

How do you know it's news? The components of the story

SLO: You will be able to identify a newsworthy story, recognise the inherent values of news and explain the structure of a news story

READINGS

- On Blackboard: How do you know its news? From *So you want to be a journalist? Unplugged*. Second Edition, Grundy, Hirst, Little, Hayes, Treadwell, CUP, 2012
- Writing News: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/sep/25/writing.journalism.news>
- Style
Guides: <http://www.poynter.org/2011/how-many-style-guides-do-journalists-really-need/132992/>
- International Center for Journalists: Covering Covid-19: Resources for Journalists, 2020 <https://www.icfj.org/our-work/covering-covid-19-resources-journalists>

Tuesday 6th - Session I

Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog Assignment: Write 200 words (in the first person) answering this question: Why are you studying journalism? What does journalism mean to you?

NOTE: All blog posts started on Tuesday must be published by Thursday at 9am. You are expected to comment on (at least two) of your peers' posts by Friday's class.

Friday 9th - Session II

Student-led quiz

Presentation with respondent

Blog review

Week IV -12th – 16th

Writing News for Readers

SLO: You will be able to write a short news story and be aware of the different styles and formats available to you.

READINGS

- See Blackboard, The Lead, from Melvin Mencher, *News Reporting and Writing*, chapter 6
- The Structure: <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/01/cut-this-story/307823/>
- The Hourglass: <http://www.poynter.org/2003/the-hourglass-serving-the-news-serving-the-reader/12624/>

Tuesday 13th - Session I

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog Assignment: Read online newspapers to find two examples of good leads and two examples of bad leads. Cut and paste the first few paragraphs of the story into a separate document and cite why you liked the lead or didn't. Underline and label the who, what, when, where, why, how and how much questions answered in the opening paragraphs.

Friday 16th - Session II

Student-led quiz

Presentation with respondent

Blog review

Week V –19th - 23rd

Fact Checking and Sub Editing

SLO: You will understand the importance of and necessity for correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. You will know how to evaluate the quality and reliability of information and how to check online sources

You will appreciate the importance of fact-checking in an age of misinformation.

READINGS

- How do journalists verify information: <http://www.poynter.org/2013/new-research-details-how-journalists-verify-information/203728/>
- On Blackboard: Research, from *So you want to be a journalist? Unplugged*. Second Edition, Grundy, Hirst, Little, Hayes, Treadwell, CUP, 2012

Tuesday 20th - Session I

Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog Assignment: Make a list of the news websites available to Anglophone residents in France. Peruse their headlines. Find one story you would like to follow up and write the pitch for it. How would you research this story? List the possible research methods you would use.

Friday 23rd - Session II

Student-led quiz

Presentation with respondent

Blog review

Week VI – 26th – 30th

Feature Writing

SLO: You will understand the tradition of feature writing and its technical components

READINGS

- On Blackboard: Feature Writing from *The Responsible Reporter, Journalism in the Information Age*, Bruce Evensen, Peter Lang 2014
- Issac J. Bailey, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and one journalist's painfully honest self-examination on racism, May 2020 <https://niemanreports.org/articles/george-floyd-ahmaud-arbery-and-one-journalists-painfully-honest-self-examination-on-racism/>
- The winner of the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for feature writing: <http://www.pulitzer.org/winners/kathryn-schulz>

Tuesday 27th - Session I

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog assignment: Select three feature articles and note their defining characteristics. Write a news piece derived from one of the features.

Friday 30th - Session II

Mid-semester exam

NOVEMBER

Week VII – 2nd - 6th

Multimedia Journalism and Writing News for the Web

SLO: You will be able to write a story for an online platform and will have an understanding of how online journalism is transforming the industry

READINGS

- Writing News for the Web: <http://www.poynter.org/2003/writing-news-online/13605/>
- Writing for Mobile: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/skills/digital-journalism/article/art20141202144618106>
- Reflecting on the role of social media and the news: <http://mediashift.org/2015/09/how-social-media-platforms-are-changing-the-business-of-news/>
- Curating online news: <https://www.journalism.co.uk/news/distributed-news-how-buzzfeed-curates-stories-for-social-platforms/s2/a609312/>

Tuesday 3rd - Session I

Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog Assignment: Write the headline, lede and two paragraphs of a news story for a mobile device. This should be a campus news story. You can research and interview fellow students

Friday 6th - Session II

Student-led quiz

Presentation with respondent

Blog review

Week VIII – 9th – 13th

Writing Broadcast News

SLO: You will know how to write a broadcast news story and understand the role of broadcast journalism in today's society

READINGS

- Radio and TV
Basics: http://www.thenewsmanual.net/Manuals%20Volume%202/volume2_48.htm
- Radio on the
wane? <https://medium.com/@lwalker/radios-next-incarnation-join-the-creative-disruption-a527ec2a364#.hhwm6s6ph>

Tuesday 10th - Session I

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog assignment: Find an example of a news broadcast transcript online. Select an online news story and rewrite it for a radio news bulletin.

Mid-semester assignment due

Friday 13th – no class

November 11th to 13th, fall break (no classes)

Week IX – 16th – 20th

The Meaning of Professional

SLO: You will understand the fundamental values and principles of journalism, such as truth-telling, watchdog reporting, accuracy, courage, tolerance, minimizing harm, and justice. You will be aware of the importance of knowing your rights as a journalist and the way the law both shapes and defines your journalistic practice. You will have compared the rights and freedoms of journalists operating across national borders and under different regimes.

READINGS

- Emily Bell: Tech Platforms have a trust problem, 2020

https://www.cjr.org/tow_center/tech-platforms-have-a-trust-problem-do-they-care.php

- Why we trust:
http://www.cjr.org/special_report/why_we_trust_and_why_thats_changing_online.php
- This could happen to YOU: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/may/26/open-door-column-note-to-readers>
- http://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Trust%20and%20Journalism%20in%20a%20Digital%20Environment_0.pdf
- On Blackboard: Responsible Reporting and the Law from *The Responsible Reporter, Journalism in the Information Age*, Bruce Evensen, Peter Lang 2014
- Know Your Rights: <http://www.splc.org/page/presentations-and-handouts>

Tuesday 17th - Session I

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog assignment: Write a news report about a disgraced reporter or someone who has breached the public's trust.

Friday 20th - Session II

Student-led quiz

Presentation with respondent

Blog review

November 16th, Mid-semester grades due

Week X- 23rd -27th

Writing Beyond the Inverted Pyramid

SLO: You will explore new and nontraditional ways to present information and learn which types of alternative formats work best with each type of news story.

READINGS

- On Blackboard: Writing Beyond the Inverted Pyramid from *So you want to be a journalist? Unplugged*. Second Edition, Grundy, Hirst, Little, Hayes, Treadwell, CUP, 2012
- The Pros and Cons of the Inverted Pyramid: <http://www.poynter.org/2003/writing-from-the-top-down-pros-and-cons-of-the-inverted-pyramid/12754/>

Tuesday 24th - Session I

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog assignment: Identify news stories which use different structures to the inverted pyramid. Explain the structures. Rewrite a news story in an alternative format.

Friday 27th - Session II

Student-led quiz

Presentation with respondent

Blog review

November 27th, last day to withdraw from a course, last day to choose credit/no credit option

DECEMBER

Week XI -30th - 4th

Interviewing and the Long Story

SLO: You will understand and be able to employ the main interviewing techniques. You will have an understanding of the tradition of and renewal of interest in longform journalism

READINGS

- On Blackboard: Four Principles of Interviewing, Melvin Mencher
- Interviewing: <http://www.poynter.org/2013/how-journalists-can-become-better-interviewers/205518/>
- Longform journalism: <http://www.fastcompany.com/3042312/most-creative-people/the-secrets-of-writing-smart-longform-articles-that-go-absolutely-viral>
- Critical Thinking: <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/12/against-long-form-journalism/282256/>

Tuesday 1st - Session I

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog assignment: Choose an interviewee, research and prepare your questions. This could be someone on campus you find inspiring, someone you have met in Paris or a professional whose career you would like to know more about. Interviews must be posted by class on Tuesday.

Friday 4th - Session II

Student-led quiz

Presentation with respondent

Blog review

Week XII -7th – 11th

Investigative Reporting

SLO: You will understand the social and professional role of the investigative journalist

Watch Spotlight

READINGS

- Introduction to Investigative Reporting: http://www.thenewsmanual.net/Manuals%20Volume%202/volume2_39.htm
- The Bureau of Investigative Journalism: <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com>
- http://sand-kas-ten.org/ijm/Chapter_1.pdf
- The Panama Papers: the largest international investigative journalism project of all time: <http://qz.com/729106/how-two-german-newspaper-reporters-broke-the-story->

[behind-the-panama-papers/](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-47418382)

Tuesday 8th - Session I

TOPICS: Lecture and discussion based on readings

Blog assignment: Select a piece of investigative journalism and identify the research techniques and sources that have been used. Write a news piece about the investigative article.

Friday 11th - Session II

Course conclusion

December 11th, last day of classes,

December 12th - 15th, reading days

December 16th – 22th, Final Exam

January 4nd, all grades due

Final Exam as published on schedule

Final assignments due at the start of class. Each student will spend five minutes discussing his

or her story; topics may include new skills learned, interesting details that emerged during reporting, any particular challenges, story structure, and/or how the story might be expanded into a longer feature article. Attendance is mandatory.

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any special faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Excessive absences result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if it is impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and *especially during the*

Covid-19 temporary amendments:

Students studying at The American University of Paris are still expected to attend ALL scheduled classes. During the pandemic, students will have the option of attending classes remotely when special circumstances apply. Students are placed under quarantine by the French authorities or by their doctor, or when students present symptoms directed, by their doctor or the AUP Health Office, to remain home. It is still the student's responsibility to follow the attendance policy that their professor might have set in the course syllabus. In particular, students attending in the Paris Zones should check with their professors about the specific attendance policy for remote learners.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STATEMENT: As an Anglophone university, The American University of Paris is committed to effective English language mastery at the undergraduate level. Most courses require scholarly writing, written and oral presentations in English, and AUP students are expected to strive to achieve excellence in their course work. To that end, professors include English proficiency among the criteria in student evaluation. Students are encouraged to visit the university Writing Lab where they may obtain help on specific academic assignments. Proficiency is assessed at various points throughout the student's academic career, most notably during the admissions and advising process, when completing general education requirements, and during the accomplishment of degree program course requirements.

Grading Policy

Every week, you will be producing written work in class which you will post to the class blog. This will allow you to receive immediate feedback both from myself and your classmates. Class quizzes are an opportunity for you to show how much you've learnt about the discipline and we'll go over them in class to see what areas you still need to work on. Students will take turns to make presentations on areas of journalism they are particularly interested in. These exercises will make up 30% of your final grade. Another 20% will come from your regular attendance and participation in class discussions. Your midterm paper, worth 15%, will take the form of a feature article which you will research and write independently (with some advice from me). You will also sit a midterm exam, 15%, which will test you on your comprehension of the main concepts covered thus far in class. Your final piece of work, worth 20%, will be a two-part assignment: an original piece of reporting, sourced, researched and written by yourself, accompanied by a critical reflection focused on how and why you wrote the piece as you did.

Other
