

Loyola University Chicago
Spring 2014
CMUN 315/Advanced Reporting
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
12:35-1:25 p.m.
School of Communication Room 003
John T. Slania
School of Communication 237
Office Phone: (312) 915-6524
Email: jslania@luc.edu.com

Course description

Advanced Reporting is a capstone course designed for experienced journalism students to utilize their reporting and writing skills by engaging in the community and exploring social justice issues. Students will use their skills in reporting, writing, layout and design, video and audio to report and produce feature stories for two School of Communication sites devoted to alumni and social issues. We are going to embark on an ambitious and hopefully rewarding mission of producing a website and hardcover book featuring working people in Chicago. And we will be producing written and video stories on successful alumni in the School of Communication.

The goal of this course is to teach students the fundamentals of Advanced Reporting, including developing news judgment, understanding ethical and legal issues, writing with objectivity and accuracy and telling a story in a compelling and organized manner. This course also will emphasize the importance of journalism as a catalyst for social justice: how journalism can change the world for the better. Students will learn through lectures, assignments, creating and building websites, producing video and audio stories and a hardcover book.

This is a Writing Intensive course. While you will be producing multi-platform projects, there will be a strong emphasis on the writing – and rewriting – of articles and scripts.

Course Learning Outcomes

You will learn about alumni and social issues through course readings and lectures.
You will research alumni and social issues and go out to neighborhoods in Chicago to conduct interviews on various social issues and topics.
You will write a series of articles on these social issues.
These articles will be posted on websites with your byline.

Instructor Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Tuesday, Thursday: 10-noon.

Texts and Course Materials

The Associated Press Style Book

University Engaged Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome: Promote leadership development and civic engagement.

A significant element of Loyola's Jesuit Catholic heritage is a focus on developing within each student the capacity for leadership expressed in service to others. Consistent with that heritage, the curriculum should provide students, regardless of major, with the knowledge, skills, and abilities that will prepare them to become ethical and innovative members of the workforce; to assume leadership roles in their chosen organizations; and to make a positive difference in the work place and their communities through civic engagement.

Competencies: By way of example, Loyola graduates should be able to:

- Identify models of leadership and civic engagement, both current and historical.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical responsibilities of leadership and its relationship to the Jesuit tradition.
- Apply analytical and reflective tools to assess situations and recognize leadership possibilities and opportunities for civic engagement.
- Articulate a vision that can empower and inspire others.
- Demonstrate effective team-building skills.
- Evaluate the leadership style of self and others.
- Engage in the community through activities effecting positive change in society and the environment.

How Advanced Reporting Addresses University Engaged Learning Outcomes

Leadership: Students demonstrate leadership skills by taking the initiative to research topics, select the story topics, make appointments to conduct interviews, otherwise report the story and write the story. Additionally, students produce a video, photography or audio project.

Teamwork: The course also promotes teamwork, since students in the class are working together to produce a news website. Each student writes stories, and those stories are edited by the instructor. A team spirit develops as the semester progresses and the website gets closer to production.

Civic Engagement: The research and reporting effort, in which students go into Chicago neighborhoods and interview people is true civic engagement.

Inspiring Positive Change: We hope the websites tell important stories to the world and inspire people to volunteer, contribute funds, or other efforts to affect positive change.

Reflection: The writing of news and feature articles, recording audio and shooting video are examples of students reflect on their experiences and encounters.

Grading

Students will be expected to know material covered in lectures and the textbook, and this will be measured through outside writing assignments and exercises.

Grades will be determined in the following manner:

- First Project: 450 points
- Second Project: 250 points
- In-class writing exercises: 100 points
- Position and Duties for Class Projects: 100 points
- Professionalism: 100 points

Note: Website and book designers can get exempted from one of the projects if they demonstrate that their design and layout work requires significant time.

Grading Criteria for Written Work

A: Publishable work with no spelling, grammatical, punctuation or AP Style errors and the proper information and sources written in a lively, well-organized manner.

B: Minimal spelling, grammatical, punctuation and/or AP Style errors. Minimal missing information and sources; minimal problems with the lead and organization.

C: Notable number of spelling, grammatical, punctuation and/or AP Style errors. Noticeable missing information and sources; problems with the lead and organization.

D: Significant number of spelling, grammatical, punctuation and/or AP Style errors. Significant missing information and sources; Significant problems with the lead and organization.

F: Misspelling of proper names. Other major spelling, grammatical, punctuation and/or AP Style errors. Almost total lack of information and sources; Severe problems with the lead and organization.

Grading Criteria for Video, Photography or Audio Work:**Video:**

A: Clearly focused video, proper framing, lively content, tells a compelling story, understandable audio, 3-5 minutes in length.

B-F: Varies depending upon how many of the above items are missing.

Photography:

A: Clearly focused, proper framing, lively content, tells a compelling story, variety of photographs in sample.

B-F: Varies depending upon how many of the above items are missing.

Audio:

A: Understandable audio, lively content, tells a compelling story, 3-5 minutes in length.

B-F: Varies depending upon how many of the above items are missing.

Rewrites and Editing

If the instructor determines you need to rewrite a written story, or edit a video or audio package, you have one week to rewrite the story for a slightly improved grade.

Deadlines

Deadlines are important in journalism, and you will be required to file assignments on time. Late assignments will drop one letter grade each day they are filed past deadline. The instructor does not accept assignments by e-mail without prior approval.

Individual Assignment Grade Scale

A: 100-94
A-: 93-90
B+: 89-88
B: 87-83
B-: 82-80
C+ 79-78
C: 77-73
C-: 72-70
D+: 69-68
D: 67-63
D-: 62-60
F: 59-0

Style and Spelling

It is important that you learn proper newspaper style, so refer often to your Associated Press Stylebook. Spelling and grammar are equally important. Your grade will suffer if your copy contains style and spelling errors.

Professionalism

This class is run like a newsroom, and you should treat it as if it were your job. Therefore, you will be expected to display a respectable level of professionalism by attending class regularly, arriving on time, being prepared for class, paying attention during lectures and participating in discussions. Frequent absences will result in a lower grade. Showing up on time also is crucial, since much material will be covered in lectures and writing labs. It is important to be on time. Tardiness will be taken into consideration when computing your final grade. If you're expecting to be absent or late, please call or email me **before** class, the same practice as if you were holding a job.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student's work, and submitting false documents. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;

- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;
- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines; or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism. A more detailed description of this issue can be found at <http://luc.edu/english/writing.shtml#source> .

In addition, a student may not submit the same paper or other work for credit in two or more classes. This applies even if the student is enrolled in the classes during different semesters. If a student plans to submit work with similar or overlapping content for credit in two or more classes, the student should consult with all instructors prior to submission of the work to make certain that such submission will not violate this standard.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

A complete description of the School of Communication Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <http://www.luc.edu/soc/Policy.shtml>

Schedule

(Subject to change)

Week One

January 13, 15, 17

Lecture: Introduction, learning AP style; Alumni Website Project

Homework: Research Working Profile

Week Two

January 22, 24

Lecture: How to write feature leads, structure of story

Lecture: Profile stories

Homework: Research Profile

Week Three

January 27, 29, 31

Lecture: Research, interviewing and sourcing

Homework: Work on Profile

Week Four

February 3, 5, 7

Lecture: Layout and design

Homework: Work on Profile

Week Five

February 10, 12, 14

Discussion: Website project

Homework: Finish Profile

Week Six

February 17, 19, 21

Discussion: Alumni Website

Homework: Research Alumni Profile Story

FIRST PROJECT DUE

Week Seven

February 24, 26, 28

Discussion: Alumni Website

Homework: Research Alumni Profile Story

Week Eight

March 3, 5, 7

Spring Break!

Week Nine

March 10, 12, 14

Discussion: Website project

Book project

Week Ten**March 17, 19, 21**

Discussion: Website project

Book project

Week Eleven**March 24, 26, 28**

Discussion: Website project

Book project

SECOND PROJECT DUE**Week Twelve****March 31, April 2, 4**

Discussion: Website project

Book project

Week Thirteen**April 7, 9, 11**

Discussion: Website project

Book project

Week Fourteen**April 14, 16, 18**

Discussion: Website project

Book project

Week Fifteen**April 21, 23, 25**

Discussion: Website project

Book project