

SYLLABUS
REPORTING BASICS I
COMM 205-01W
Dr. Fletcher
MWF 8:15-9:05 a.m.
Mundelein 205

HOW TO USE THIS SYLLABUS:

THIS SYLLABUS HAS FOUR PARTS:

- 1. PART I PRESENTS DEADLINES FOR QUIZZES AND PAPERS. IT ALSO GIVES THE PERCENTAGE VALUE FOR ASSIGNMENTS.**
- 2. PART II DESCRIBES THE COURSE AND THE GRADING SYSTEM**
- 3. PART III CONTAINS THE GROUND RULES FOR THE COURSE**
- 4. PART IV PRESENTS THE CLASS SCHEDULE.**

THIS FORMAT SHOULD HELP YOU ACCESS INFORMATION QUICKLY BY SCROLLING TO “Part I, II, III, or IV.” It also will keep you on top of quiz, exam, and deadline dates, since they are listed first. It might be a good idea to copy and paste these inside your notebook or post to your phone.

IMPORTANT: You are responsible for knowing the content of the syllabus. The rules and regulations apply, whether you have reviewed them or not. You should also check SAKAI each week and before each class (under “Announcements”) for any changes.

PART I: Exams, Quizzes and Paper Deadlines for This Class:

- ✓ 2/23 Article One (800-1000 words) 10 percent of grade
- ✓ 2/24 Grammar and Punctuation Quiz 10 percent of grade
- ✓ 3/13 Midterm, Part One
- ✓ 3/15 Midterm, Part Two (Midterm is worth 20 percent of grade)

- ✓ **3/30: Article Two (900- 1200 words) 10 percent of grade**
- ✓ **4/21 Rewrites Due.**
- ✓ **4/26 AP Style Quiz (earns points on final exam)**
- ✓ **4/28 Article Three (900-1200 words) 10 percent of grade. AP Style quiz.**
- ✓ **5/4 Final Exam, 9-11 a.m. (Final is worth 20 percent of grade).**

NOTE: We will talk about how to do the outside papers in class. I will also post a template for each paper assignment and the exams under “Announcements” on Sakai.

WORK THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER:

- ✓ **Lab work (writing in class on deadline): 20 percent**
- ✓ **Participation in class and lab (this means active and constructive contributions, not just attendance): may raise your grade by a half to one full letter grade. Minimal participation/distracting, disruptive behavior may lower your grade by a half to one full letter grade. (See “Participation,” in Part II, Ground Rules, below)**

REWRITES: Lab assignments and the first article may be rewritten for a new grade; however, they must consist of **new material**. If you want to rewrite a lab, ask me for a different assignment. If you need to rewrite the first article, you must attend a different event. If your rewrite is lower than your original paper, you earn the higher grade.

You may hand in a rewritten assignment (hard copy) at any time during the semester. However, the absolute deadline for lab rewrites is 4/21. The deadline for these must be handed in as hard copies. No rewrites will be accepted after 4/21.

LAB DEADLINES: At the end of most labs, you will email me your work; the **deadline is the end of class**. Failure to meet the deadline, even by a minute, means the lab receives a zero.

Journalism is about meeting deadlines; it is better to send something that may need a few more sentences or some editing instead of not submitting your article at all.

PART II: COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GRADING STANDARDS

Course Description: This course fills a requirement for the Journalism minor and major and for Advertising/Public Relations. It is also a "writing intensive" course.

Course Goals: This course takes a critical approach ("critical" meaning both enhancing your appreciation of what it takes to gather and report the news and increasing your awareness of the news media's difficulties) to contemporary media reporting and writing. You will learn about reporting and writing for different platforms (print, broadcast, and internet). An important emphasis throughout will be ethical issues in news gathering and reporting. This course will introduce you to what constitutes reliable journalism (as opposed to fake news) AND the basic elements of media reporting and writing, with emphasis on developing news judgment, finding and verifying information, learning effective interviewing skills, meeting deadlines, and learning how to write clearly and concisely.

Required Text:

Writing and Reporting for the Media, 11th edition. Bender, et al. Students must have THIS edition by the second week of class.

NOTE: This is available at Loyola's Bookstore, LSC.

Class Format:

The first and second class of each week usually will consist of lecture and discussion. The third class usually will be lab, during which you will usually write in class, on deadline. **Make sure you bring your laptop with you on lab days.** Most assignments will be emailed to me.

Grading:

- ✓ You'll receive guidelines, posted on SAKI
- ✓ Announcements, for your three outside papers and for the midterm and final exams ahead of time.
- ✓ You'll be given a certain number of points for each assignment. These points will be put on a curve for each assignment and then converted to letter grades.
- ✓ Your final grade will be an average of all your letter grades on assignments.

PART THREE: GROUND RULES:

Absences: Attendance counts. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting the notes from another student. Authorized absences for travel (e.g., travel for a club or team) must be cleared with me in advance. Documentation must be provided. If you are sick for more than one week, you should bring in documentation from your doctor or the Wellness Center.

Plan carefully: If you miss a lab or an exam, you cannot make it up (unless for pre-authorized travel or if you have a documented illness or authorized absence).

Laptop/iPhone Use: Laptops and other digital devices cannot be used to take notes during lectures, unless you have an authorized, documented reason for doing so. Using one without such permission will count against your participation grade

Class Participation:

Positive Contributions and your final grade: In class, questions and comments are welcome. Contributing in class **regularly** in a consistent, meaningful, and attentive way can raise your grade, at the professor's discretion, by as much as one full letter grade. You cannot receive an A in this class if you never contribute. If you miss nine or more classes altogether without documented authorization you cannot receive higher than a D for your final grade.

Negative Contributions and your final grade: Inappropriate classroom behavior (rudeness to others: being disruptive, distracting, or disrespectful) can lower your final grade by as much as one full letter grade, at the discretion of the professor.

The following behaviors will negatively impact your participation grade:

- ✓ Coming in late (Everyone gets one free late; after that, it counts).
- ✓ Leaving during class (unless it is for an authorized medical reason; you must bring in the documentation from SSWD by Week Two)
- ✓ Looking at your computer/cell phone, using your laptop, or doing other work during class.

For the above, I'll give you a warning the first time. After that, I'll keep track of the above, which will affect your participation and final grade.

OTHER RULES:

- ✓ No eating is allowed in class. (unless it is for a documented medical reason)
- ✓ Make sure your cell phones are off (**not** on vibrate) before class begins.
- ✓ No laptops allowed during lectures, unless you have a documented reason for needing to use one, or if we're doing an assignment requiring laptops in class.

Academic Dishonesty Policy:

- ✓ **Plagiarism** of any form and of any length on assignments will be reported to the Dean of Students immediately and the student will receive a grade of "F" for the course. According to Loyola University guidelines(SOC website):

“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 or images produced by others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, audio, video, etc.”

- ✓ **Fabrication** of a whole assignment, or any part of an assignment, will result in an “F” for this course.
- ✓ **Cheating** on an exam or quiz will result in an "F" for this course.

Office Hours:

MWF: I'm available after 10:10 a.m.

Email me (cfletch@luc.edu) ahead of time to set up an appointment, since my office is at WTC, not LSC. We'll meet at LSC, however, unless it fits both our schedules to meet at WTC.

Throughout the semester, feel free to email me any time with questions about your work.

And, if you're interested in journalism as a possible field, keep checking our Facebook page for news of hiring, events, advising, etc.

It's: https://www.facebook.com/multimediajournalismloyola/?view_public_for=709689009194073

PART IV

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Changes in the schedule may be made, depending on the progress we make through the material and the schedules of guests.

Written assignments are due on the date indicated. If you fail to turn in an outside paper by the deadline, unless you have a documented reason, your grade is zero for that paper. A zero is also awarded late papers, even by a minute. You have to meet your deadlines.

Articles may be added to your readings.

Note: Readings are to be completed by the date indicated. For each chapter, follow the page guidelines below and stop reading when you get to the exercises.

A brief quiz may be given at the start of class whenever there is a reading. If you come in after the quiz, you cannot make it up.

Pop quizzes may also be given on the lectures at any point during the semester. Quizzes will count as part of your lab grade.

NOTE: Bring your laptop on lab days.

1/18 Introduction.

Go through syllabus and assignments.

1/20 Lab. Observation. Standard assessment.

1/23 FOCUS: CONTEMPORARY JOURNALISM AND WHAT IS NEWS?

Read the following before class.

- ✓ Bender. Preface (xv-xviii. Stop at "New Features")
- ✓ Bender, Chapter 1

In class:

- ✓ View NYT front page.

1/25 Before class:

- ✓ Bender, Chapter 2 (Read through “Reporter’s Guide to Accuracy,” p.23)

In class:

- ✓ View *Guardian* ad.

1/27 Lab BRING YOUR LAPTOP

Before class, review Bender, Figure 1.5, p.11 on formatting papers. Pay special attention to where to put name, date, and slug line. **From this class on, five points off for incorrect formatting (this applies to lab and outside papers).**

1/30 FOCUS OF WEEK: COVERING EVENTS AND USING ATTRIBUTION

1/30: *Chicago Sun-Times* reporter will be in class to talk about covering events, including the last election. **Take notes. This will form the basis of your lab on 2/3.**

2/1 EVENT COVERAGE (CONT.) THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTION

Before class, read:

Read Bender, Chapter 15, p. 304, “Covering the Speech or Meeting,” through end of chapter, SKIPPING p. 308 and “Internet Brings Pornography to Children,” pp. 311-312.

Read <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/11/business/media/donald-trump-buzzfeed-cnn.html> re Trump’s first news conference (as example of event coverage).

In class: Talk about how to cover an event for your first article (due 2/23)

2/3 LAB. BRING LAPTOP.

2/6 FOCUS: NEWSWRITING STYLE. MEANING OF OBJECTIVITY

Before class:

- ✓ Bender, Chapter 3.

2/8 FOCUS: GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION

Before class, read:

- ✓ Bender, Chapter 4
- ✓ Bender, Appendix B, pp. 455-457

Last 15 minutes of class: **Grammar/Punctuation pre-quiz. Do this without looking anything up. This pre-quiz will not be graded; the goal is to get feedback so you learn what you need to work on or Grammar Quiz on 3/3.**

NOTE: Your Grammar/Punctuation/ Quiz on 2/24 will cover the above material PLUS the handout on common writing mistakes you receive in class today.

2/10 Lab.

2/13. FOCUS: NEWS STORY ORGANIZATION

- ✓ Read Bender: Chapter 9: Skip “Narrative Style,” pp. 194-198. Resume with “Using Transitions,” p. 198 to end of chapter.
Talk re how to organize your first article (due 2/23).

2/14 GUIDELINES FOR WRITING ARTICLE ONE (DUE 2/23) WILL BE POSTED ON SAKAI.

2/15 Before class: Read Bender, Chapters 7 and 8.

In class:

- ✓ Discuss lead-writing, especially for your first article.

2/17 Lab.

2/20 FOCUS: ETHICS IN JOURNALISM/FAKE NEWS

Before class:

- ✓ Read Bender, Chapter 6
- ✓ Read http://www.chronicle.com/article/A-Professor-Once-Targeted-by/238742?cid=gn&utm_source=gn&utm_medium=en&elqTrackId=ba00a89ba55a42dda93a058ce32548b4&elq=f3256aab23ed4a539216e4a729cb0be2&elqaid=12008&elqat=1&elqCampaignId=4835

In class: Emergency questions re Article One, due 2/23

2/22 Before class:

- ✓ Read Bender, “Ethics of Visual Journalism,” p. 288-291 (Stop at “The Digital News Package”)

In class: Talk about Grammar/Punctuation Quiz on 2/24.

2/23 **ARTICLE ONE DUE**, EVENT COVERAGE (800-1000 words) by email to cfletch@luc.edu by 5 p.m. NOTE: This is your deadline. Failure to meet it, even by one minute, earns a zero on this article. No excuses.

2/24 GRAMMAR/PUNCTUATION QUIZ (This is worth 10 percent of your grade).

2/27 FOCUS: LIBEL

Before class: Read Chapter 5. Start with “Libel,” bottom p. 80-89 (Stop at “Privacy”).

3/1 FOCUS: LIBEL

In class:

- ✓ Continue discussion of libel.
- ✓ Talk about choosing an event to cover at IES’ Climate Change Conference (3/16-3/18). This will form the basis of Article Two (due 3/30).

3/2 LOOK FOR THREE SAKAI ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1. HOW TO REGISTER FOR AN EVENT YOU’LL COVER FOR IES’ CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE, 3/16-3/18, LSC. YOU MUST REGISTER BEFORE ATTENDING.

2.GUIDELINES FOR ARTICLE TWO

3. STUDY GUIDELINES FOR MIDTERM

3/3 FOCUS: PRIVACY

Before class: Read “Privacy,” p. 89-93. Stop at “Newsgathering Issues.”

In class: Talk about how to cover Climate Change event.

3/6-3/10 SPRING BREAK NO CLASS THIS WEEK

3/13 MIDTERM EXAM, PART ONE

3/15 MIDTERM EXAM, PART TWO

3/17 FOCUS: INTERVIEWING FOR PRINT AND BROADCAST

Before class:

Before class: Read Chapter 11.

In class: Talk about choices of topic and components for Paper Three

(due 4/28)

Talk about Climate Change Conference coverage, 3/16-3/18.

3/20 FOCUS: BROADCAST REPORTING AND WRITING

Before class: Read Bender, Chapter 12

3/22 AP STYLE OVERVIEW (AP STYLE WILL FACTOR INTO YOUR FINAL EXAM GRADE).

3/23: YOUR MIDTERM GRADES WILL BE POSTED ON LOCUS.

AP Style Rules will be posted under Sakai Announcements, including what you need to study for pre-quiz on 3/31.

3/24 NO CLASS (professor at a conference). YOUR LAB WILL BE POSTED ON SAKAI DURING CLASS TIME. YOU CAN DO THIS REMOTELY.

3/27 LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM CLASS WITHOUT PENALTY GRADE OF “WF.”

3/27 FOCUS: REPORTING ON CRIME AND ACCIDENTS

Before class: Read Chapter 18 to p. 373. Stop at “Local Government.”

3/30 ARTICLE TWO DUE by 5 p.m.

3/29 FOCUS: REPORTING ON DISASTERS

- ✓ <http://dartcenter.org/resources/covering-recovery-context-background-challenges-preparing-major-disasters>
- ✓ <http://dartcenter.org/content/arun-karki-reporting-without-home>
- ✓ <http://www.poynter.org/2015/breaking-news-best-practices-reaching-and-interviewing-witnesses-and-victims-of-trauma/376312/>
- ✓ <http://dartcenter.org/content/disaster-coverage-as-it-applies-to-digital-world>

3/31 Lab.

4/3 FOCUS: WRITING SPECIALIZED STORIES AND OBITUARIES.

Before class:

- ✓ Read Bender, Chapter 16

4/4 GUIDELINES FOR WRITING ARTICLE THREE (DUE 4/28) WILL BE POSTED ON SAKAI

4/5 FOCUS: DIGITAL MEDIA

Before class, read:

- ✓ Bender, Chapter 13 (Skip pp. 277-282, from “Blogging and Digital Media” through “Microblogging”). Resume with “The Writing Coach” on bottom, p. 281 and read “The Reporter’s Guide,” p. 283.

In class: Talk about ARTICLE THREE (hard copy due in class on 4/26).

4/7 Lab AP STYLE PRE-QUIZ

4/10 Guest in class.

4/12 Lab.

4/14-4/17 EASTER BREAK

4/19 FOCUS: WRITING FEATURE STORIES

Before class:

- ✓ Read Bender, Chapter 17
- ✓ Read the article that won the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Environmental Reporting:

<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/07/20/the-really-big-one>

NOTE: As you read, jot down some notes on what you think the lead is, what the nut graph is, and important images (objects that have significance) that you notice.

4/21 FOCUS: INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

Before class: Read Bender, Chapter 19.

NOTE: DEADLINE TO BRING IN REWRITES OF LABS/FIRST OUTSIDE ARTICLE DUE. THESE MUST BE IN HARD COPY FORMAT.

4/24 Finish discussion from last week's readings.

4/25 STUDY GUIDE FOR FINAL WILL BE POSTED ON SAKAI ANNOUNCEMENTS

4/26 AP STYLE QUIZ (can earn points for final exam)

4/28 DEADLINE : PAPER THREE. STUDENTS MUST BRING IN A HARD COPY OF THEIR PAPER TO CLASS. EMAILS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

In class: AP Style Quiz AND Assessment of Progress quiz. Each of these will count as one lab.

5/4 FINAL EXAM. 9-11, this site.

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