

JOURNALISM 325

Principles of Journalism

Spring 2012

Professor Richard Moore

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Office hours: M thru F 10:00am – 11:00am and by appt.

Course description: This course is designed to help you learn the underlying philosophy and principles of journalism and how it is practiced in various media. We will examine how journalists create their product and critically assess the impact, quality and usefulness of today's news coverage. Our study will begin with an examination of the history of news media development through its current-day practice and then move toward some basic skills training that will lead to actual reporting assignments for online publication.

Course objectives: Whether you intend to become a journalist, work in a peripheral field (PR, advertising, etc.) or simply become a more literate news consumer this course will provide the basis for understanding how and why news people and news institutions operate in the way they do. This is not an intensive skills course that trains you to write and perform other editorial functions, although there will be two basic reporting assignments to help acquaint you with the fundamentals of news gathering and editing. The primary objective is to establish a base of knowledge about the framework in which journalists operate – the skills required, the protections, the risks, the challenges and the rapidly changing news industry and its likely future.

Toward that end, we can distill four fundamental objectives:

- 1) To examine the history of news media development through its current-day practice, including the role of freedom of speech and press in the overall practice.
- 2) Examine how journalists create their product and critically assess the impact, quality and usefulness of today's news coverage in terms of

- its truthfulness, accuracy, fairness and recognition of diversity as appropriate.
- 3) Move toward some basic skills training that will reflect the ability to think critically, creatively and independently about the media in the practice of journalism and its related professions.
 - 4) Produce works using critical thinking skills and research skills for an online publication in which use of the latest appropriate technology and adherence to proper ethical considerations will be required as well as clear and concise writing.

Required texts: K & R: Kovach, B. and Rosentiel, T.
*The Elements of Journalism, What Newspeople
Should Know and the Public Should Expect*

Other required media: *The State* newspaper (daily print or online edition)
USA TODAY (print or online edition)
Local and network television newscasts
Internet

Policies: Attendance

We will be covering a lot of information in this class. I am here for your benefit and expect you to be here and prepared to participate. I will take attendance regularly by taking roll, giving pop quizzes or by other means. Missing class without an excused absence (sickness validated by a doctor's note, death of a family member or close friend, or pre-approved university activity) will compromise the value of this course and result in a grade deduction for each missed class beyond three. **Proof of an excused absence must be presented at the next meeting of the class.**

It is your responsibility to monitor the accuracy of grades posted on Blackboard. Any grading or attendance discrepancy must be noted within one week of its occurrence for adjustments to be made.

Assignments and Quizzes

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. Missing that deadline without pre-approval will result in an immediate 25% reduction in your grade for that assignment. In other words, your grade can be no better than a “C” for that assignment. Late assignments will only be accepted until 5:00pm on the day they are due.

Assignments must be submitted in person. Unless otherwise stated in class or by pre-arrangement with me, I do not accept e-mailed assignments.

All assignments must be typed using 12-point font, double-spaced, with your name in the upper left-hand corner with multiple pages stapled together. Do not use paper clips.

You are responsible for keeping the original assignment (or a copy of what is returned to you) as proof that the assignment was completed in case there is ever a question or discrepancy in my records.

Quizzes are given according to the schedule provided in the syllabus as well as on an unannounced basis.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking another’s work and passing it off as your own without attribution as to the original source. It is forbidden and will not be tolerated. Violators will be subject to strict discipline as outlined in the Student Affairs Policy on Academic Responsibility.

Special Needs

Any student who requires special accommodation due to a disability must inform me within the first week of class.

Use of Electronic Devices

The use of laptops and recording devices is permitted during class, but only for purpose of note-taking. Cell phones must be turned off during class. Violation of this policy will result in the student being removed from that day’s class and counted as absent (unexcused).

Grades: Your grade will be based on the total of possible points (320) for all assignments and quizzes according to the following percentage table:

A	-	92-100%
B+	-	90-91%
B	-	83-89%
C+	-	81-82%
C	-	74-80%
D	-	67-73%
F	-	below 67%

Spelling, grammar and punctuation are important. Your lack of attention to these details will result in a grading reduction.

Communication: I will use USC's Blackboard system to communicate with you throughout the semester. Via Blackboard you will receive your grades, receive handouts, get more detail on your assignments and be notified of any schedule changes.

About your professor: I joined the USC faculty in August 2006 after a 35 year career in television news. My last professional position was as Vice President of News for WKYC-TV in Cleveland. I also served as news director at a number of other TV stations including WSB-TV in Atlanta, WSOC-TV in Charlotte and WCPX-TV in Orlando. My career included opportunities to create converged news operations for USA TODAY and the Philadelphia Inquirer. Prior to news management my career was focused on writing and producing.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Monday, Jan 9

Introductions

Syllabus

Discussion: Our objectives

Assignment: *Why is journalism for you? 1-2 pages (10 pts.)*

Wednesday, Jan 11

Due: *Why Journalism*

Review and discuss your papers

Assignment: *Read K & R – Intro and Chapter 1*

Friday, Jan 13

Review and discuss K & R

Assignment: *Read K & R – Chapters 2 - 6*

Monday, Jan 16

King Holiday – No Class

Wednesday, Jan 18

Review and discuss K & R

Assignment: *Read K & R – remaining chapters*

Friday, Jan 20

Review and discuss K & R

Assignment: *Read K & R – remaining chapters*

First News Quiz 5 pts

Monday, Jan 23

Review and discuss K & R –

Wednesday, Jan 25

Review and discuss K & R

Friday, Jan 27

Watch “Buying the War” – Pt 1

Monday, Jan 30

Watch “Buying the War” Pt 2

Assignment: *Reaction Paper (20 pts)*

Wednesday, Feb 1

Due: *Reaction Paper*

Discuss “Buying the War” reactions

Assignment: Read <http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/>
(Overview, Major Trends)

Friday, Feb 3

Quiz – State of the News Media Report

Discuss State of the News Media report

Assignment: *Audience Transformation Profile* 25 pts (Due Weds, Feb 8)

Monday, Feb 6

Guest: Jason Belk, Sports Director – WMBF-TV, Florence-Myrtle Beach

Wednesday, Feb 8

Due: *Audience Transformation Profile*

Discuss your papers

Assignment: *Read Codes of Ethics*

spj.org

rtnda.org

Friday, Feb 10

Quiz – Codes of Ethics 10 pts

Discuss Codes of Ethics

Saturday, Feb 11

Extra Credit Opportunity – RTDNAC Student Workshop, Charlotte

Write a 1-2 page reaction/experience paper (15 points)

Monday, Feb 13

Discuss RTDNAC experiences

The “Wall of Shame”

Assignment: *Wall of Shame profile* 15 pts

Wednesday, Feb 15

Due: *Wall of Shame profile*

Discuss profiles

Assignment: *Read “News Values” handout*

Friday, Feb 17

Second News Quiz

Discuss news values

Assignment: *Identify news values in three stories* 10 pts

Monday, Feb 20

Due: *News Values in three stories*
Discuss news values in stories

Wednesday, Feb 22

Story idea development
Assignment: *Establish personal blog at www.blogger.com*
Develop three story ideas 15 pts

Friday, Feb 24

Third News Quiz
Due: *Three story ideas*
Hold news meetings

Monday, Feb 27

Discuss news meeting outcomes/issues
Discuss Story Refinement process
Assignment: *Story Idea Refinement 15 pts (Due Mon, Mar 12)*

Wednesday, Feb 29

Story idea development
View/read story samples

Friday, Mar 2

Guest: *David Hart, News/Content Mgr – WBTW, Florence Morning News*

Monday, Mar 5 – Friday, Mar 9

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES

Monday, Mar 12

Due: *Story Idea Refinement*
Discuss outcomes/issues
Assignment: *First News Story 25 pts (Due Mar 23)*

Wednesday, Mar 14

Guests: *Keslie Weekes, Brian Dresdow, Producers – WIS-TV, Columbia*

Friday, Mar 16

Fourth News Quiz
Extra Credit Opportunity - Attend USC J-School Career Fair
1-2 page paper describing your experience (15 pts)

Monday, Mar 19

Discuss Career Fair experiences

Wednesday, Mar 21

Fifth News Quiz

Friday, Mar 23

Due: *First News Story*

Assignment: *What did you learn? 15 pts*

Monday, Mar 26

Due: *What did you learn?*

Assignment: *Visit NewsU.org and complete one self-directed assignment 10 pts*

Wednesday, Mar 28

Due: *NewsU coursework*

Assignment: *Develop three story ideas 15 pts (Due Mon, Apr 2)*

Friday, Mar 30

Sixth News Quiz

Discuss news story idea development

Monday, Apr 2

Due: *Three story ideas*

Hold news meetings

Assignment: *Refine one story idea 15 pts (Due Monday, Apr 9)*

Wednesday, Apr 4

Guest: Gina Smith, Reporter – The State

Friday, Apr 6

Research Day – No Class

Monday, Apr 9

Due: *Refined story idea*

Assignment: *Second news story 40 pts (Due Mon, Apr 23)*

Wednesday, Apr 11

Discuss story development problems

Friday, Apr 13

Guest: Otis Taylor, Arts/Entertainment Reporter, The State

Assignment: *Visit NewsU.org and complete one self-directed assignment 10 pts*

Monday, Apr 16

Due: *NewsU coursework*

Wednesday, Apr 18

Watch “*Breaking News, Breaking Down*”

Friday, Apr 20

Bonus News Quiz (*replaces missing/lowest quiz grade*)

Discuss “*Breaking News, Breaking Down*”

Monday, Apr 23

Due: *Second News Story*

Final exam review

Final Exam (*40 pts*)

Section 001 – Sat, Apr 28 – 9:00am

Section 002 – Weds, Apr 25 – 2:00pm