

# **JOURNALISM 325**

## **Principles of Journalism**

### **Fall 2008**

**Professor Richard Moore**  
**T/Th 12:30-1:45pm**  
**Coliseum 3001**

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**Office hours:** M thru F 11:00am – 12:00Noon 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.

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

Kolodzy, Janet  
*Convergence Journalism*

**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 full letter grade deduction if the number of unexcused absences reaches three. If you have more than three unexcused absences an additional letter grade deduction will occur for each additional day.

**Assignments**

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.

Assignments must be submitted in person. Unless otherwise stated in class, 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.

### **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 a total of 500 possible points according to the following distribution:

Papers	-	125 points
NewsU	-	30 points
Quizzes	-	25 points
1 <sup>st</sup> reporting proj.	-	60 points
2 <sup>nd</sup> reporting proj.	-	80 points
Final exam	-	50 points
Participation		30 points
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>400 points</b>

Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

A	-	90-100%
B	-	83-90%
C	-	75-83%
D	-	68-75%
F	-	below 68%

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

*There will be opportunities for extra credit offered at times during the semester.*

**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. You must update your Blackboard account by the start of our class on January 18 by providing your preferred e-mail address and at least one telephone contact number. Go to: <http://blackboard.sc.edu> >login >personal information >edit personal information >(make any necessary changes) >submit.

**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)**

Thursday, Aug 21

Introductions

Syllabus

Discussion: Our objectives

**Assignment:** *Why are you here? 1-2 pages (10 pts.)*  
*Read K & R – Introduction through Ch. 3*  
*Update your Blackboard account*

Tuesday, Aug 26

**Due:** *Why are you here?*

Review and discuss K & R – Introduction through Ch. 3

**Assignment:** *Read K & R – Ch. 4-7 Read RTNDA and SPJ Codes of Ethics*  
([www.rtnda.org](http://www.rtnda.org)) and ([www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org))

Wednesday, Aug 27

***Last day to drop course without a grade of “W”***

Thursday, Aug 28

Review and discuss K & R – Ch. 4-7 and Codes of Ethics

**Assignment:** *“Wall of Shame” Case Study 2-3 pages (25 pts)*

Tuesday, Sept 2

**Due:** *Case Study*

Be prepared to discuss your paper

**Assignment:** *Finish reading K & R*

Thursday, Sept 4

**First News Quiz**

Review and discuss final chapters of K & R

**Assignment:** *Read PEJ “State of the News Media” report for 2008*  
([www.stateofthenewsmedia.com/2008/](http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.com/2008/))

Tuesday, Sept 9

Be prepared to discuss State of the News Media report

**Assignment:** *Changing Media Habits 2-3 pages (25 pts.)*  
(Assignment is due on Tuesday, Sept 16)

Thursday, Sept 11

The Impact of 9/11 on News Media

***Video: “In Memoriam”***

Tuesday, Sept 16

**Due:** *Changing Media Habits paper*

Be prepared to discuss your paper

**Assignment:** *Read Chapters 1-5 of “Convergence”*

Thursday, Sept 18

**Guest:** *Gina Smith, Reporter for The State*

**Assignment:** *Complete one self-directed course at ([www.newsu.org](http://www.newsu.org)) (15 pts)*

Tuesday, Sept 23

**Due:** *NewsU coursework*

**Second News Quiz**

Discuss “*Convergence Journalism*”

**Assignment:** *Finish reading “Convergence Journalism”*

*Develop three story ideas (10 pts)*

Thursday, Sept 25

**Due:** *Story ideas*

“Story meeting” discussion

**Assignment:** *Refine your story (10 pts)*

Tuesday, Sept 30

**Due:** *Refined story idea*

Discuss refined story ideas

**Assignment:** *Reporting Assignment #1 (due Oct 7) (40 pts.)*

Thursday, Oct 2

Discuss reporting issues and obstacles

**Assignment:** *Reporting Assignment #1 (due Oct 7) (40 pts.)*

Tuesday, Oct 7

**Due:** *Reporting Assignment #1*

Discuss stories

**Assignment:** *What Did You Learn? 1-2 pages (15 pts)*

Thursday, Oct 9

No Class – Fall Break

Tuesday, Oct 14

**Due:** *What Did You Learn?*

**Guest:** *Tammie Epps, Media Relations – Palmetto Health*

Thursday, Oct 16

No Class – Attend USC Career Fair

**Assignment:** *Job Interview Lessons – What Did You Learn? 1-2 pages (15 pts)*

Tuesday, Oct 21

**Due:** *Job Interview Lessons - What Did You Learn?*

Discuss selected reporting assignments

**Assignment:** *Develop three new story ideas (10 pts)*

Thursday, Oct 23

**Third News Quiz**

**Due:** *New story ideas*

“Story meeting” discussion

**Assignment:** *Refine story idea (10 pts.)*

Tuesday, Oct 28

**Due:** *Refined story idea*

**Guest:** *Chaunte McLean, Assignment Editor - WLTX*

**Assignment:** *Reporting Assignment #2 (Due Nov 6) (60 pts.)*

Thursday, Oct 30

**Fourth News Quiz**

Discuss reporting assignment issues and obstacles

**Assignment:** *Complete Reporting Assignment #2*

Tuesday, Nov 4

No class - Election Day

Thursday, Nov 6

**Due:** *Reporting Assignment #2*

Watch “Outfoxed” – Pt. 1

**Assignment:** *What did you learn – Reporting #2? (15 pts.)*

Tuesday, Nov 11

**Due:** *What Did You Learn?*

Watch “Outfoxed” – Pt. 2

**Assignment:** *“Outfoxed” reaction paper 1-2 pages (15 pts)*

Thursday, Nov 13

**Due:** *“Outfoxed” reaction paper*

**Fifth News Quiz**

Discuss selected stories from Reporting Assignment #2

**Assignment:** *Complete a self-directed course at ([www.newsu.org](http://www.newsu.org)) (15 pts.)*

Tuesday, Nov 18

**Guest:** *Ashleigh Messervy, Morning Anchor/Reporter - WACH*

Thursday, Nov 20

Watch “Feeding the Beast” Pt 1

Tuesday, Nov 25

Watch “Beast” Pt 2

**Assignment:** “Beast” reaction paper 1-2 pages (15 pts)

Thursday, Nov 27

No class – Thanksgiving Break

Tuesday, Dec 2

**Due:** “Beast” reaction paper

**Extra Credit News Quiz**

Review

Thursday, Dec 4

**Extra Credit News Quiz**

Review

Week of Dec 8

Final Exam (50 pts)