

J462: Reporting II

School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon

Spring 2017

Instructor	Professor Damian Radcliffe <damianr@uoregon.edu>
Office	201 Allen Hall
Office hours	3pm-5pm Friday, but you can also drop by or make a separate appointment.
Telephone	541-346-7643 / 541-972-531 (text/SMS only after 7pm please).
Twitter	@damianradcliffe
Materials	Please bring lots of enthusiasm, your laptop and your phone.
Timing	8.00 – 09.50 Monday and Wednesday, 303 Allen Hall

Course Description: J462: Reporting II

Background

This is a compulsory course, but whatever the area of journalism you want to work in, having an understanding of the rudiments of public affairs and community reporting is essential. Developing these journalistic muscles will make you a better journalist, photographer, editor and storyteller.

Approach

Over ten weeks you will undertake a range of individual and group tasks which will give you a strong foundation in the core skills expected of journalists in 2015.

In doing this, you will develop your writing skills, storygathering and storytelling ability and to be able to critically evaluate what makes good/bad public affairs reporting.

The course will explore a wide range of topics and skills, giving you a taster for different types of journalism, which can then be explored in more detail in further specialist programs. It will also ensure that you are equipped to understand - and share - examples of common everyday journalistic activity with future employers.

Learning outcomes

You can expect to learn:

- What public affairs and community reporting is and why it matters
- Sources for news - how to find and develop them
- Advanced interviewing and writing skills

How you will do this:

Through lessons, group and individual assignments, you will cover a selection of the following areas:

- Developing a contacts book
- Where to look for a story
- Interviewing skills
- How to put your contacts and interviewing skills into action

- Inside City Hall and Public Records
- Issues reporting
- Data storytelling
- Reporting minority communities
- Live reporting

To demonstrate that you have developed these skills you will also create an individual portfolio showcasing your work from this – and other courses; and contribute to a class-wide portfolio which highlights the breadth and depth of the best work produced by the group.

Learning Methods

These will include:

- Class lectures and guest speakers
- Listening to – and critically evaluating – content
- In-class assignments and tasks (writing, reading, listening, pitching etc.)
- Out of class assignments (content creation, content review and online learning modules)
- Writing-up key lessons from our classes on the class blog (hosted on Medium)

Estimated student workload

The course features two classes a week + assignments.

In addition to *compulsory* class attendance, you will also be set a combination of individual and group assignments. These will take 6-10 hours a week to complete outside of class.

Tasks will include: reading, identification of case studies, preparation of presentation materials and papers, fieldwork (interviewing, creation of multimedia content) and portfolio development.

Alongside this you will also undertake a “Big Issue” topic; a more in-depth look at a subject which matters to you and your potential audience. This work will run concurrent with other tasks. You will need to manage your time accordingly to balance competing workloads from this class and others.

How this class works

Attendance

J462 is designed to give you a foundation in some of the key skills needed in today’s job market. Attendance of classes, and completion of assignments - *on time* - is essential. Miss the first and/or second class of the term, and you will be asked to withdraw.

Non-attendance and failure to complete assignments on time will result in an F for that task.

Please notify me, in writing and with as much prior notice as possible, if you must miss a class or if work will be delivered late.

If you miss a class and you haven’t notified me beforehand, then I expect you to get in contact with me ASAP to explain your absence and to agree the best way to catch-up on what you missed.

Participation

Class meetings will focus on introductions to topics, collective feedback on assignments and sharing what you have learned – and what you want to do. *Your active participation is vital.*

Our classroom is a newsroom. This means that you need to be comfortable pitching ideas, receiving – and giving – feedback, and treating everyone in the room with due respect. There are no wrong answers and bad ideas, only answers and ideas which could be developed better.

Assignments

These will require original research, reporting and writing. This may involve meetings, events, interviews, and information-gathering that takes place off campus and a different days and times.

Like all journalists you'll find some tasks easier – and more enjoyable – than others. Sometimes, what you're looking for isn't easy to find, and you'll need to show tenacity and ingenuity to complete a task on time. Plan your time and resources accordingly.

You'll be given a brief for each assignment with clear directions of what's expected and by when.

Writing and multi-media

A number of assignments will be done twice, with the opportunity to rewrite and edit your materials following feedback from me and/or your peers. This reflects the reality of many newsrooms and will almost always result in your revised work being of a higher standard. These exercises will help you to improve your skills and news sensibilities.

A key emphasis of Reporting II will be on turning you into stronger writers, but there will also be opportunities to use visuals, audio, infographics, photography and social media in many assignments. You're encourage to embrace these opportunities when you can.

Grading

Tasks/Weighting *(subject to revision/changes)*

Activity	Tasks	% of Grade	Points
Writing	1. Reporting I rewrite	10%	100
	2. Zombie apocalypse	10%	100
	3. Issues piece (with Lori Shontz)	20%	200
	4. Profile / Native American experience (w/Torsten Kjellstrand)	20%	200
		50%	
Research / Critical Thinking	5. Data Journalism/Storytelling	15%	150
	6. Paper trail (with Scott Maier)	15%	150
		30%	
Other	7. Attendance	5%	50
	8. Class participation	5%	50
	9. Personal portfolio	10%	100
		20%	
TOTAL		100%	1,000

How Grades Will Be Determined

Grading Grid:					
Category	A	B	C	D	F
Strong lead: Informative hard (summary) news lead or compelling anecdotal opening.	Vivid, telling detail.	Provides essential information.	Essential information but lacking clarity, conciseness and/or detail.	Not a direct lead and/or important information missing.	Factual error(s).
Essential information covered. Story / Analysis logically organized.	Who, what, where, when and why answered.	5 Ws covered but story not organized clearly with most important information at the top.	Essential information provided but disorganized.	Essential information missing and/or disorganized.	Does not tell a story.
Appropriate use of quotes and attribution.	Strong use of quotes, with best quote high in story. Attribution provided when needed.	Appropriate use of quotes and attribution.	Quotes and attribution provided.	Quotes or attribution missing	Quotes and attribution missing
Clear and concise writing. Appropriate news-writing or analytical style.	Clear and concise writing. Appropriate news-writing style (i.e., short paragraphs, descriptive detail, active verbs, no first-person).	Basically clear and concise.	Thorough editing needed to meet standards.	Writing style is inappropriate for a news story.	Unintelligible.
Factually accurate. Correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.	Mechanically sound, no errors.	1-2 minor errors. Style inconsistent.	1 major error such as a fragment, run-on, comma splice, or more than two minor errors.	2 major errors and multiple minor issues.	Fatal flaws: Factual errors, misspelling of proper names, multiple grammar, spelling errors.

Other things which come into the mix:

- Layout, formatting, for digital submissions, this matters.
- Are you telling a story I've not heard before.
- Does your story have the X-Factor (it can be solid, but does it zing?)

Your work will be reviewed in the same way as any Editor would review the content submitted to them. I will be looking for good writing, strong images, interesting stories, clarity of message, breadth of sources used, fairness and balance, accuracy, good grammar, spelling and style.

Course policies

Attendance

As outlined above, this is mandatory for this class. I don't expect to have to chase you up about any absences. Be proactive. Treat me, and this class, as you would do a job.

Accessibility

The University of Oregon seeks to create inclusive learning environments. If aspects of this course result in barriers to your participation, please notify me as soon as possible. You are also welcome to contact Disability Services in 164 Oregon Hall at 346- 1155 or disabsrv@uoregon.edu.

Crisis Center

The University of Oregon Counseling Center provides students with confidential telephone crisis intervention 24/7. The number is 541-346-3227.

Diversity

Open inquiry, freedom of expression, and respect for differences are fundamental to a comprehensive and dynamic education. SOJC is committed to upholding these ideals by encouraging the exploration, engagement, and expression of divergent perspectives and diverse identities.

Discrimination of any kind, disrespect for others, and inequity in educational opportunity are not acceptable. Students, faculty, and staff are expected at all times to maintain the School of Journalism and Communication's high standards of ethical and compassionate conduct. Please see me if you need help or have any questions.

Academic integrity

The U of O policy on academic dishonesty will be observed throughout this course.

Plagiarizing and/or cheating will result in an automatic failure of the course.

To avoid this, you should read: <http://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>

We will also talk about the importance of proper attribution of your sources and providing credit where it is due. In the digital arena this is more important than ever, as the lifting of quotes or the creation of false content, nevermind plagiarism can all be easily identified. Careers can – and have been – destroyed as a result of breaking these rules. Don't be foolish and make the same mistakes!

Technology

Papers should be emailed so that they can be reviewed and graded through the "Track Changes" function in Microsoft Word. This is also more environmentally friendly than printed copies.

Mobile phones should be turned off in class. Laptops are allowed, but there will be "lids down" moments throughout the course.

If you're on websites you shouldn't be using in class, I'll call you out. You have been warned!

Writing Central

I encourage you take advantage of of the opportunities provided by Writing Central:
<http://journalism.uoregon.edu/sojc-writing-central/>

It's not open for drop ins in Week One, but we can can schedule appointments. Coaches are prepared for this, specially, to discuss your Reporting I rewrite assignment.

The rest of the time, Writing Central is open Week 2 through Week 10, with appointment hours during Finals Week. Their first day for spring term is Monday, April 10.

Spring term schedule:

- Monday: 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- Tuesday: 1-3 p.m.
- Wednesday: 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- Thursday: 1-3 p.m.
- Friday: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Questions

If you want to know more about anything mentioned here, or anything which you think is missing, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Course Schedule and Assignments

This schedule is a draft and is subject to amendment.

Week	Date	Activities
1	Mon 3 April	<p>Introductions. Expectations. Why this matters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Where do you get the news from?</i> • <i>Lessons from Reporting I</i> • <i>What are the components of reporting?</i> <p><i>Task 1: Reporting I / Gateway rewrite. Due 23:59 on 17th April.</i></p>
	Weds 5 April	<p>No class (Damian away)</p> <p>Work on your Reporting I rewrite. Including visit to Writing Central.</p>
2	Mon 10 April	<p>Intro to Live Reporting.</p> <p>In class exercise: Live Reporting x 2.</p> <p>Guest speaker: Samantha Matsumoto, The Oregonian</p>
	Weds 12 April	<p>Reading discussion: Who'd Be a Journalist? - The New York Times</p> <p>Understanding different types of community and human interest stories.</p> <p>Timed exercise: Trash is for Tossers.</p>
3	Mon 17 April	<p>Writing short</p> <p><i>Discussion and in class exercise</i></p>
	Weds 19 April	<p>Reporting on underserved communities (Torsten Kjellstrand)</p> <p>Guest speaker: Dahlia Bazzaz, The Seattle Times</p>
4	Mon 24 April	<p>Descriptive writing/reporting exercises.</p> <p>Guest speaker: What are employers looking for? (Kevin Anderson, Gannett.)</p> <p><i>Task 2: Zombie Apocalypse. (Due 23:59 19 Oct)</i></p>
	Weds 26 April	<p>You've done your interview, now what? Making sense of transcripts</p> <p>Discussion and in-class exercise.</p>
5	Mon 1 May	<p>Introduction to Portfolios.</p> <p>Guest speaker: Jonathan Bach, Statesman Journal (9am)</p>
	Weds 3 May	<p>Breakfast with Stacy Marie Ishamel, BuzzFeed.</p> <p>Introduction to issues reporting task (Lori Shontz)</p>
6	Mon 8 May	<p><i>Damian absent all week</i></p>
	Weds 10 May	<p>Diversity workshop with Torsten Kjellstrand</p> <p>Issues workshop with Lori Shontz.</p>

7	Mon 15 May	Review of Issues pieces? Paper Trail exercise (Scott Maier) Begin work on exercise.
	Weds 17 May	Data Storytelling intro and exercise Guest speaker: Sami Edge, Santa Fe New Mexican (9am)
8	Mon 22 May	Using social media as a news source. <i>Exercise: telling stories on social media.</i>
	Weds 24 May	In class portfolio work.
9	Mon 29 May	Cancelled Memorial Day.
	Weds 31 May	Presentations/discussions on Data Storytelling task Guest speaker Caitlyn May, Cotage Grove Sentinel
10	Mon 5 Jun	Paper Trail feedback/results. Student presentations: Portfolios (Group 1)
	Weds 7 Jun	Student presentations (Group 2) Wash-up: lessons learned from Reporting II. End of term evaluation. Next Steps.