**JN216 - News Reporting and Writing**

**Winter 2020 Syllabus**

Instructor: **Rob Priewe**

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Class blog: robpriewe.blogspot.com ~ twitter: @robpriewe

**Course Description (CRN 32305)**

This introductory journalism course teaches how to gather information and write for print and online media. Topics include basic interviewing and research skills; journalistic writing style; organizational structures for news and online articles; and legal and ethical issues in journalism.

Stories will be posted on your blog as well as shared with The Commuter, LBCC’s award-winning, student-run newspaper. **Publishing stories is among the primary objectives of this class.** These can provide work samples you need to build your portfolio.

As you’ll see, journalism takes commitment and hard work, flexibility and an open mind. Along the way, the information you gather and the stories you share can make a difference in our community and in the lives of readers. Beyond journalism, the ability to quickly and accurately gather and report information has applications in many careers.

**About the Instructor**

In addition to teaching LBCC’s journalism and marketing classes, Rob serves as adviser to The Commuter. He can answer questions about the student newspaper and its online site, as well as introduce you to the editors and other staff.

Also consider Rob a resource for ideas, insights and contacts acquired during 30-plus years in journalism. Most of that experience comes from his work as a reporter, copy editor and managing editor at the Corvallis Gazette-Times. He also has experience writing feature and sports stories, columns and editorials, and taking photos.

Through professional connections such as the Society of Professional Journalists, Associated Collegiate Press, and the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, Rob can help guide you if you want to pursue a career in media. You can find a variety of up-to-date links and resources at our class blog -- **robpriewe.blogspot.com** -- or on Twitter -- **@robpriewe**.

**Course Schedule**

Noon to 12:50 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Forum computer lab classroom, F-202 (enter through the north side of the Forum building). Note: This includes JN216A-Journalism Lab; there is no scheduled class time for the lab.

**Course Outcomes**

At the conclusion of the term, students in this class will be able to:

* Employ basic journalism skills such as interviewing, research and gathering facts to identify, report on and write about news subjects and events.
* Describe the First Amendment, media laws and ethics, and use that knowledge to make editorial decisions and carry out the role and responsibilities of a journalist.
* Use social media platforms such as Twitter/Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn to distribute and promote news stories.
* Create an online portfolio of work that can be published and shared with readers, The Commuter and potential employers.

**Texts**

* "Dispatches from 1320” by Tom Hallman Jr. (Required)
* “Associated Press Stylebook” -- *Any recent edition* (Required)
* "Reporter's Guide to Multimedia Proficiency" by Mindy McAdams (*available to download through Moodle*)
* Optional: “Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism” by Tim Harrower *(Any edition)*

**JN215A Journalism Lab (CRN 33222)**

This one-credit lab works as a co-requisite to News Reporting. (After this term, you can take JN215A for one credit per term and work as a reporter, photographer or editor at The Commuter.) The expectation is that you will spend two or more hours outside of class each week gathering information, interviewing sources, and writing and posting your stories on your blog. *This lab does NOT have a meeting time.* Your grade for JN215A will be equal to or higher than your News Reporting class grade. Your lab grade also will be based on your four highest-graded news stories and how many stories you have published in The Commuter.

**A Note About Writing 121**

News Reporting and Writing is essentially an intensive writing workshop. So the expectation is that students have successfully completed Writing 121 with a grade of C or better. If not, please see the instructor on the first day of class.

**Grading**

* **News Stories** (200 points -- Four best story grades)
* **Weekly Blog Forum** (90 points)
* **AP Style/Current Events Quiz** (Best 6 scores - 60 points)
* **Participation** (50 points -- 5 points per week)
* **Portfolio** (50 points -- Cover Letter, Online LinkedIn Profile, and Blog)

* A – 90 to 100 percent (405 or more points)
* B – 80 to 89 percent (360 to 404 points)
* C – 70 to 79 percent (315 to 359 points)
* D – 60 to 69 percent (270 to 314 points)
* F – 59 percent and below (269 points and below)

***Total possible points -- 450***

This term we will be writing a variety of news stories, including some of these:

* **LBCC News Story (What is … ? Where is … ? When is … ?)**
* **Commuter Turns 50 Anniversary**
* **Campus News Event Story**
* **Community News Event Story**
* **Profile**
* **Speech Story**
* **Meeting Story**

Students must turn in **all five** required news stories during the course of the term. Your final grade will be based on your four highest-graded stories. Students must complete all five stories to have a shot at earning an A in the course. Turn in only four stories and the highest grade you can earn is a B. Turn in only three stories and the highest grade you can earn is a C.

**NOTE:** To earn an A in this course, students must have at **least TWO stories published in The Commuter during this term.** Students can earn **EXTRA CREDIT** by writing more than the required five stories for this class *and for The Commuter*.

Stories will be graded on 50-point scale that includes these criteria:

* An effective and compelling lead.
* A “nut graf” that tells the reader “why this story matters.”
* Research/reporting (including multiple sources), content and organization.
* Clarity and creativity of writing.
* "At a Glance" information.
* Online links.
* Earn *bonus points* by ensuring a **photo** accompanies your story in The Commuter.

***NOTE:*** *This course does not include writing stories about your family and friends, your boss or co-workers, or the groups to which you belong (e.g. campus clubs, off-campus groups). Should this occur, your story grade may be reduced at least one letter grade, and possibly to zero, in which case you will have to report and write a different story. Keep in mind potential* ***conflicts of interest****!*

**Revising Stories** – To improve your grade, you are encouraged to **edit and revise your stories** throughout the term. Re-submit your stories for a higher grade, even if they already have been published. WHEN RE-SUBMITTING STORIES, TURN IN THE EVALUATION FORM. One of the most important lessons of this course is the *process* of journalism, which puts a premium on revising work for print as well as online.

**Deadlines Matter!** – You will be given deadlines for turning in each of your stories. *Failure to turn in stories on the specified dates may result in a reduction of at least one letter grade on your story.* Extensions on deadlines must be discussed with the instructor IN ADVANCE to avoid this penalty. **Stories must be posted on the day they are due!**

**Online Blog** – Students will create their own blog, where they will post their news stories. Feel free to use the blog you created for another class (e.g. JN134-Photojournalism, JN217-Feature Writing). In addition to adding various components to your blog (e.g. biography, links, photos), you are encouraged to post other writing and commentaries as well. Students are urged to use Blogger as the platform for their blog, though WordPress or another platform can be used.

You can find links to the blogs of all the students in this class at "Rob's Class Blog" -- **robpriewe.blogspot.com**

**Weekly Blog Forum** -- Each week students will answer Forum questions posted on Moodle. These are 10-point assignments. The Forum grade will be based on a variety of factors, including grammar and spelling (remember, these reflect on your abilities as a journalist); content that goes beyond a casual observation; and unique elements such as photos and videos (*Properly attributed and permitted, of course!)*.

**AP Style/Current Events/Journalism Quiz** -- Starting around Week 2, students may be quizzed on current events, journalism practices or elements from the Associated Press Style Guide, one of the required textbooks for this class.

**Portfolio** – Your final assignment will be to complete your portfolio, including updating your online profile on LinkedIn.com, writing a Cover Letter and highlighting your best stories or “clips” on your blog.

**Twitter**

We will use Twitter during the term to keep up with current events, learn about things going on in the world of journalism and let people know about the news stories you are writing or working on in class. Go ahead and sign up for an account on Twitter.com during the first week. Then start following those who can expand your knowledge of journalism.

**Moodle**

We will utilize LBCC’s online learning system for a variety functions. By logging on to Moodle you can access your grades, quizzes, the syllabus, story ideas and other useful information. To get started, log on to LBCC's eLearning site at **elearning.linnbenton.edu**.

**Course Outline and Assignments**

**NOTE:** *This syllabus may be revised by the instructor as needed.*

**Week 1 – Jan. 6-10: Newswriting Basics**

* Monday: Welcome to News Reporting and Writing
* Wednesday: Brainstorming your first LBCC News Story; The Five W's and Interviewing Basics
* Friday: Begin your blog and answer Blog Forum question

**Week 2 – Jan. 13-17: Reporting Basics**

* Monday: The "inverted pyramid" and laying the foundation for your first news story
* Wednesday: Writing the first draft of history ...
* Friday: Blog Forum and **Story 1 due (post on blog)**

**Week 3 – Jan. 22-24: The First Amendment and Journalism Ethics**

* Monday: *NO CLASS - LBCC closed for MLK Jr. Day observance*
* Wednesday: Blog Forum due Friday; Covering Events; AP Style
* Friday: *NO CLASS - Instructor out of office*; Blog Forum and Commuter 50th Story due

**Week 4 – Jan. 27-31: Covering the News**

* Monday:
* Wednesday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due Friday
* Friday: **Story 3 due (post on blog)**

**Week 5 – Feb. 3-7:** **Writing … the Profile**

* Monday:
* Wednesday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due Friday
* Friday:

**Week 6 – Feb. 10-14: Online Journalism**

* Monday:
* Wednesday:
* Friday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due before class**; Profile due (post on blog)**

**Week 7 – Feb. 19-21: Public Relations and Journalism**

* Monday: *NO CLASS - College closed for Presidents Day observance*
* Wednesday: AP Style Quiz due before class Friday
* Friday*:* **Story 4 due**; Blog Forum due

**Week 8 – Feb. 24-26:**

* Monday:
* Wednesday: Democrat-Herald Field Trip; Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due Friday
* Friday: *NO CLASS - Instructor out of office (ACP)*

**Week 9 – March 2-6: Your Portfolio**

* **Read LBCC’s Resume/Cover Letter Guide on Moodle**
* Monday:
* Wednesday:
* Friday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due before class**; Story 5 and all revised stories due (Post on blog)**

**Week 10 – March 9-13: Class Wrap-up**

* Monday: Work on Portfolio
* Wednesday: Revise portfolio.
* Friday: Blog Forum due; **Portfolio due TODAY.**

**Final Meeting –** 1 to 2:50 p.m. **Wednesday, March 18** - Sign up to meet with instructor.

**Participation**

You should show up for each class ready to discuss the assigned readings or other activities and be prepared to participate. For the Participation score, each week of the term is worth 5 points. Keep in mind, you must be present to win!

**Statements of Inclusion and Nondiscrimination**

The LBCC community is enriched by diversity. Everyone has the right to think, learn and work together in an environment of respect, tolerance and goodwill. We will work toward creating a community without prejudice, intimidation or discrimination. *(Related to Board Policy #1015)*

LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, veteran status, age or any other status protected under applicable federal, state or local laws.

Students who may need accommodations due to documented disabilities, who have medical information which the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in an emergency should speak with their instructor during the first week of class. If you believe you may need accommodations but are not yet registered with the **Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR)**, see the [CFAR website](https://www.linnbenton.edu/cfar) ([www.linnbenton.edu/cfar](https://www.linnbenton.edu/cfar)) for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.

**Cultural Richness at LBCC**

To promote academic excellence and learning environments that encourage multiple perspectives and the free exchange of ideas, all courses at LBCC will provide students the opportunity to interact with values, opinions, and/or beliefs different than their own in safe, positive and nurturing learning environments. LBCC is committed to nurturing the development of culturally literate individuals capable of interacting, collaborating and problem-solving in an ever-changing community and diverse workforce.

**Basic Needs Beyond the Classroom**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Roadrunner Resource Center for support (resources@linnbenton.edu, or visit on the web [www.linnbenton.edu/RRC](http://www.linnbenton.edu/RRC) under Student Support for Current Students). That office can help students get connected to resources to help. Furthermore, please notify the instructor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources that they may possess.

**Seven Positive Expectations:**

Students at LBCC:

1. Take responsibility for learning material, participating in class activities, advocating for their needs and knowing the rules of the educational environment.
2. Follow the direction of faculty and staff, including providing information and identification when requested.
3. Respect the learning environment within the classroom and follow safety guidelines.
4. Maintain honesty and integrity in all work, communication and interactions.
5. Properly use college equipment, computers and facilities, including timely return of loaned equipment/materials.
6. Follow all college regulations, including those posted in special labs and classrooms, such as rules governing electronic devices.
7. Follow state and federal laws.

*For more information see the "Student Right to Know” section of the LBCC website.*

**The Writing Center**

LBCC’s Writing Center is an excellent source of help organizing, developing and revising written assignments. The Writing Center is in the Learning Center on the second floor of Willamette Hall. It is open to students from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday; and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday. Students also can use the Writing Centers at the Benton Center and the Lebanon Center.

You also can get help through the Online Writing Lab (OWL). For more information, call 541-917-4708 or go online to the **www.linnbenton.edu/writing-center**.

**Note:** You can earn extra credit on your assignments if you use the Writing Center to help organize, write and edit those assignments. To earn extra credit, be sure to have the Writing Center staff note that you worked with one of the staffers.

**Late Assignments, Incompletes and Week 1 Attendance**

* Any assigned coursework with a fixed deadline that is not turned in on time may be reduced at least one letter grade. Assignments that are posted or turned in one week or more after the deadline will earn a maximum of half credit. No assignments will be graded if turned in two weeks after the deadline.
* “I” grades (incomplete) will not be granted.
* **Students who don’t show up for class the first week will be dropped from the class.**

**If you withdraw from class**

Students who are unable to successfully complete the course should withdraw prior to the end of the **seventh week** of class. For more information on withdrawing, including refund dates, see www.linnbenton.edu/admissions/withdraw-deadlines.

**A Word About Plagiarism**

Do your own work! Claiming someone else’s work as your own or using information or ideas without proper attribution can lead to your failing an assignment or the class. Attribution is required whenever you use sources, especially online information. *Resist the urge to copy and paste!*

Plagiarism is subject to disciplinary action as described in LBCC’s guide on Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct, which is available online at LinnBenton.edu.

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