**JN216 - News Reporting and Writing**

**Winter 2017 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 student-run newspaper. **Publishing stories is among the primary objectives of this class.** These can provide work samples you need to build your portfolio, which is the culmination of this class.

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 classes, I serve as adviser to The Commuter. So I’m glad to answer questions about the student newspaper and its online site, as well as introduce you to the editors and other staff.

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

Through professional connections such as the Society of Professional Journalists and the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association I 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**

10-10:50 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Forum computer lab classroom, F-202 (enter through the north side of the Forum building).

**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 new stories.
* Create an online portfolio of work that can be published and shared with readers, The Commuter and potential employers.

**Texts**

* "The Corpse Had a Familiar Face" by Edna Buchanan (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 can 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** (100 points)
* **AP Style/Current Events Quiz** (80 points)
* **Participation** (50 points -- 5 points per week)
* **Portfolio** (50 points -- Cover Letter, Online LinkedIn Profile, and Blog)

* A – 90 to 100 percent (432 or more points)
* B – 80 to 89 percent (384 to 431 points)
* C – 70 to 79 percent (336 to 383 points)
* D – 60 to 69 percent (288 to 335 points)
* F – 59 percent and below (287 points and below)

***Total possible points -- 480***

Your five required news stories include one of each of the following:

* **LBCC News Topic Story (What is … ? Where is … ? When is … ?)**
* **News Event Story**
* **Profile**
* **Speech or Meeting Story**
* **Writer’s Choice**

Students must turn in **all five** 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. In addition to adding various components to your blog (e.g. personal biography, blogroll, archives), 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 either 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!)*.

**AP Style/Current Events/Journalism Quiz** -- Starting Week 2, students will 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 an email 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. 9-13: 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. 18-20: Reporting Basics**

* **Begin reading Edna Buchanan's "The Corpse Had a Familiar Face," Chs. 1-2**
* Monday: *NO CLASS - College closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday.*
* Wednesday: The "inverted pyramid" and laying the foundation for your first draft; Writing the first draft of history ...
* Friday: AP Style Quiz due before class; Blog Forum and **LBCC News Story due (post on blog)**

**Week 3 – Jan. 23-27: The First Amendment and Journalism Ethics**

* **Read "The Corpse Had a Familiar Face," Chs. 3-4**
* Monday:Covering Events
* Wednesday: Blog Forum due Friday
* Friday: AP Style Quiz due before class Friday

**Week 4 – Jan. 30-Feb. 1: Covering the News**

* **Read "The Corpse Had a Familiar Face," Chs. 5-6**
* Monday:
* Wednesday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due Friday**; News Event Story due Friday (post on blog)**
* Friday: *NO CLASS - Instructor out of the office*

**Week 5 – Feb. 6-10:** **Writing the Profile**

* **Read "The Corpse Had a Familiar Face," Chs. 7-8**
* Monday:
* Wednesday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due Friday
* Friday:

**Week 6 – Feb. 13-17: Online Reporting**

* **Read "The Corpse Had a Familiar Face," Chs. 9-10**
* Monday:
* Wednesday: Guest Speaker: Kyle Odegard, Albany Democrat-Herald
* Friday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due before class**; Profile due (post on blog)**

**Week 7 – Feb. 22-24: Public Relations and Journalism**

* **Read "The Corpse Had a Familiar Face," Chs. 11-12**
* Monday: *NO CLASS - College closed for Presidents Day holiday*
* Wednesday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due Friday; **Post Speech or Meeting Story on blog**
* Friday*:*

**Week 8 – Feb. 27-March 3: Inside the Newsroom**

* **Finish "The Corpse Had a Familiar Face," Chs. 13-14**
* Monday: Wrap up Edna’s book!
* Wednesday: Democrat-Herald Field Trip; Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due Friday
* Friday: *NO CLASS - Instructor out of office (ACP)*

**Week 9 – March 6-10: Your Portfolio**

* **Read LBCC’s Resume/Cover Letter Online Site**
* Monday:
* Wednesday:
* Friday: Blog Forum and AP Style Quiz due before class**; Last story (Writer’s Choice) and all revised stories**

**Week 10 – March 13-17: Class Wrap-up**

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

**Final Meeting –** 8-9:50 a.m. **Wednesday, March 22** - 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!

**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.

**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.

**Center for Accessibility Resources Statement of Disability**

You should meet with your instructor during the first week of class if:

1. You have a documented disability and need accommodations.
2. Your instructor needs to know medical information about you.
3. You need special arrangements in the event of an emergency.

If you have documented your disability, remember that you must make your request for accommodations through the Center for Accessibility Resources Online Services web page every term in order to receive accommodations. If you believe you may need accommodations, but are not yet registered with CFAR, please go to <http://linnbenton.edu/cfar> for steps on how to apply for services or call 541-917-4789.

**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 resource where you can get 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 from 9 a.m. to noon and 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. For more information, call 541-917-4708 or see **linnbenton.edu/go/learning-center/writing-help**

**Note:** You can earn extra credit on your news stories if you use the Writing Center to help organize, write and edit those stories. 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 Special Needs**

* Any assigned coursework with a fixed deadline that is not turned in on time may be reduced at least one letter grade.
* Students who don’t show up for all classes the first week will be dropped from the class.
* “I” grades (incompletes) will not be granted.
* Students who have medical conditions affecting their performance in class, documented disabilities, or special needs should contact the instructor and/or the Office of Disability Services (541-917-4789) during the first week of the term.

**If you withdraw from class**

Students who are unable to successfully complete the course should withdraw prior to the end of the 7th 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 the Internet. *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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