

# Syllabus, JOU 202: Basic News Reporting

## *Instructor*

Instructor: Bob Bergland  
email address: bergland@griffon.mwsc.edu  
Homepage: www.missouriwestern.edu/~berglan  
Office: SSC 202B Phone: 271-4446  
Home phone: 279-1699 (between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.)  
Office Hours: one hour after class and by appt

## *Required Materials*

News Reporting and Writing 6th Ed.(Brooks, Kennedy, Moen, Ranly)  
Coursepack of handouts/assignments

## *Course Goals*

The course is designed to help you:

- Learn, apply, and hone journalistic writing skills
- To give you hands-on experience writing various types of articles
- To increase your portfolio size, diversity and quality
- Develop time management skills to meet deadlines
- Develop and use interviewing skills
- Actively seek and discuss current news events
- Look for news and see newsworthiness from a variety of sources
- Understand that news affects people's lives
- Gain an insight of the connection between the news media, public relations and other communication fields

## *Groundrules*

- Attendance: Regular attendance is required. Much of the work in a writing class happens in the classroom, and whatever you miss cannot be made up. **Each absence over two will result in your final course evaluation being lowered one grade.** Excessive tardiness or leaving early without prior notice may also be considered an absence. If you miss more than two classes, then to have an excused absence you must both call me beforehand and provide documentation for the excuse by the next class period.

To make up a missed quiz, you need to have called me beforehand and have a documented excuse. Except in cases of extreme emergency, you will need to make sure someone turns in any assignments that are due to avoid a late penalty.

It is a good idea to inform me of planned absences; at the very least, be sure to talk to a classmate about what you missed.

- Assignments. Work to be turned in as a hard copy must be presentable and in laser-printed form. Most assignments, however, will need to be turned in electronically. If you hand in sloppy or poorly proofread documents, they will be downgraded significantly. As in the workplace, there will be no "rewrites" for a higher grade. You must complete all major assignments to pass the class.
- Computer Responsibilities: You must bring a 3.5" diskette to each class because some class time will be allotted for computer work. Additionally, you are expected to check your email daily for new assignments and messages.
- Plagiarism: An act of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty usually results in an F for the course.
- Disabilities: Students with a disability that may affect their performance in this class should contact me

individually as soon as possible.

- Late Work. Deadlines are crucial in journalism, public relations and technical writing. Late work is not accepted. Unless announced otherwise, stories and homework assignments are due at the beginning of the class period, and will not be accepted if turned in after the first five minutes of class.
- Policies:
  1. Every student has a right to learn in a calm atmosphere and to share his/her opinion in a calm manner at an appropriate time.
  2. When you are interviewing someone for a story: tell the interviewee that you are NOT a Griffon News reporter but that you may submit the story to the newspaper or yearbook for consideration.
  3. For any story project that requires the entire class attend a single event outside class time, you are expected to attend or to inform me in advance in case of conflict so that an alternate assignment/schedule may be made. An absence from these events counts toward your two absences

I am always willing to help you improve any documents, whether they are first drafts of documents to be turned in later, already graded documents or documents you produce for other classes or a company or organization. Please see me during my office hours or talk with me to set up a meeting time

### ***Planned Workload***

Quizzes	50 pts
Hyperjournalist	50 pts
Homework	200 pts
Stories	500 pts
Tests	200 pts
Total	1000 pts

### Grading Scale (90/80/70/60)

900-1000 A  
800-899 B  
700-799 C  
600-699 D

### Quizzes (10 points each)

Some announced, some unannounced, over readings, discussions and current events

### Homework Assn (25 points each)

1. Leads
2. Small story--speech
3. Style/grammar/attributing quotes exercise
4. Small story—crime/courts
5. Small story--fire
6. feature leads
7. News release
8. Journalistic changes to news release

### Stories (80 points each, except for Feature)

Crime/Courts  
Council/Board meeting  
Accident/Fire/Tragedy Simulation  
Sports

Feature (100 points)  
Editorial

Test #1 (100 points)

Stylebook, grammar, leads, attribution, interviewing, current events

Test #2 (100 points)

Some stylebook/grammar, libel, ethics, editing, writing, material from readings and discussions

### Tentative Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thurs
June 26-29 Intro to class, computers, Elements of newsworthiness, Tour of News-Press	Newsroom, management, Leads, Stylebook	Leads, Interviewing, Attribution, Inverted pyramid	Small stories, Hyperjournalist
July 3-6 Conferences, 8-12, Guest speaker: Dennis E. (N-P)	Happy B-day, USA!	Crime/Court, Trip to Courthouse	Midterm, Tour of KQ2
July 10-13 Meeting stories, 7 p.m. City Council meeting	Acc/Fire/Dis., Arn Simulation	Obits, Feature stories, Feature leads	Ethics, Law, Editorials
July 17-20 Investigative journalism, All the President's Men	Sports 7:05 Saints game	Press releases—guest speaker	Final exam

### Due dates

June 28: Leads

June 29: Small story--speech

July 3: Stylebook

July 5: Hyperjournalist

July 6: Small story—crime/courts

July 10: Court story

July 12: Small story—fire, Meeting story

July 13: Arn story, Feature leads

July 17: Editorial, obit

July 18: Feature draft

July 19: Feature story

July 20: Sports, press release