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English 126  
Fall 2008  
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Each class will feature the following segments, though the schedule is subject to change pending breaking news or other events that may shape our coverage:

1. Short quiz: two questions each on international news and national news (Read New York Times) and two questions each on state and local news. (Read Norwich Bulletin)
2. News meeting to discuss various issues related to news judgment.
3. Reporters meeting to discuss story ideas.
4. Interview: Student to student, or guest speaker.
5. In-class writing assignment.
6. Something to know (topics listed below).

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| Sept. 8  | <u>Introduction/ truth with responsibility</u><br>In-class: Overview, basic story discussion.<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 1.                               |               |
| Sept. 15 | <u>Story ideas; story qualities</u><br>In-class: Newsroom, elements of news.<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 2.  |               |
| Sept. 22 | <u>Leads/nut graphs</u><br>In-class: Find the focus<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 3, pages 34-44; <b>Write one-page gas price story.</b>                     |               |
| Sept. 29 | <u>Story structure</u><br>In-class: Crime and fire stories.<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 3, pages 45-62.  |               |
| Oct. 6   | <u>Interviewing/note-taking/quotes</u><br>In-class: Interview students - Part 1.<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 4, pages 66-77; <b>Write interview story.</b> | <b>Quiz 1</b> |
| Oct. 13  | No class. Happy Columbus Day.  |               |
| Oct. 20  | <u>Interviewing/note-taking/quotes</u><br>In-class: Interview students - Part 2.<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 4, pages 78-88; <b>Write interview story.</b> |               |

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| Oct. 27 | <u>Beats:</u><br>In-class: Mechanics, On assignment (SD.)<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 5.   |               |
| Nov. 3  | <u>Story-telling</u><br>In-class: Songs as stories (Three Wooden Crosses.)<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 6; <b>Write two pages on community leader.</b>  | <b>Quiz 2</b> |
| Nov. 10 | <u>Ethics</u><br>In-class: Discussion.<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 7; <b>Write two pages on subject to be determined.</b>  |               |
| Nov. 17 | <u>Current events I</u><br>In-class: Interactive assignment - police.<br>Assignment: Read Chpt. 8.   |               |
| Nov. 24 | <u>Current events II</u><br>In-class: Interactive assignment - tornado.<br>Assignment: <b>Budget for final story, including list of six sources with contact numbers. (Final story must be 3-5 pages.)</b> | <b>Quiz 3</b> |
| Dec. 1  | <u>Final Story I</u><br>In-class: Discuss final stories.<br>Assignment: <b>First draft final story.</b>  |               |
| Dec. 8  | <u>Final Story II</u><br>In-class: Discuss final stories   |               |
| Dec. 15 | <u>Perspective</u><br>In-class: Watch film<br>Assignment: <b>Rewrite final story.</b>  |               |
| Dec. 22 | <u>Recap</u><br>In class: Final story due.   | <b>Quiz 4</b> |

**Goal:** The purpose of this course is to learn the basics about what goes into the stories you read in your daily newspapers, either online or in print. You will also be required to write a

publishable, entry-level news story by the end of the semester.

**Required Text:** *Inside Reporting*, by Tim Harrower.

**Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. Three unexcused absences will result in the loss of a letter grade on your final grade.

**Grades:** Assignments are due the following week. There is no mid-term or final exam. Of your grade, four quizzes are 25 percent, in-class assignments and class participation are 25 percent, 5 out-of-class assignments are 25 percent, and the final story is 25 percent.

**Misc:** No eating or drinking in class. No swearing. Assignments must be typed and double spaced. I do not have office hours, but e-mail or call my cell any time for help, or request additional help on class days.

### **Journalism: Grading Standards**

"A" No fact errors; a first-rate lead; acceptable structure; no major mechanical errors; thorough coverage; excellent writing.

- "B" No serious fact errors; a good lead; acceptable structure; very few mechanical errors; thorough coverage; clear, concise writing.
- "C" No serious fact errors; an acceptable lead; acceptable structure; few mechanical errors; adequate coverage; writing needs considerable revising.
- "D" No serious fact errors; weak lead; poor structure; errors in style, spelling, grammar; inadequate coverage; unclear writing.
- "F" Major fact errors including misspelled names; unacceptable lead; unacceptable structure; omission of important information; numerous errors in style, spelling, grammar; missed deadlines; plagiarism.

(Mechanical errors are errors in style, spelling, grammar, sentence or paragraph structure, as well as typing errors. Copy must be typed, double-spaced, copy-edited with a pencil, and include proper set-up and designation on each page: name/ slug/ page number/ end mark.)

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|----|----------|
| A  | 94-100   |
| A- | 90-93    |
| B+ | 87-89    |
| B  | 83-86    |
| B- | 80-82    |
| C+ | 77-79    |
| C  | 73-76    |
| C- | 70-72    |
| D+ | 67-69    |
| D  | 63-66    |
| F  | Below 63 |