

Middle School Journalism: Tell Your Story

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Middle School Journalism: Tell Your Story

Who? What? When? Where? Journalism provides us with the answers to these questions for the events that affect our lives. In this course, students will learn how to gather information, organize ideas, format stories for different forms of news media, and edit their stories for publication. The course will also examine the historical development of journalism and the role of journalism in society.

COURSE METHODOLOGY

- This is an inquiry-based course. Students will generate knowledge through online readings, asynchronous discussions with students and their instructor, interactions with online tutorials, and online and hands-on simulations.
- The instructor will act as a guide, a facilitator, an events planner, and a resource advisor. He/she will always be available through course message.
- The student must actively construct and acquire knowledge by being intrinsically motivated to succeed. To succeed, students must participate and complete all readings and activities. This course requires the student's active participation.
- Both formal and informal assessment methods will be used in the course. Informal assessment will include an evaluation of the quality and timeliness of participation in class activities. Formal assessment may include multiple-choice quizzes, tests, discussion board participation, and written assignments. A final exam will be given at the end of the course.

COURSE PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

This course for which you are registered is a college preparatory, academically rigorous course that covers an entire semester's worth of material. As such, it is important that you adhere to the following guidelines as you manage your time and commit to successfully completing all required coursework:

1. The requirements for this course are equivalent to completion of minimum of 90+ hours of class instruction at a traditional on-site high school
2. Assignments must be submitted for each unit as they are completed so that the teacher may review and assess your performance. Do not hold your work, you must submit each unit's homework as it is completed, demonstrating weekly assignment completions
3. You must log in regularly to your course to demonstrate continued participation, and completion of all course requirements, including assignments, assessments and discussion forums
4. You must complete your individual work and any incident of suspected cheating, plagiarism or collaboration on assignments violates the academic integrity expectations outlined at the time of your enrollment and can result in failure of the course or further action as deemed appropriate

Citizenship

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner that reflects sound ethics, honor, and good citizenship. It is the student's responsibility to maintain academic honesty and integrity and to manifest their commitment to the goals of NUVHS through their conduct and behavior. Students are expected to abide by all NUVHS policies and regulations. Any form of academic dishonesty, or inappropriate conduct by students or applicants may result in penalties ranging from warning to dismissal, as deemed appropriate by NUVHS.

Communication

Throughout this course students will need to be in close contact with their instructor and fellow students. Students are expected to communicate via course message and electronic discussion boards. Therefore, students should plan on checking their course messages at least three times a week and participate in the discussion boards during the weeks they are live.

Instructors strongly encourage and welcome open communication. Clear, consistent, and proactive communication will ensure a successful experience in this course. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor immediately if and when a personal situation occurs that affects his/her performance in this class. Being proactive with communication will result in a quick solution to any problems that may occur.

COURSE OUTLINE

Unit 1 – Part 1: What is Journalism?

In this unit, we will learn all about the world of journalism. We will discover what journalism is and who is involved in the process. We will also learn about different types of journalism and media, including newspapers, magazines, electronic media and photojournalism, and the different type of news they present.

Learning Objectives

- Define journalism.
- Discuss the purpose of journalism.
- Define key terms such as reporter, editor, journalist and audience.
- Discuss the different type of journalism.
- Identify different types of news.
- Explain key roles in the world of journalism.

Activities

Unit 1 – Part 1 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 1 – Part 1 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 1 – Part 1 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 1 – Part 1 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 – Part 1 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 – Part 1 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 1 – Part 2: Analyzing Media

In this unit, we will discover why and how certain types of stories appear on the news. We will learn that while the news is supposed to stick to the facts, sometimes reporters include elements in the stories that are designed to help us think a certain way. By gaining an understanding of what makes something newsworthy and learning how to analyze the media, we will learn to look beyond those tricks and make our own decisions and judgments about the stories in the news.

Learning Objectives

- Explain what makes a story newsworthy.
- Discuss elements of a good news story.
- Define and give examples of audience.
- Define and recognize bias.
- Discuss why reporters include opinions.
- Explain the role tone plays in a news story.
- Explain how to analyze a news story.

Activities

Unit 1 – Part 2 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 1 – Part 2 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 1 – Part 2 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 1 – Part 2 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 – Part 2 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 – Part 2 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 2: Gathering Information

In this unit, we will discover how journalists gather information and the types of sources they use when reporting the news. We will also discover the importance of finding the right sources, avoiding sources that could lead reporters astray and focusing on finding credible sources of information. In order to report on the news, journalists must have news to report. We will learn how quality journalists find information and use those techniques to find information of our own.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the difference between primary and secondary sources.
- Discuss the importance of gathering credible information.
- Explain the signs of sources that are not credible.
- Identify ways to gather information.
- Discuss ways to gather different types of information.
- Explain how journalists use the information they gather.
- Describe investigative journalism.

Activities

Unit 2 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 2 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 2 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 2 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 2 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 2 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 3: Organizing Information

In this unit, we will learn how journalists take the information they have gathered and organize it so they can write an article. We will also discover the different types of articles journalists can write and the purposes they have for writing. This will help us understand why journalists choose particular organizational techniques. We will then be able to determine which organizational technique is best for each type of news story or purpose.

Learning Objectives

- Identify different purposes journalists have for writing.
- Describe the two main types of news stories: hard news and soft news.
- Explain the different types of soft news.
- Describe how journalists determine what information is important.
- Discuss the components and role of a lead.
- Describe the two main organizational techniques for hard news.
- Explain which organizational technique is best for a particular article.
- Explain the pros and cons of each type of news story.
- Explain the pros and cons of each organizational technique.

Activities

Unit 3 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 3 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 3 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 3 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 3 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 3 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 4: Writing an Article

In this unit, we will discover what goes into writing an article. We will review the main methods writers use to organize an article and then go over an article's most important parts. Articles must be written in a specific way, so we will learn how to write an article with the correct point of view and using an appropriate voice. This unit will also cover how journalists revise their articles and make sure they meet their deadlines.

Learning Objectives

- Describe methods for organizing an article.
- Identify the main parts of an article.
- Explain how an article is written.
- Use third person point of view to write an article.
- Use active voice to write an article.
- Explain the purpose of deadlines.
- Describe how to revise an article.
- Discuss the difference between a story and an article.
- Identify quality headlines.

Activities

Unit 4 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 4 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 4 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 4 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 4 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 4 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 4: Writing an Article (Continued)

Midterm Exam Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first four units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Midterm Exam Activities

Midterm Discussion	Discussion	5 points
Midterm Exam	Exam	50 points

Unit 5 – Part 1: Preparing a Newscast

In this unit, we will learn all about the world of broadcast journalism. We will discover the different types of newscasts and learn how to prepare and organize a newscast. We will also identify the different story forms used in broadcast news and learn what factors are most important when writing a story that will appear on the news. The on-air news stories you see may seem simple, but you'll see that a lot of elements go into preparing a short newscast.

Learning Objectives

- Explain the difference between writing for print and writing for on-air news.
- Recognize the different types of newscasts and their purpose.
- Explain the main story forms.
- Identify the major components of a newscast.
- Describe how to write a broadcast news story.
- Describe and demonstrate how a newscast is organized.
- Explain the importance of graphics and video in a newscast.
- Demonstrate writing a story using the different story forms.

Activities

Unit 5 – Part 1 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 5 – Part 1 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 5 – Part 1 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 5 – Part 1 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 – Part 1 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 – Part 1 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 5 – Part 2: Editing an Article or Newscast

Once a news story has been written, it must go through an editing process. We will learn all about the editing processes for both print and broadcast journalism. This unit will cover the different types of editors and what they look for. We will also talk about some of the common errors found in both articles and newscasts and learn ways to avoid issues such as plagiarism and fabrication. If a news piece is not edited properly, it can become a major issue for a journalist, a newspaper and/or a TV news show.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the different types of editors involved in the editing process.
- Explain the importance of editing.
- Understand the difference between macro editing and micro editing.
- Discuss issues with plagiarism and fabrication and ways to prevent them.
- Describe the editing process for a newspaper article.
- Describe the editing process for a newscast.
- Recognize the common errors found in articles and newscasts.
- Edit an article to correct major issues.

Activities

Unit 5 – Part 2 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 5 – Part 2 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 5 – Part 2 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 5 – Part 2 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 – Part 2 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 – Part 2 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 6: Media, the Law and Ethics

In this unit, we will discover some of the laws and responsibilities that guide journalists as they publish the news. We will learn about the First Amendment and how it protects journalists in the United States, but will also discover that some countries do not allow journalists the same freedoms. We will also discover some of the laws journalists must abide by and discuss the role that ethics plays in the field of journalism.

Learning Objectives

- Explain the difference between the law and ethics.
- Describe the First Amendment rights for journalists.
- Understand the lack of freedom journalists have in other countries.
- Determine when a journalist should not ethically publish a story.
- Explain how the law and ethics play a role in determining the stories a journalist covers.
- Discover specific examples of when journalists did not follow the law or acted unethically.
- Learn the consequences of breaking the law or not acting ethically in journalism.

Activities

Unit 6 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 6 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 6 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 6 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 6 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 6 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 7: Media and Society

In this unit, we will discuss the role media plays in society. We will discover how journalists can influence what news people are talking about and how they can affect people’s emotions. We will learn how media journalists reach different types of people and how they make sure they have the news people are listening to. This unit will also introduce us to a new kind of journalist, the Internet journalist, and explain how the Internet is changing the way the news is discovered and reported.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the role media plays in society.
- Explain how the media determines what stories are important.
- Discuss how the media gets people to experience different emotions.
- Describe how media can enhance or manipulate information.
- Cite specific examples of how the media has affected society.
- Explain how the media reaches different audiences.
- Discuss the way the Internet has changed journalism.
- Explain different ways the Internet is used to spread news.
- Describe how the media reflects diverse voices of people from various backgrounds.
- Discuss examples of alternate viewpoints in the media.

Activities

Unit 7 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 7 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 7 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 7 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 7 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 7 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 8: A History of Journalism

In this unit, we will learn how the news has changed over time. We will discover how and when the first newspapers were created and how the news was spread before newspapers were so easy to find. We will also look at the history of broadcast journalism, discovering when radio, newsreels and televisions became important ways to share the news. From there, we will take a look at the newest form of journalism – Internet journalism – and discuss how it has changed the face of journalism and what it means for the future of the news.

Learning Objectives

- Explain how the news was spread before newspapers, television and radio.
- Discuss the history of the creation of the newspaper.
- Discuss the history of broadcast journalism.
- Describe how journalism has played a role in American history.
- Describe how the Internet has changed the news.
- Explain the history of African-Americans in journalism.
- Explain the history of women in journalism.
- Analyze the effect journalism has had on society.
- Analyze the effect society has had on journalism.

Activities

Unit 8 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 8 Project #1	Homework	15 points
Unit 8 Project #2	Homework	15 points
Unit 8 Discussion Part 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 8 Discussion Part 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 8 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 8: A History of Journalism (Continued)

Final Exam Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from units five to eight in this course – the last four units.
(Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Final Exam Activities

Class Reflection Discussion	Discussion	10 points
Final Exam	Exam	50 points

HOW YOU WILL BE GRADED

For critical thinking questions, there are no right or wrong answers. For example, a question on your thoughts on why you think people are shy is a pretty open-ended type of question. Grades will be based on the depth of personal insight you present. **Do not simply agree or disagree** with an insight question. We are looking for critical thinking and possibly a related personal experience with the question.

It is important to provide detailed answers for insight/opinion questions.

For review questions, you should produce a more academic answer. For example, "What two categories are norms divided into?" This type of direct question requires a specific answer. Please use full sentences and proper grammar.

When submitting paragraphs, use these guidelines.

1. The first, second or last sentence contains the main idea and key words from the question or assigned topic.
2. Paragraph contains one to three explanatory sentences.
3. Paragraph contains two to four sentences about specific details related to question.
4. Details are colorful, interesting and appropriate.
5. Paragraph ends with a good closing sentence that refers to the main idea without repeating it.
6. Free of spelling and grammatical errors.

GRADE SCALE

The following grading scale will be used to determine your final letter grade.

Letter Grade	Percentage Earned
A	95%+
A-	90% - 94.9%
B+	87% - 89.9%
B	84% - 86.9%
B-	80% - 83.9%
C+	77% - 79.9%
C	74% - 76.9%
C-	70% - 73.9%
D+	67% - 69.9%
D	64% - 66.9%
D -	60% - 63.9%
F	59% and lower

SUPPORT

At NUVHS you will have access to multiple support teams. Who you contact will depend on the questions you have. Always start by contacting your teacher through the Message Center in the course. Your teacher should be able to answer your question, but if they can't, then they will direct you to another support team. If you have questions about any of the course content, your grades, or course policies, you should contact your instructor.

For questions about your enrollment, transcripts, or general school-wide policies, you can contact **NUVHS Student Services** at info@nuvhs.org or by phone at 866.366.8847. For example, if you would like to withdraw from your course, you should contact Student Services. Please note that a refund for your course can only be obtained if you drop within the first seven days of enrolling in the course.

For help with login/password issues, or other technical issues specific to the Blackboard website, you can contact the team at [National University Blackboard Learn](#). They can also be reached by phone at (888) 892-9095.

EXPECTED SCHOOL-WIDE LEARNING RESULTS (ESLRs)

Engaged Learners

- Demonstrate self-directed learning skills such as time management, and personal responsibility through the completion of course requirements
- Develop an understanding of their own preferred learning styles to enhance their overall academic potential
- Incorporate effective and relevant internet and multimedia resources in their learning process to broaden their knowledge base

Critical Thinkers

- Effectively analyze and articulate sound opinions on a variety of complex concepts
- Illustrate a variety of problem-solving strategies that strengthen college preparation and workforce readiness
- Formulate a framework for applying a variety of technology and internet-based research to enhance information literacy and collaborative thinking

Effective Communicators

- Demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to tone and voice in multiple forms of communication
- Express concepts and ideas in a variety of forms
- Enhance communication skills through the use of media rich or other technology resources

Global Citizens

- Appreciate the value of diversity
- Understand the range of local and international issues facing today's global community
- Demonstrate awareness of the importance of cultural sensitivity and social responsibility in the 21st century