

Welcome to:

## (Class Designation Here) – Introduction to Journalism

Instructor: Tim Maylander

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Office Hours: (at least 2 hrs/week) or by appointment

Class Meets: Tu/Th 2:00-3:15 p.m., (Bldg. + Room # here)

Phone: (573) 326-9806

Office: (location here)

### **Course Objectives:**

The days of everyone in suburbia waking up to a pot of coffee brewing and a newspaper on the front porch may be over, but does that mean journalism isn't important – or worse, dying off?

This is one of the many questions you'll be asked about an ever-changing industry. But as much as journalism changes, there are elements of the profession that are timeless.

In this class, we'll take a look at both these things, and more. The purpose of this class is to give you a taste of what journalism is and what being a journalist is like. As you continue in your educational careers, there are entire colleges devoted to the study of journalism should you choose to go that route. Of course, many news agencies will hire someone with minimal training to do entry-level work, making it feasible with the right skillset to get a job after earning your Associate's Degree. Also, journalism skills rely heavily on writing and communication, making what you'll learn in this class useful even if you decide not to pursue a career as a journalist.

Whichever route you choose later on, here's what you'll be doing in this class:

- Defining what journalism is and what types of journalism are out there
- Studying basic grammar and writing style, learning to write for broadcast
- Developing interviewing skills that will make both your interviewee and you less nervous
- Learning the different ways stories can be structured
- Touring a professional newsroom and/or studio to see how real journalists do it
- Discussing ethical issues facing the industry today
- Examining what the future may hold for journalists and journalism
- Creating your very own publication

### **Teaching Philosophy:**

I believe that every student has the potential to succeed and do great things. As an educator, it's my job to show you that potential and help you achieve it. I expect a lot out of my students, and my students should expect a lot out of me. I have a background in both education and journalism, and it's my goal to combine these two passions into a positive learning environment for you. I try to blend organization and firmness with caring and compassion. I promise to never teach you something I don't think will be useful to you sometime in the future. More than anything, I promise to never be satisfied with doing things the same way every semester, and to treat each student with respect and honesty.

## **Materials:**

**Required Textbook:** Principles of American Journalism: An Introduction (2013). Stephanie Craft and Charles Davis. We will use this book extensively as outlined in the tentative schedule. It is available through the bookstore, but should you choose to buy it online, [Amazon has renting/used purchasing options available](#).

Other readings will be made available through BlackBoard.

## **Optional Textbooks:**

- **AP Stylebook:** Most newsrooms use this as the ultimate authority on grammar and punctuation rules. Is it a copy or a Xerox? How do you abbreviate state names? Do I use fewer or less in that sentence? Mr. Maylander has a couple books in the classroom, but it is highly recommended that you have either your own AP Stylebook or an online subscription to the AP Stylebook.
- **Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero-Tolerance Approach to Punctuation** by Lynne Truss (2006). Want a humorous look at grammar issues in our modern society? Truss shows us why grammar is important in an age of expediency and texting. Recommended for people who think that grammar is scary and is sometimes pointless (Note: Your professor is one of these people. He owns the book.)

## **Other Required Materials:**

- Reporter's Notebooks. These are available in the bookstore, purchase as you need them.
- Pen, pencil and regular notebook. Please bring all three to every class unless otherwise noted.
- Laptops are optional and should only be used in-class for note-taking purposes.

## **Attendance Policy:**

I do not have an attendance policy per se, but class participation is a part of your grade. Suffice it to say, it's hard to participate if you're not in class (and if you're not prepared for class). If you need to miss class, please let me know via email at least 24 hours in advance. Note that if you do miss class, it is your responsibility to use the syllabus and your fellow classmates to get caught up. I will post materials on BlackBoard as much as possible, but check to make sure you don't miss other material/announcements on days you are absent.

## **Grades:**

Your assignments will be graded on a 100-point scale. Especially early in the semester, I am not looking for perfection or for your work to be publication/broadcast ready. What I am looking for are signs you're thinking about the material we covered in class and applying it appropriately. I will also be looking for improvement throughout the semester. There should be a noticeable difference between your first story and your final publication.

Each major assignment will come with an assignment sheet that will outline my expectations, how to meet those expectations, deadlines, and any other pertinent information related to the assignment.

**Please read these sheets carefully** as they are very helpful tools for you.

Though assignments are graded on a 100-point scale, not all have equal weight. Here is how your grade is calculated for the semester, and the grading scale:

5% - Grammar and Style Quizzes (4) (in class)	93% and up – A
15% - Take-home Exams (3)	92.99% - 90% – A-
5% - Interviewing Exercise	89.99% - 87% – B+
5% - First Story	86.99% - 83% – B
5% - First Edit	82.99% - 80% – B-
5% - Second Story	79.99% - 77% – C+
10% - Multimedia Story	76.99% - 73% – C
5% - Newsroom Tour Reflection	72.99% - 70% – C-
30% - Final Project: Your First Publication	69.99% - 67% – D+
5% - End of the Semester Reflection	66.99% - 63% – D
10% - Class Participation	62.99% - 60% – D-
	59.99% and down – F

### **Equipment Checkout and Computer Lab Hours:**

Throughout the semester, you may want to use professional-level equipment to complete your assignments. However, you do not need to spend tens of thousands of dollars on personal gear. If you want to shoot with a DSLR camera, a camcorder or a professional-grade audio recorder, here's how to get those materials: (List specific instructions and hours here)

Should you need access to computers, here's what's available on campus and at the public library: (list hours, locations, types of computers and software available here).

### **Contacting Tim:**

I have provided you with my email address and cell phone number. Please do your best to contact me in advance or during the day using email. I will do my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours. If you need to reach me immediately or after normal business hours, you may call or text me. This is a privilege that can very easily be revoked if it is abused. Please use email to contact me about missing class, not my phone. I do have office hours twice a week. Also, I am usually able to set up times outside of class to meet with students – in fact, I'm happy to do this. Let me know what you need help with and I'll do my best to assist you with whatever you need. The more time in advance you give me, the more I'll be able to help.

## **Assignment Policy:**

The syllabus goes into great detail telling you to what the deadline for each assignment is to the minute. Therefore, any homework that is turned in after the deadline will be considered late. I will accept late work for one day (24 hours) after the deadline, but only half credit will be given. After 24 hours, no credit will be given.

**THAT BEING SAID:** If you know that there will be times when either you have to miss class or doing an assignment will be difficult/impossible to do in the timeframe I give you, please contact me as soon as you become aware of the conflict. *Bottom line: If you let me know as soon as problems occur, I will usually grant an extension or be able to work with you.* Do not let the assignment policy scare you from taking to me, it is not designed to do that. You will find that I am very accommodating if advanced notice is given. I am significantly less accommodating if contacted after deadlines (or if no attempt to contact me is made at all).

Reasonable exceptions to this policy can be made on an individual basis. Contact Tim with questions.

## **Syllabus Changes:**

I have done my best to outline every requirement, policy, assignment, class, etc. in this syllabus. I reserve the right to change it at any time. If changes are made, an updated version will be posted on BlackBoard. If you have any questions whatsoever with any of the content in this syllabus, please email me right away.

**Academic Policies:** (these will vary by university, I've included MU's standard academic policies here as a placeholder)

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful.

**Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to the following:**

- Use of materials from another author without citation or attribution.
- Use of verbatim materials from another author without citation or attribution.
- Extensive use of materials from past assignments without permission of your instructor.
- Extensive use of materials from assignments in other classes without permission of your instructor.
- Fabricating information in news or feature stories, whether for publication or not.
- Fabricating sources in news or feature stories, whether for publication or not.
- Fabricating quotes in news or feature stories, whether for publication or not

- Lack of full disclosure or permission from editors when controversial reportorial techniques, such as going undercover to get news, are used.

When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting or collaboration, consult with your instructor. For closed-book exams and exercises, academic misconduct includes conferring with other class members, copying or reading someone else's test and using notes and materials without prior permission of the instructor. For open-book exams and exercises, academic misconduct includes copying or reading someone else's work.

### **CLASSROOM MISCONDUCT**

Classroom misconduct includes forgery of class attendance; obstruction or disruption of teaching, including late arrival or early departure; failure to turn off cellular telephones leading to disruption of teaching; playing games or surfing the Internet on laptop computers unless instructed to do so; physical abuse or safety threats; theft; property damage; disruptive, lewd or obscene conduct; abuse of computer time; repeated failure to attend class when attendance is required; and repeated failure to participate or respond in class when class participation is required.

**IMPORTANT:** Entering a classroom late or leaving a classroom before the end of the period can be extremely disruptive behavior. Students are asked to arrive for class on time and to avoid early departures. This is particularly true of large lectures, where late arrivals and early departures can be most disruptive. Instructors have the right to deny students access to the classroom if they arrive late and have the right to dismiss a student from the class for early departures that result in disruptions.

Under MU policy, your instructor has the right to ask for your removal from the course for misconduct, disruptive behavior or excessive absences. The instructor then has the right to issue a grade of withdraw, withdraw failing or F. The instructor alone is responsible for assigning the grade in such circumstances.

### **DISHONESTY AND MISCONDUCT REPORTING PROCEDURES**

MU faculty are required to report all instances of academic or classroom misconduct to the appropriate campus officials. Allegations of classroom misconduct will be forwarded immediately to MU's Vice Chancellor for Student Services. Allegations of academic misconduct will be forwarded immediately to MU's Office of the Provost. In cases of academic misconduct, the student will receive at least a zero for the assignment in question.

### **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ETHICS**

The School of Journalism is committed to the highest standards of academic and professional ethics and expects its students to adhere to those standards. Students should be familiar with the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists and adhere to its restrictions. Students are expected to observe strict honesty in academic programs and as representatives of school-related media. Should any student be guilty of plagiarism, falsification, misrepresentation or other forms of dishonesty in any assigned work, that student may be subject to a failing grade from the instructor and such disciplinary action as may be necessary under University regulations.

### **UNIVERSITY of MISSOURI-COLUMBIA Notice of Nondiscrimination**

The University of Missouri System is an Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action institution and is nondiscriminatory relative to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era veteran. Any person having inquiries concerning the University of Missouri-Columbia's compliance with implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, or other civil rights laws should contact the Assistant Vice Chancellor, Human Resource Services, University of Missouri-Columbia, 130 Heinkel Building, Columbia, Mo. 65211, (573) 882-4256, or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

#### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need assistance, please notify me immediately. The school will make reasonable efforts to accommodate your special needs. Students are excused for recognized religious holidays. Please let me know in advance if you have a conflict.

#### **ADA COMPLIANCE**

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and need assistance, please notify the Office of Disability Services, A038 Brady Commons, 882 4696, or the course instructor immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs.

#### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Students are automatically excused for recognized religious holidays. Let your instructor know in advance if you have a conflict.

#### **INTELLECTUAL PLURALISM**

The university community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions concerning the quality of instruction in this class may address concerns to either the Departmental Chair or Divisional leader or Director of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor(s) at the end of the course.

### **Tentative Schedule:**

Note: This schedule is subject to change (and it will). The most up-to-date version will always be found on Sakai. If you have any questions, please contact me right away.

#### **WEEK ONE (1/20, 1/22)**

**Tuesday:** Welcome to Introduction to Journalism. Classroom expectations and material description

**Read before Thursday:** Craft & Davis, ch. 2 (31-60)

**Thursday:** What is journalism? Who are journalists? Is journalism dead and is journalism important?

#### **WEEK TWO (1/27, 1/29)**

**Read before Tuesday:** "An abridged history of journalism" handout (posted on Blackboard)

**Optional reading:** [American Journalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century](#).

**Tuesday:** What we can learn from studying journalism's past

**Read before Thursday:** Craft & Davis, pgs. 5-30

**Thursday:** What good is journalism, anyway?

**ASSIGNMENT:** Take home exam #1. Tell me what journalism means to you and why you think it's important (or not). Use historical examples as evidence. 2-3 pages, see assignment sheet for further details. Due in BlackBoard before class on 2/3.

### **WEEK THREE (2/3, 2/5)**

**Read before Tuesday:** Craft & Davis, pgs. 70-84

**Tuesday:** Nuts & Bolts: The 5 W's + H and other journalistic cornerstones

**Read before Thursday:** Craft & Davis, pgs. 60-69

**Thursday:** Determining newsworthiness. What makes a story a story?

### **WEEK FOUR (2/10, 2/12)**

**Tuesday:** On grammar and AP Style

**Read before Thursday:** "Selections from the AP Stylebook, pt. 1" handout (posted on BlackBoard)

**Thursday:** Comparing news stories to other forms of communication

**IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT:** First AP Style Quiz

### **WEEK FIVE (2/17, 2/19)**

**Read before Tuesday:** "Story Structure" handout (posted on BlackBoard)

**Tuesday:** The many ways news stories can be structured

**ASSIGNMENT:** Watching broadcast news/radio in depth. See assignment sheet for details. Due in BlackBoard before class on 2/19.

**Thursday:** Breaking down a TV/Radio broadcast

**ASSIGNMENT:** Take home exam #2. What have you learned about grammar and story structure? How will you incorporate it in your future work? What types of story structure do you see yourself using? 2-3 pages, see assignment sheet for details. Due in BlackBoard before class on Tuesday.

### **\*WEEK SIX (2/24, 2/26)**

**Read before Tuesday:** Selections from Interviewing: A guide for Journalists and Writers by Gail Sedorkin

**Optional Reading:** [13 simple tips for journalist techniques for effective interviews](#)

**Optional Reading:** [20 interviewing tips for journalists](#)

**Tuesday:** Interviewing 101

**Read before Wednesday:** Biographical information on John Smith, Ward 2 Councilmember

**ASSIGNMENT:** Email Mr. Maylander three questions you would like to ask Mr. Smith by 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday. Mr. Maylander will give you feedback, please bring these questions to class on Thursday.

**Thursday:** Practicing your interviewing skills with the Ward 2 Councilmember John Smith

**ASSIGNMENT:** Interviewing Exercise. See assignment sheet on BlackBoard for details. Due before class on 3/3.

### **WEEK SEVEN (3/3, 3/5)**

*Read before Tuesday:* Craft & Davis, ch. 8 (193-208)

**Tuesday:** On independence, objectivity and obligations to society

*Read before Thursday:* "Selections from the AP Stylebook, pt. 2" handout (posted on BlackBoard)

**Thursday:** Everything you need to know about writing your first story

**IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT:** Second AP Style Quiz

**ASSIGNMENT:** First story. See assignment sheet for details. Due in BlackBoard before class on 3/10.

### **WEEK EIGHT (3/10, 3/12)**

**Tuesday:** Editing: How-to guide

**ASSIGNMENT:** First Edit. See assignment sheet for details. Due in BlackBoard before class on 3/12.

**Thursday:** Going beyond what we did in our first story

**ASSIGNMENT:** Second Story. See assignment sheet for details. Due in BlackBoard before class on 3/17.

### **\*WEEK NINE (3/17, 3/19)**

*Read before Tuesday:* [10 Rules for Visual Storytelling](#) by Mindy McAdams

**Tuesday:** 16 elements of exceptional photography. Why photography matters.

**ASSIGNMENT:** [Download Soundslides \(free version\)](#) on your laptop and bring it to class if you have one.

**Thursday:** Photo Essays: telling stories through images

**ASSIGNMENT:** Multimedia story. See assignment sheet for details. Due in BlackBoard before class on 3/31.

### **WEEK TEN (3/24, 3/26)** Spring Break – No classes

### **WEEK ELEVEN (3/31, 4/2)**

**Tuesday:** Videography. Discussion about the final project.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Mr. Maylander assigned you into groups on Tuesday for the final project. Please email him which type of final project you'd like to do before class on 4/2.

**Thursday:** Video editing (the basics)

## **WEEK TWELVE (4/7, 4/9)**

*Read for Tuesday:* Craft & Davis, ch. 6 (133-163)

**Tuesday:** Ethics and journalism – a contradiction?

*Read for Thursday:* [How a reporter got both facts and ethics wrong](#)

**Thursday:** Real-world examples of media ethics

*Extra credit opportunity:* Your readings mention several times where journalists have lapsed in their ethical obligations. We talked about several more in class. Find a “journalism ethics issue” that we didn’t talk about yet and write a 2-3 page paper about it (see assignment sheet for details). Due in BlackBoard before class on 4/14.

## **WEEK THIRTEEN (4/14, 4/16)**

*Read before Tuesday:* Craft & Davis, pgs. 85-87, 91-97

*Read before Tuesday:* “Selections from the AP Stylebook, pt. 3” handout (posted on BlackBoard)

**Tuesday:** Economics and journalism

**IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT:** Third AP Style Quiz

**ASSIGNMENT:** Submit the work you’ve completed so far on the final project. Each person should have completed at least one story by now and part of the finished product (video/paper/website) should be put together. Due in BlackBoard before class on 4/16.

**Thursday:** Touring a real-life broadcast facility and seeing journalists in action (or at least in a newsroom)

**ASSIGNMENT:** Newsroom reflection. See assignment sheet for details. Due in BlackBoard before class on 4/21

## **WEEK FOURTEEN (4/21, 4/23)**

*Read before Tuesday:* Craft & Davis, ch. 5 (107-130)

**Tuesday:** The future of our industry – what does it look like?

*Extra credit opportunity:* We watched a clip from “The Paper” in class on Tuesday, but there are many more movies about/involving journalism. Pick one you haven’t seen and write up a review which emphasizes your takeaways from the film. See assignment sheet for a list of movies/details. Due in Blackboard before class on 4/28.

*Read before Thursday:* Review the previous “Selections from the AP Stylebook”. The final stylebook quiz will contain questions from each handout.

**Thursday:** Mobile journalism

**IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT:** Fourth (and final!) AP Style Quiz

### **WEEK FIFTEEN (4/28, 4/30)**

**Tuesday:** No class. Meet with your groups to finish up the final projects. Mr. Maylander will be in his office during class time if you need to reach him and will be available outside of class as well.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Final projects are due in BlackBoard before class on Thursday.

**Thursday:** Presentations and group member evals

### **WEEK SIXTEEN (5/5, 5/7)**

**Tuesday:** Presentations

**Thursday:** Any remaining presentations. Semester wrap-up. Eval for Mr. Maylander

**ASSIGNMENT:** Your “End of the Semester Reflection” is due in BlackBoard before our scheduled final time, which is 5/12 at 3:00 p.m.

### **WEEK SEVENTEEN – FINALS WEEK**

No class – but be sure to turn in your End of the Semester Reflection. Have a great summer!