

**Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday - 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.**

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## **Welcome!**

Welcome to Summer Journalism at NYU. For the next six weeks, we'll be running a virtual newsroom, using distance learning to study, practice and master the basics of reporting, newswriting and multi-media techniques.

You will also function as reporters and photographers in your home towns. Like most journalists today, you will be using social distancing, social media, online video conferencing platforms and other techniques to report on your world. The goal is to get your work published on our own website or in your local newspaper back home.

By the time we are finished, you will be proficient in writing news stories and features, conducting interviews, shooting news and feature photos and video for the Web.

You will have spur of the moment assignments, timed drills, last minute assignment changes – just like real life.

This is also an opportunity to explore topics of interest, such as the arts, music, current events etc. within the scope of proper journalistic activities.

Our special class-wide project this summer will be a pre-election survey of voter sentiment and preferences ahead of the 2020 Presidential Election in November.

Finally, we will produce a class web site, highlighting work by each student.

## **Expectations**

This class will be fun, but it will also be intense. I have high expectations for all of you. Classwork will consist of style and news quizzes, timed in-class writing assignments, lectures, discussions and workshops. Homework assignments will consist of daily news readings, handouts as well a variety of reporting assignments. Some assignments will be due the next class, some will be due after the weekend.

Journalists need to be well informed to do their jobs properly. While we are together I will expect the same of you. I expect that you will read the New York Times, the New York Daily News or the New York Post every day. These papers are available online and I will assign special articles for discussion.

In order to become a good writer, you must read good writing. This is a step in that direction. Read the news carefully and critically. Why did a lead work or not work? Why was a story organized the way it was? Since you are lucky enough to be living in a city with many newspapers, some of them free, you should dip into different ones to experience the popular press.

I expect that the sessions will be part lecture and discussion, part timed assignments to be emailed (or uploaded) at a specific time. We will have frequent one-on-one sessions to discuss your work and you will have the opportunity to “peer edit” each other’s work.

For writing assignments, you will be required to conform to AP style. That means you will need to have a copy of the AP Stylebook (any edition OK) or access to the stylebook online.

I intend to run our class as if it is a newsroom. Newsrooms run on deadlines. And that means there is an iron-clad expectation that you will not be late to or absent from the online classes without providing a legitimate excuse *in advance*, and you will not be late in turning in an assignment.

In the news business unexcused tardiness or absence is grounds for discipline or termination; in our newsroom, it will lower your grade dramatically. Late assignments will not be accepted and will earn an F. Late arrival for class earns an F for all work for the day. Three absences from class earn an F for the course. Woody Allen said 90 percent of life is showing up. The same is true of our newsroom.

Your final grade will be computed as follows: Class participation: 33 percent  
In-class work: 33 percent  
Homework: 33 percent.

#### IMPORTANT!!!!

Plagiarism or fabricating sources, quotes, sentences from any print, broadcast or online source are among journalism’s hanging offenses and will not be tolerated here. They are also a major academic violation. Incidents of either will be punished with an F for the course and a report to academic authorities.

I am available to meet with you either via Zoom or by email.

Please purchase:  
AP Stylebook. Any edition, paper or online. Grammar guide of your choice

I will provide worksheets and other materials not otherwise listed. Please save all written work, handouts and this syllabus as they are the “textbook” for the class.

What follows is my best guess at a schedule. But it is apt to be like the news -- constantly changing and unpredictable -- to allow us to take advantage of events. Be prepared to be flexible.

All homework assignments are due the next class. Weekend assignments are due the following Tuesday. Many assignments will come from the AP Day Book, which is schedule of many local news events. Be flexible because some assignments will be last minute.

#### WEEK 1:

Basic Discussion: The importance of journalism and why we are journalists. What is news and where do story ideas come from? What makes for good writing?

Diagnostic writing quiz – what do you know, what do we need to work on. (Not graded!!!)

Outside Assignment: Find a story somewhere in your neighborhood, someone you could consider a “hometown hero.” Write 500 words about it. Take three photos to go with it: an overall shot, a close-up and a portrait (if possible). You may not use the first person in the story.

## WEEK 2:

News story basics: The lede (or lead), the nut graf, the quote, the transition and story organization.

In class activity: Mock press conference, story workshop.

Assignment A: Write a breaking news story of 500 words from the in class press conference.

Assignment B: Attend an online event – even watching a local politician via an online feed.. Write a 500 word story with quotes, estimate of size of crowd, nut graf. It should be suitable for print in your hometown paper.

## WEEK 3:

The Art and Craft of Interviewing

Activity: In-class interviews and writing. Story workshop.

Assignment: Interview someone compelling and write a 500-word profile of him/her. On separate sheet, describe why you chose this person. 600 words total. Photos if possible.

## WEEK 4:

Stalking the Feature Story

Discussion: What is a feature, how do you find one and what makes it good?

Activity: Story workshop, discussion of a favorite feature story. Be sure to bring one to discuss. Obits: why they matter!

Bring in one of two recent obits from the New York Times (by Margalit Fox or Sam Roberts if possible)

Assignment: Write a 500-word feature story and shoot three photos to go with it: Environmental, close-up and portrait (again, if possible).

## WEEK 5:

Journalism in the Real World – Online, blogging, Tweeting and 21<sup>st</sup> Century distribution of the news.

Final Assignment: Write a 750-word news, profile or feature story with three photos (environmental, close up, portrait), with or without a slideshow or two-minute web video.

WEEK 6

Workshop final projects. Create web site and post online.

To see what we did last summer:

<https://wp.nyu.edu/reportnewyorksummer2019/>