



**LOYOLA  
UNIVERSITY  
CHICAGO**

*Preparing people to lead extraordinary lives*

**COMM 205-21W Reporting Basics I  
Spring 2023**

**School of COMM - Room 015**

**Time: MoWeFr 2:45PM - 3:35PM**

**Instructor Information:**

Professor: Daniel Trielli

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Office Hours: By appointment

**Course Description:**

This course examines current issues in U.S. journalism with strong emphasis on developing skills in news reporting, interviewing, and writing.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

- News Judgment
- Writing Concisely and Clearly
- Writing on Deadline
- AP Style
- Interviewing Techniques

**Recommended material:**

- AP Stylebook. The 56th Edition, published in 2022, is strongly recommended, but previous, recent editions would also work. This is a key resource not just for this class, but for life.
- Newspapers and news websites. The library offers access to a great selection of national news outlets. <https://libguides.luc.edu/news>

## **Course format:**

Our week is divided into three meetings:

- Monday: Lecture and discussion about the topic of the week. Your participation in that discussion is essential. Mondays are also the days in which the weekly assignments are given and due.
- Wednesday: In-class exercises about writing or reporting.
- Friday: News of the week discussion + updates on weekly assignments.

## **Course Assignments & Assessments:**

All assignments will be posted and turned in on Sakai. Late assignments will have an instant deduction of 0.5 point, plus another 0.5 point for every additional 24 hours of tardiness.

### **Biweekly assignments (6, each worth 10 points)**

There are a total of 6 biweekly assignments, each divided into two weekly parts: reporting and writing. Five of those six assignments will have a specific theme, based on lectures and class discussions: events, bios, press conferences, communities and people on the street. The final assignment will have a theme of your choice. The goal is to have you reporting and writing as much as possible, on deadline, in common scenarios in a reporter's job. Grading rubrics are attached at the end of the syllabus, before the schedule.

#### **Reporting assignments (6, each worth 4 points)**

This part of the biweekly assignment is about gathering the information you need. The goal is to get all relevant information, make sure it is accurate, and appropriately sourced.

#### **Writing assignments (6, each worth 6 points)**

This part of the biweekly assignment is about putting together what you found into a publication-ready news piece. The goal is to have a thorough, accurate, clear, focused 300-400 word long article following AP Style. The final assignment will be a little longer: 500 to 600 words.

### **In-class exercises (10, each worth 2 points)**

We will do ten in-class exercises in which we will work (usually in pairs) on ideas and themes discussed each week.

### **News of the week (1, worth 10 points)**

Every Friday one or two students will lead a discussion about the news of the week. Before class, the presenter or presenters will post on Sakai a bullet point listing and summarizing noteworthy news stories published in international, national, or local media. In class, they will present it and lead discussion among the other students.

### **Participation and professionalism (10 points)**

There are specific times for class discussion set aside on Monday and Friday. These discussions will not only help us understand the topics each week, but will also be handy in helping generate

ideas. Therefore, your participation is essential. You will also be assessed on your professionalism during all classes.

### Grading

	Total points	Points per assignment
Biweekly assignments	60	10
In-class exercises (10)	20	2
News of the week (1)	10	10
Participation and professionalism	10	10
Total	100	-

### Course Policies:

**Academic Integrity:** Loyola University Chicago takes seriously the issues of plagiarism and academic integrity. Below is an excerpt, quoted directly, of the university's statement on integrity.

"The faculty and administration of Loyola University Chicago wish to make it clear that the following acts are regarded as serious violations of personal honesty and the academic ideal that binds the university into a learning community:

Submitting as one's own:

1. Material copied from a published source: print, internet, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.
2. Another person's unpublished work or examination material.
3. Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit.
4. Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The critical issue is to give proper recognition to other sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty."

( [http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academ icintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academ icintegrity.shtml))

**Accessibility:** Loyola University Chicago provides reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC). Professors will receive an accommodation notification from SAC, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Students are encouraged to meet with their professor individually in order to discuss their accommodations. All information will remain confidential. Please note that in this class, software may be used to audio record class lectures in order to provide equitable access to students with disabilities. Students approved for this accommodation use recordings for their personal study only and recordings may not be shared with other people or used in any way against the faculty member, other lecturers, or students whose classroom comments are recorded as part of the class activity. Recordings are deleted at the end of the semester. For more information about registering with SAC or questions about accommodations, please contact SAC at 773-508-3700 or SAC@luc.edu.

## Grading rubrics

Reporting assignment	Excellent (1)	Satisfactory (0.5)	Unsatisfactory (0)
<b>Has Five Ws and one H</b>	All main questions are answered	More than one of the main questions are not answered	More than two of the main questions are not answered
<b>Factual correctness</b>	All information is correct	Minor incorrections	Incorrect even in most important info (Names, ages, and jobs)
<b>All information is sourced</b>	Every piece of information has clear source attribution	Some pieces of information are not sourced	Most pieces of informations do not have clear sources
<b>Has quotes from involved parties or stakeholders</b>	Everyone who should be heard is heard	Some relevant perspectives are missing	Key perspectives are missing

Writing assignment	Excellent (1)	Satisfactory (0.5)	Unsatisfactory (0)
<b>Has Five Ws and one H</b>	All main questions are answered	More than one of the main questions are not answered	More than two of the main questions are not answered
<b>Factual correctness</b>	All information is correct	Minor incorrections	Incorrect even in most important info (Names, ages, and jobs)
<b>Typos and grammar</b>	Few typos or grammatical mistakes	Occasional typos and grammatical mistakes	Frequent typos and grammatical mistakes; difficult to understand at times
<b>Length</b>	300-400 words	270-440 words	Fewer than 270 or more than 440 words
<b>Structural clarity and focus</b>	Structure of the piece is clear and focused	Some issues with structure, but it does not impede understanding	Has structural issues which make it hard to follow
<b>Follows AP Style</b>	AP Style was appropriately followed	Occasional deviations from style	Frequent problems with the style

Late assignments will have an instant deduction of 0.5 point, plus another 0.5 point for every additional 24 hours of tardiness.

**Schedule - Subject to change (updates will be announced on Sakai)**

<b>Week 1 (Jan 18-20) - Intro</b>	
Wednesday (Jan 18)	Lecture and discussion: Why reporting and writing?
Friday (Jan 20)	New assignment: Reporting on events

<b>Week 2 (Jan 23-27) - Reporting week</b>	
Monday (Jan 23)	Lecture and discussion: Five Ws and one H
Wednesday (Jan 25)	NO CLASS
Friday (Jan 27)	In-class exercise: Finding the Ws and the H

<b>Week 3 (Jan 30-Feb 3) - Writing week</b>	
Monday (Jan 30)	Lecture and discussion: Inverted Pyramid and other story shapes Assignment due: Reporting on events New assignment: Writing about events
Wednesday (Feb 1)	In-class exercise: Reorganizing information
Friday (Feb 3)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 4 (Feb 6-10) - Reporting week</b>	
Monday (Feb 6)	Lecture and discussion: Objectivity and truth Assignment due: Writing about events New assignment: Reporting about people (bios)
Wednesday (Feb 8)	In-class exercise: Rating objectivity
Friday (Feb 10)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 5 (Feb 13-17) - Writing week</b>	
Monday (Feb 13)	Lecture and discussion: AP Style: what and why Assignment due: Reporting about people (bios) New assignment: Writing about people (bios)
Wednesday (Feb 15)	In-class exercise: Wiki bios of journalists
Friday (Feb 17)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 6 (Feb 20-24) - Reporting week</b>	
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Monday (Feb 20)	Lecture and discussion: Where stories come from Assignment due: Writing about people (bios) New assignment: Reporting on press conferences
Wednesday (Feb 22)	In-class exercise: TBD
Friday (Feb 24)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 7 (Feb 27-Mar 3) - Writing week</b>	
Monday (Feb 27)	Lecture and discussion: Writing (and re-writing) leads Assignment due: Reporting on press conferences New assignment: Writing about press conferences
Wednesday (Mar 1)	In-class exercise: Lead alternatives
Friday (Mar 3)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 8 (Mar 6-10) - SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS</b>	
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<b>Week 9 (Mar 13-17) - Reporting week</b>	
Monday (Mar 13)	Lecture and discussion: Chasing good sources Assignment due: Writing about press conferences New assignment: Reporting on communities
Wednesday (Mar 15)	In-class exercise: TBD
Friday (Mar 17)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 10 (Mar 20-24) - Writing week</b>	
Monday (Mar 20)	Lecture and discussion: Inclusive language Assignment due: Reporting on communities New assignment: Writing on communities
Wednesday (Mar 22)	In-class exercise: TBD
Friday (Mar 24)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 11 (Mar 27-31) - Reporting week</b>	
Monday (Mar 27)	Lecture and discussion: Interviewing Assignment due: Writing on communities New assignment: Reporting with people on the street
Wednesday (Mar 29)	In-class exercise: Interviewing your peers part 1

Friday (Mar 31)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading
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<b>Week 12 (Apr 3-7) - Writing week</b>	
Monday (Apr 3)	Lecture and discussion: Using quotes Assignment due: Reporting with people on the street New assignment: Writing on people on the street
Wednesday (Apr 5)	In-class exercise: Interviewing your peers part 2 - writing
Friday (Apr 7)	NO CLASS (Easter)

<b>Week 13 (Apr 10-14) - Recap week</b>	
Monday (Apr 10)	NO CLASS (Easter)
Wednesday (Apr 12)	Recap
Friday (Apr 14)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 14 (Apr 17-21) - Reporting week</b>	
Monday (Apr 17)	Lecture and discussion: Law and ethics Assignment due: Writing on people on the street New assignment: Final (your choice of topic) - reporting
Wednesday (Apr 19)	In-class exercise: Office hours
Friday (Apr 21)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 15 (Apr 24-28) - Writing week</b>	
Monday (Apr 24)	Lecture and discussion: Editing yourself Assignment due: Final (your choice of topic) - reporting New assignment: Final (your choice of topic) - writing
Wednesday (Apr 26)	In-class exercise: Office hours
Friday (Apr 28)	News of the week discussion In-class group reading

<b>Week 16 (May 1-5) - Finals week</b>	
Wednesday (May 3)	Assignment due: Final (your choice of topic) - writing