

Loyola University Chicago  
COMM 205  
Basic Reporting  
Fall 2018  
Wednesday 4:15 - 6:45

RogersEdgeReporter Newsroom: 6443 Sheridan Road

Professor John Carpenter  
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312-909-2254

**Office hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. in our classroom. Also by appointment.

**Course Description:**

This class will teach essential journalism skills, including news writing, feature writing, interviewing, research, finding stories, editing and rewriting, basic journalistic ethics, and professional journalistic practices. While the course will feature lectures and work from our textbook, the emphasis will be on practical experience, covering real people and real events in the neighborhood around Loyola. Worthy student work will be published on a community news website that is being created just for this and other Loyola classes.

While this is a journalism class, it is important to remember that the essential skills of a good journalist - resourcefulness, relentlessness, clear and careful writing, high ethical standards, and good judgment - are skills that translate into many fields.

**Your professor:**

I am a veteran journalist, and have worked as a reporter for both the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun-Times. My work has also appeared in the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, Forbes, and many other publications. I was editor of the Chicago Sun-Times' award-winning Homicide Watch website, which I also helped launch. Over the course of my 35-year career, I have covered everything from crime to politics to transportation to education to travel tech startups to music to sports. My work has won many awards.

**Course Text**

*''Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism''*

by Tim Harrower

*''AP Stylebook''* Note: This was not on my original book order. So I know you may not be able to get it immediately.

**Grade scale:**

100-93 = **A**  
92-90 = **A-**  
89-87 = **B+**  
86-83 = **B**  
82-80 = **B-**  
79-77 = **C+**  
76-73 = **C**  
72-70 = **C-**  
69-67 = **D+**  
66-63 = **D**  
62 or below = **F**

## **Expectations, Classroom Conduct and Etiquette**

**•No open laptops during class, unless we are working on a project, or you are researching something germane to class.**

Because participation and discussion are crucial components to the class, anything that distracts you from being fully engaged is a detriment to both the class as a whole and to your ability to get the most out of the class material. Therefore, to help you stay focused on the subject matter at hand and to enhance your participation grade, please:

- If you must look at your cell phone, step out of the classroom.

- Do not use a laptop or tablet computer during class, unless it is for in-class work, or you provide proof that you have a documented need to use one to take notes. •(See disabilities section below. Note: PowerPoints presented in class will be available on Sakai.) •

## **Student Rules and Responsibilities Academic Dishonesty**

Loyola University and the School of Communication expect academic integrity and have policies regarding academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (such as failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours). This is an academic community; being uninformed or naïve is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing sources.

### **It is dishonest to:**

- Turn in the same work for two classes;•••Turn in a paper you have not written yourself; or• copy from another student or use a "cheat sheet" during an exam.

*Turning in work that is not your own will result in failure on the assignment and possible dismissal from the class.*

You can find Loyola's policies regarding academic integrity

at:  
[http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academic\\_integrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academic_integrity.shtml).

### **Special Needs**

If you have a special circumstance that may impact your course work and for which you may require accommodation, please contact me early in the semester so arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD). We will accommodate your needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. Loyola's policy is that it is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates. Additional information about the services available at Loyola, including eligibility for services, is on the SSWD website: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml>.

### **Electronic Communication & Information**

#### **Sakai:**

Course information and assignments will be available on Sakai. Please notify me if you have any problems using the class Sakai site.

**Email:** I will answer email within 24 hours on weekdays but will not always access it on weekends. You may not receive a response to a late Friday email until Monday.

**Text:** For urgent messages, feel free to text me at 312-909-2254. Please identify yourself in the text.

#### **Assignments:**

##### **Person profile (150 points) (DUE: Oct. 3, 4:15 p.m.)**

Complete a 300-400 word profile of a person of your choice. It does not have to be a "newsworthy" person, and it can be someone you know. But they must be interesting. You must interview them, and you must write a story that makes me interested in them. (Helpful tip: If you interview your roommate, he or she better be very interesting. For example: "My roommate loves cool music!" = not interesting. "My roommate spent the summer travelling around the country with her band in a van, and here's what she learned from the experience." = interesting.)

**Breaking News or news feature (150 points) (Floating deadline, but must be completed before Nov. 21.)** Complete a 300-400-word story either on a local news event, or breaking news incident OR complete a 300-400-word news feature on an issue of relevance to the RogersEdge and/or Loyola community. WE WILL DISCUSS THIS IN GREATER DETAIL.

**Tests (150 points each)**

Test 1 will be Sept. 19, and will cover Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the text.

Test 2 will be October 17, and will cover Chapters 7 and 8, and will include a general news writing portion.

**Final story (300 points) (DUE: On the date and time of our Final Exam)**

Report and write a 600-word story on any subject that is newsworthy in the neighborhood we are covering. I will consider allowing students to pair into teams to write longer stories. We will talk about this more in great detail. **Note: The Final Paper will take the place of the final exam, and will be due on May 5, the date of the final exam.**

**Class Participation: 100 points**

I expect you to be attentive in class, to contribute to class discussions, to give your best effort in in-class exercise, to be supportive in in-class feedback on exercises, and to be supportive of your fellow students. Please note the prohibition on open laptops for anything other than in-class work.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

**Aug. 29**

Introduction, syllabus review. Basic writing and note-taking exercises.

**Sept. 5**

**READING DUE:** ``Inside Reporting'' Pages 14 and 15

``Inside Reporting'' Chapter 2: How Newsrooms work''

``Inside Reporting'' Chapter 3: Newswriting Basics

**Lecture/discussion:** What is journalism?  
Writing and Research exercises

**Sept. 12**

**READING DUE:** ``Inside Reporting'' Chapter 4: Reporting Basics.''

``Inside Reporting Chapter 5: Covering the News''

**Sept 19**

Test 1 (Encompassing chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5)  
News writing and reporting exercises.

**Sept. 26**

**READING DUE:** ``Inside Reporting Chapter 7: Ethics''

**Oct. 3**

Guest

Person profile due

**Oct. 10**

**READING DUE:** ``Inside Reporting Chapter 8: Digital Journalism''

**Oct. 17**

Test 2 (Encompassing chapters 7 and 8, with a general news writing portion.)

**Oct. 24**

**READING DUE:** ``Inside Reporting Chapter 9: Broadcast Journalism.''

Guest

**Oct. 31**

**READING DUE:** ``Inside Reporting Chapter 10: Public Relations.''

Writing and reporting exercises.  
Story discussion

Nov. 7 Field trip, TBD.

Nov. 14 TBD

Nov. 21 - NO CLASS

Nov. 28

Dec. 5