Loyola University Chicago
Spring 2013
COMM 205-22W Reporting and Writing Across Platforms; SOC 015
MWF 11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

Jessica R. Brown, Instructor
E-mail: jbrown7@luc.edu (Please allow up to 48 hours for a response to e-mail during the week and do not expect a response during the weekends, even if there is an assignment or exam expected the following week. Remember to include your name and the course on your subject line. Please use your Loyola e-mail account when sending e-mails.)
Office: SOC 218 Phone: 312-915-7726 Office Hours: Wednesday 4-6; Thursday 2-4

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The goal of this course is to teach students the fundamentals of news writing and reporting across platforms: Print, Online and Broadcast. Students will learn the basics of journalistic writing, interviewing, descriptive techniques, and fact checking as well as the principles of ethics as it relates to journalism and storytelling. Students will be expected to meet strict deadlines and exercise good news judgment and become intelligent consumers of information.

TEXT AND OTHER MATERIALS
Harrower, T., Inside Reporting 3rd edition (IR)
The Associated Press Stylebook, 2013
Subscription (print and/or digital) to at least two U.S. news publications
External or flash drive A stapler Notepad, Pen/Pencil

GRADING
100-95 A 94-90 A- 89-87 B+ Quizzes (10%)
86-83 B 82-80 B- 79-77 C+ In-class work/Participation/Professionalism (30%)
76-74 C 73-70 C- 69-67 D+ Out-of-class assignments (30%)
66-65 D Below 65 F Final Project (30%)

Plagiarism Statement: Please see attached document

SPECIAL NEEDS: Students are urged to contact me should they have questions concerning course materials and procedures. If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact me within the first 2 weeks of the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD). Additional information about the services available at Loyola, including eligibility for services, is on the SSWD website: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml>

IMPORTANT NOTES:
1.) Readings and assignments are due on the day they are listed.
2.) No absence will be excused unless it is because of the death of a loved one or serious illness or injury. You will be required to present proof for an excused absence. Proof MUST be given no later than your first day back.
3.) Unless otherwise instructed, ALL students should upload stories on a Word document, typed in *Times New Roman, 12 pt., double-spaced in paragraph form*, with their name, date, name of assignment, and word count in the top right corner to Sakai. If there is no Sakai assignment, the story should be handed in as a hard copy using the same parameters, and stapled in the top left corner. Stories not properly formatted or turned in as requested will **lose 5 points**.

4.) No in-class work may be completed out of class due to an absence unless that absence is excused.

5.) Unless otherwise instructed, NO work will be accepted via email. However, if you have issues with uploading content to Sakai, you may email me your work instead.

6.) ALL out-of-class assignments must be uploaded to [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com) - Class ID: 8419912 / Password: comm205. Any assignment that is not posted here will **lose 20 points**.

7.) You must be present to complete in-class assignments, unless you have an excused absence. In this situation the assignment must be completed by the next class period minus 10 points. If you are absent and miss work, you cannot make it up.

8.) **REAL-WORLD ASSIGNMENTS (RWA):** ALL real-world assignments are subject to publication on Hubbub. Students should make it clear to all sources and subjects that their stories are intended for actual publication.

9.) Plagiarism WILL NOT be tolerated. Please read carefully the Academic Honesty policy provided to you at the start of the semester.

10.) **RE-DOs:** Students may re-do **two out-of-class, 100-point assignments** in which they receive a grade of **79 or less**. These assignments MAY NOT have had a built-in draft. If you choose to re-do an assignment, you have two weeks after the original graded work is returned to complete it. Re-dos will receive the **average of the two scores** for both versions. Re-dos WILL NOT be accepted without the **original work** being returned as well. NO rewrites will be accepted after Dec. 1, even if this date is less than the two week parameter set above. There will be NO re-dos on assignments with **missing source lists** or that have issues with **plagiarism**.

11.) **WRITING HELP:** As this is an intensive writing course, you may find that you need additional help. Please visit the Writing Center: [http://www.luc.edu/writing/home/](http://www.luc.edu/writing/home/) if necessary. However, journalism is a unique type of writing, and your issues may not necessarily be addressed at the Writing Center. If your issue is basic English and sentence construction this resource is fine. If your issue is how to use language and information to tell a news story then see me for more help.

12.) Because this is a journalism writing intensive course, your writing will be graded on your ability to communicate via the written word. This includes your use of grammar, spelling and punctuation. You will also be graded on journalistic practices, which will be detailed in the text, handouts and in-class discussions.
13.) **QUIZZES:** Each quiz will be worth 20 points. **I will drop the lowest quiz grade.** They begin promptly at the start of class and students will have approximately **7-10 minutes** to complete them. There will be no make-up quizzes. Students may use their AP stylebooks, but no other resources. Quizzes will consist of current events, general knowledge, AP style, grammar, spelling and punctuation, and writing.

14.) **SOURCE LISTS:** A source list is required for all **real-word** stories where you have **quoted or paraphrased** a person. This list is similar to a reference list one would use at the end of an essay or report, but it is strictly for personal communication. The list MUST include the sources’ full name, title/occupation, place of residence and contact information. If the source is a student you should supply the major and year in school and what school they attend. Contact information may be a phone number or email address. Journalists maintain source lists so they can locate their subjects if more information is needed later, or to prove that they exist in the event an ethical issue in reporting arises. A missing source list will be an automatic **20 point deduction.**

15.) **PARTICIPATION:** We will regularly discuss current events and students will be asked to contribute or even lead discussions. You will be expected to take part. This grade portion will also include general, daily contributions to course discussions and activities.

16.) **PROFESSIONALISM** will be assessed on these criteria: being on time for class; not leaving class before it’s been adjourned; being disruptive or rude to others; texting; gaming; playing games; using social networks; using technology or devices for purposes other than our course work; being deceptive about absences, missed work, or other course issues. I will make note of any of these issues and adjust this grade accordingly.

**THE COURSE (Subject to change)**

**Week 1: Course Overview; Journalism Basics**
Aug. 25 – The syllabus; The job of the journalist; Yesterday’s news and today’s challenges
Aug. 27 – What is News?  
  **EXERCISE:** Why is this story newsworthy?  
Aug. 29 – The structure of a news story  
  **EXERCISE:** The anatomy of a news story
  **Reading:** IR introduction, chapter 1-2

**Week 2: AP Style; Writing Leads**
Sept. 1 – Using the AP stylebook  
  **PRACTICE:** AP Style
Sept. 3 – Working with Leads
Sept. 5 – **Quiz 1; PRACTICE:** Writing Leads
  **ASSIGNMENT:** Eight leads, due Sept. 8
Week 3: Interviewing; Briefs
Sept. 8 – **DUE: Eight Leads**
How to conduct an interview; sourcing
*Reading: IR chapter 4; AP Style E-H*
Sept. 10 – EXERCISE: Man on the street, due at end of class
*Reading: AP Style I-M*
Sept. 12 – Quiz 2; Working with briefs
**ASSIGNMENT: Two Briefs, due Sept. 15**

Week 4: Writing Quotes and Attribution; Covering Tragedies
Sept. 15 – Picking the right quote; Writing proper attributions
Sept. 17 – Quiz 3; Accidents, Disasters and Fires
Dissect an accident/disaster story
*Reading: IR chapter 5; AP Style E-H*
Sept. 19 – EXERCISE: Writing an accident story, due at end of class
**ASSIGNMENT: Writing a news story from an interview, due Sept. 22**

Week 5: Meeting, Speeches and Events:
*RWA: Covering an event/speech/meeting; due Oct. 13*
Sept. 22 – **DUE: News story w/ interview**
Dissect a speech/meeting story
*Reading: AP Style N-S*
Sept. 24 – EXERCISE: Asking the right questions
Sept. 26 – Quiz 4; EXERCISE: Writing a speech story, due at end of class

Week 6: Feature Reporting
Sept. 29 – Profile structure
**EXERCISE: Dissect a profile story**
*Reading: IR chapter 6; AP Style T-Z*
Oct. 1 – EXERCISE: 10 Questions/Partner Interviews
*RWA: Partner Profile due Oct. 10, lead draft due Oct. 3*
Oct. 3 – Continued work on assignment: **DUE Partner Profile lead draft**

Week 7: Law and Ethics; Mid-term
Oct. 6(7) – NO CLASS; FALL BREAK
Oct. 8 – Don’t get sued, or fired, or both!
*Reading: IR chapter 7, AP Style libel*
Oct. 10 – Mid-term; **DUE: RWA Partner Profile**

Week 8: Opinion; Reviews
Oct. 13 – **DUE: Last day to turn in RWA event/speech/meeting**
Writing editorials, columns and reviews
**EXERCISE: Dissect an opinion piece**
*Reading: AP Style business and sports*
Oct. 15 – EXERCISE: Find facts to support an opinion
*RWA: Opinion, draft due Oct. 20, final story due Oct. 24*
Oct. 17 – EXERCISE: Set the scene; due at end of class

Week 9: Digital Journalism
Oct. 20 – **DUE: RWA Opinion draft**
Writing for the Web and Alternative Story Forms
Oct. 22 – Quiz 6; EXERCISE: Surf the Web; Craft ALT ideas
Oct. 24 – **DUE: RWA Opinion**
*RWA: ALT & Multimedia story, due Oct. 29*

Week 10: Broadcast Journalism
Oct. 27 – Writing for the ear
*Reading: IR chapter 9; AP Style social media*
**EXERCISE: The anatomy of a broadcast story news story**
Oct. 31 – EXERCISE: Stand-ups Part II

Week 11: Broadcast Journalism continued/ Final Project
Nov. 3 – EXERCISE: Print lead v. Broadcast leads
Nov. 5 – Quiz 7; RWA: Final project detailed, plan due Nov. 10
Nov. 7 – Digital Ethics Symposium. Today we will attend the afternoon session of the symposium. Please be in Regents Hall (16th floor Lewis Towers) by 11:30; even earlier if you can. You may write an event story for extra credit. Please use the same parameters as the RWA used earlier in the semester.**

Week 12: Online Reporting
Nov. 10 – Quiz 8; RWA: Final project package plan/ budget line(s) due
Nov. 12 – EXERCISE: Writing a story with updates
Nov. 14 – EXERCISE: Writing a story with updates continued, due at end of class

Week 13: Online Reporting
Nov. 17 – What is Public Relations? Reading: IR chapter 10
EXERCISE: Locate a news story based on a press release
Nov. 19 – EXERCISE: Write a story from a press release, due at end of class
Nov. 21 – EXERCISE: Man on the street II

Week 14: Final project draft
Nov. 24 – Creating a slideshow
Nov. 26-28 – NO CLASS; THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 15: Final Project; Final Exam Review
Dec. 1 – RWA final project draft due (2 copies)
Dec. 3 – Review for final
Dec. 5 – DUE: RWA final project

FINAL EXAM: Dec 8., 1-3 p.m.

ASSIGNMENTS: details and due dates (subject to change): In-class work may not posted below.

Sept. 8 – Eight leads; 80 points
Using the examples highlighted on pages 46-47, write eight different leads on the news items provided to you in class. Please be sure to indicate the type of lead above the text for each one. Turn in a hard copy and upload to Sakai.

Sept. 15 – Two Briefs; 50 points
See Handout. Turn in a hard copy and upload to Sakai.

Sept. 22 – Writing from an interview; Word count = 250-300
Based on the lessons about interviewing, writing quotes, sources and attribution, craft a story using the transcription provided to you on the handout.

Oct. 10 – Partner Profile, Word count = 350-400
HARDCOPY & SAKAI: You will be partnered with a fellow student to write a profile on one another. You must interview both your partner and one other source who can speak intelligently about the subject. From interviews, and other research, this profile should highlight a single angle about this person that
makes them newsworthy. A profile is NOT a resume or an attempt to tell someone’s life story in 400 words, as that would be impossible. Focus and edit yourself. A draft of your lead is due Oct. 3.

Oct. 13 – Event/Speech/Meeting story; 100 points; Word count = 300-350; 100 points
HARDCOPY & SAKAI & TURNITIN.COM. For this course students must cover a real-world event, speech or meeting and report on it. Ten extra credit points will be given to topics relating to social justice, OR, the media. Students may turn this assignment in any time up until class time on this date. Students MUST also hand in with their story proof of the event. This can be a flyer, or a print out of the event online or from an email. The event must take place between Sept. 22-Oct. 13. The news story MUST include quotes from the speaker(s) and two other sources, most likely audience members. You should get well-rounded, diverse quotes from subjects. Well-written, timely stories may be asked to post to Hubbub. These stories will also receive 10 points extra credit.

Oct. 20/24 – Opinion (w/draft); 100(10) points; Word count = 300-350
DRAFT = HARDCOPY ONLY; FINAL = SAKAI. You may select any current event (since Oct. 1) topic to write a column on. This column has a required draft, which is worth 10 points.

- The draft, due Oct. 20, should clearly indicate which of the three styles (see page 135) you will use based on the quality of your writing. It should be evident what your voice is, what your topic is and what research you have done to help you craft your opinion.

Oct. 29 – ALT & Multimedia; 100 points; Word count = N/A
HARDCOPY ONLY; FINAL = SAKAI. For this assignment you will choose a topic you think is most relevant to the upcoming Illinois gubernatorial race taking place on Nov. 4 and craft a short-form (aka Alternative Story Form). More details will come later.

Nov. 10; Dec. 1 & 5 – Final Project; Word count = 450-500
HARDCOPY, SAKAI & HUBBUB: The final project will be a feature on a topic to be determined once it is formally assigned. The final project will be a real-world assignment, in which the final product will be posted onto Hubbub. The final product will consist of the following elements:

- A 450-500 story w/ links (be sure to highlight links on the Word document)
- A minimum of three quoted or paraphrased interview sources
- At least two images or one video clip to complement the story. The student must be the author of these visual elements.
- An ALT (graphic or sidebar)

- Nov. 10: Package plan/budget line: On this date you must turn in a hardcopy that details your 1.) topic written as a proper lead; 2.) the type of people or names of people you want interview; 3.) the URL of other sources you may use to gather more information, 4.) What/Who you will photograph, video; 5.) three options for a graphic and/or sidebar; 6.) four link options.

- Dec. 1: Draft one: On this date students should bring two hard copies of their written story. ALL of the reporting should be completed at this stage and at least HALF of the story should be written. Students may be asked to share their progress with the entire class.

FINAL EXAM: Dec 8., 1-3 p.m.