

ADVANCED REPORTING

PROFESSOR	Joe Gisondi
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OFFICE/HOURS	Virtual TR 8-9 a.m. MW 10-11 a.m.
PHONE	Leave message with dept. secretary at 217-581-6003
TEXTS	Inside Reporting (Harrower) The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This three-credit course gives students the fundamentals of gathering, organizing, evaluating and writing objective reports in accepted journalistic style and to provide an understanding of what a career in journalism entails.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To collect and interpret data in public records in order to integrate this information into news reports across multiple platforms.
2. To collect, comprehend, analyze, synthesize and critically incorporate source materials gathered from research, observation and interviews.
3. To comprehend and apply mobile journalism strategies in order to deliver location-based news through social and digital applications for websites, phones, apps, and other emerging media.
4. To engage with diverse ideas, individuals, groups and cultures in order to create and present information accurately and fairly across multiple media platforms.
5. To comprehend legal and ethical issues affecting news media professionals.
6. To create news reports that are organized, focused and cohesive, that apply critical thinking and numerical literacy, and that properly implement Associated Press Style, grammar, spelling, word usage, and sentence variety.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct – www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php. Violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations to fully participate in this class, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). Accommodations must be approved through OSDS, located in McAfee Gym, Room 1210. Call 581-6583 for an appointment.

ELECTRONIC WRITING PORTFOLIO

This course qualifies as a writing-centered course in the EWP program. An assignment from this class may be submitted to your Electronic Writing Portfolio to fulfill part of your graduation requirement if it meets the campuswide EWP requirements. Please see your adviser for more information on how to select and submit your writing. Information is available online at www.eiu.edu/~assess.

STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER

Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note

taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to McAfee Gym, Room 1301.

ABSENCES & MAKE-UP WORK

Students are expected to be in class via Zoom on time and remain for the duration. You are responsible for all material covered or assigned during class.

ASSIGNMENTS

Name	Pts
News stories (2)	200
Election Project	100
Government coverage	50
School Board coverage	50
Court Document story	50
Public Records exercise	50
Discussion	100
Exercises/Quizzes	100
Final	100
Total	800

ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

Students will work on reporting and writing skills in classes so make sure to bring writing utensils, paper, AP Stylebooks and other research materials.

NEWS STORIES: Students must write two original news stories that fulfill all of the criteria cited in the attached Grade Sheet. Students must submit news stories by the following deadlines: Sept. 30, Oct. 30. Post stories in D2L in the proper folders (Story 1, 2). Stories connected to events must be submitted by 8 the following morning. Therefore, if you are reporting on a protest held on Monday night, you must submit the story by Tuesday morning, ALL STORY ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE DISCUSSED WITH ME BEFORE YOU MAY REPORT, WRITE AND SUBMIT THEM. Stories submitted after the deadlines set forth above in this paragraph will lose 10 points each day they are submitted late. So, please, plan accordingly and start reporting early.

GOVERNMENT MEETING STORY: Students can cover a Coles County Board meeting, a Charleston City Council meeting, an EIU Faculty senate meeting or you may propose coverage of another event. Students must write 400-plus words for a news story that offers specific details about the most significant actions, leads with the most significant information, includes salient comments from at least two board members and delivers context for key topics. The stories must be submitted in the 'GOVERNMENT' D2L dropbox by 8 a.m. the day after the meeting concludes. Example: Those covering a Tuesday night Charleston City Council meeting would need to submit their stories by 8 a.m. Thursday.

SCHOOL BOARD STORY: Students will cover a Charleston Unit School District 1 meeting held on the third Wednesday each month, writing a 400-plus word news story that offers specific details about the most significant actions, leads with the most significant information, includes salient comments from at least two board members and delivers context for each key topic addressed. The building is located at 410 West Polk Ave. Submit stories in the 'SCHOOL BOARD' D2L dropbox by 8 a.m. the following day.

COURT DOCUMENT STORY: Students will review court documents during a period prescribed by the professor, select a court case and write a 400-plus word news story whose due date will be outlined in the assignment sheet. This must be submitted in the 'COURT DOCUMENT' D2L dropbox.

PUBLIC RECORDS ASSIGNMENT: Students will find information cited in public records that are kept in government buildings and databases, which are sometimes housed online. Students must complete the entire assignment by the prescribed deadline to earn credit. This must be submitted in the 'PUBLIC RECORDS' D2L drop box by midnight on the prescribed date.

PARTICIPATION: Students will be awarded up to 10 points for participating in Zoom sessions, depending upon the frequency and quality of the class contributions.

ELECTIONS PROJECT: Students will research, report and write a story on an issue, person or otherwise newsworthy story related to the elections. Students will file stories on election night as well so keep Tuesday, Nov. 3 free.

FINAL EXAM: Students will write a news story on deadline.

GRADING

- A - 720-800 points
- B - 640-719 points
- C - 560-639 points
- D - 480-559 points
- F - below 480 points

CLASS REVISIONS: Syllabus may be changed at any time during the semester.

Schedule of Assignments

- Topic 1 **NEWS STORY ESSENTIALS:** Reinforce and build on skills, approaches for reporting news across multiple media platforms that includes interviewing, writing leads, ethics and structuring stories. Students will offer evaluations of news stories.
- Topic 2 **PUBLIC RECORDS ACCESS:** Find, evaluate and use public records in reporting news for specific audiences across multiple media platforms. Comprehend laws and statutes related to public information. Address ways to employ the Freedom of Information Act.
- Topic 3 **USING, EVALUATING STATS:** Read, interpret data and public records in order to integrate this information into news reports across multiple platforms.
- Topic 4 **COVERING POLITICS AND ELECTIONS:** Read, interpret public records and data related to issues, political offices, polling, candidates, donors and other primary sources to cover politics and elections.
- Topic 5 **COVERING GOVERNMENT MEETINGS:** Collect, comprehend, analyze, synthesize and incorporate information gathered from public records, government officials and other primary sources to cover meetings, issues and trends.
- Topic 6 **COVERING EDUCATION:** Collect, comprehend, analyze, synthesize and incorporate information gathered from public records, government officials and other primary sources to cover issues, trends and meetings. Understand the education system, access and use of public court records, and clarifying legal terms.
- Topic 7 **COVERING COPS AND CRIME:** Collect, comprehend, analyze, synthesize and incorporate information gathered from crime reports, police officers, emergency responders, and other public records and primary sources into news reports.
- Topic 8 **COVERING COURTS:** Collect, comprehend, analyze, synthesize and incorporate information gathered from government officials, court data and other public records in order to integrate this into news reports that can be distributed across multiple platforms. Understand the legal system, access and use of public court records, and clarifying legal terms.
- Topic 9 **COVERING DISASTERS:** Collect, comprehend, analyze, synthesize and incorporate information gathered from public records, government officials and other primary sources to cover natural disasters across multiple platforms.
- Final Students will write a news story on deadline.