



JRN203 Journalism I

Section 1

Fall 2015

Hodel, Classroom 1 (NW)
WF 2-3:30

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I. CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamental skills of print journalism-how to find, report, and write hard news and feature stories-and to help them begin to apply a biblical worldview to the practice of journalism. The students will practice basic journalism skills and also consider why people read news in the first place, how acknowledging the truth of Christianity affects the practice of journalism, and how the role in society of a Christian journalist changes with the context in which he is writing. This course is normally taken in the freshman year. (F)

II. ASSUMPTIONS

Journalism I and II will introduce you to the fundamental skills of print journalism. Unlike similar courses you might take elsewhere, however, here you will begin to apply a biblical worldview to the practice of journalism. It takes years of practice to master the standard journalistic methods, but you can pick up the basics fairly quickly.

Two semester-long courses will not turn you into a competent journalist. Two courses are enough, however, to get you started, to help you recognize what constitutes good journalism, and to help you develop a vision for excellent journalism informed by a Christian perspective. We want you to build a foundation of skills and ideas you will use daily as you continue to develop your intellectual and professional abilities in your other classes and particularly through your journalism internships. When you finish the journalism program here you should be well prepared to find a job in the news media and perform competently.

III. COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The student shall begin to develop and apply a biblical worldview to the study and practice of journalism in the following ways:

1. Understand how news media interact with and help shape contemporary culture and politics:
 - A. Explain the nature of news and why people seem to need it
 - B. Describe two major categories of mass communication research
 - C. Explain the major ways mass media messages tend to influence society
- as measured by mid-term and final exams I1, I3, I4, J1, J2

2. Develop competency in the core journalistic tasks (reporting, writing, editing):

- A. Know and use basic interviewing techniques
- B. Practice writing leads and other elements of news stories
- C. Construct four hard and one feature-style news stories
- D. Critique their own and other students' work via in-class editing sessions

as measured by the completion of writing exercises, news story assignments, and class participation I3, J3, J7, J8

3 Begin to develop a biblical view of the role of a Christian journalist in society:

- A. Explain ways Christians in journalism approach integrating faith and the requirements of the profession
- B. Describe how the role of a Christian in journalism differs depending on the nature of the publication (Christian or secular)

as measured by mid-term and final exams I1, I4, J1, J2

4. Begin to develop and apply a biblical standard of journalistic ethics and a strong commitment to journalistic integrity:

- A. Summarize the major contemporary approaches to journalism ethics
- B. Compare contemporary ethical standards with biblical teaching

as measured by a final exam J7

IV. REQUIRED TEXT / MATERIALS

Carole Rich *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method*, latest edition
AP Stylebook, 2008 or later

Marvin Olasky *Telling the Truth: How to Revitalize Christian Journalism*, 1996 (available online, link posted on CAMS, <http://www.worldmag.com/world/olasky/truth1.html>)

Note: you may use a cheaper and earlier edition of *Writing and Reporting News*; the chapters are not in the same order and the content varies a bit, so if you choose to use such be sure to read the chapter on the correct topic for that week.

V. FORMAT & PROCEDURES

In general, we will spend our class time in lecture, discussion, class exercises and going over written assignments in class. Fridays we will also discuss your most recent stories and your “pitches” or proposals for your next news story.

Textbook reading reports and news stories are generally due on Wednesdays. See schedule for details.

While taking a journalism class or completing a journalism internship, you are also required to read a daily newspaper or news website of your choice five days per week. Spend about 15-20 minutes scanning headlines and reading those stories that interest you. You must also choose 3 weekly or monthly magazines/websites that you will read throughout the semester. Please submit next class a list of the publications you agree to read faithfully for the semester.

Readings for Olasky's *Telling the Truth* are on the web with a link in “course hyperlinks” on CAMS; readings other than those in the textbooks will be posted on the documents section of CAMS.

News stories should be submitted via CAMS; please also bring to class 2 paper copies of your news stories on the Friday after they are due. We will spend part of Fridays editing together the work you

turned in the previous class period. Written work will be graded and returned as soon as possible, usually early the following week. Also on Fridays we will usually spend part of the class having a “story meeting” in which we discuss your ideas for upcoming stories.

Some of you may have the opportunity to write a story for the Patrick Henry Herald, worldmag.com, or some other publication—those are accepted in lieu of a regular news story assignment, but the due date may be earlier depending on the publication. All news stories completed for this class may be considered for publication in the Herald or elsewhere so do not send me anything containing information that should not, for any reason, be public.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class attendance and participation policy: Obviously, if you aren’t present, you can’t participate. Students should plan to engage in class discussions and particularly in the group critique sessions.

2. Course readings:

See Course Schedule. There is a reading assignment most weeks; to receive full credit you must submit 10 reading reports, on the weeks of your choice, by the end of the semester. Reading reports must be submitted on paper in class in person on the first class day of the week. Each report should summarize three **significant** points **in a couple of sentences each** from that week’s reading assignment. These must be typed. (note--you only need three summaries/week, even if the assignment requires you to read more than one passage or chapter) Also, some of the chapters posted on CAMS have exercises or questions at the end of the chapter—you do not need to complete those exercises, just do the reading report described above.

3. Types of Written Assignments:

(a) 5 Pitches for your basic news stories: submit in class a hardcopy of three possible story ideas for your next basic news story. Describe each in about a paragraph or so and why you think it’s a worthwhile story. Due on Fridays, see schedule.

(b) 5 Hard or basic news stories: about 600 words each, at least two interviews; you are responsible for finding your own story ideas. Due on Wednesdays. See schedule. Submit via CAMS, and bring 2 hard copies to class on the following Friday

(c) Feature news story: 1,200+ words, feature story structure, at least 4-6 interviews, due Wed. Nov. 18. Submit via CAMS; no hard copy required

(d) Reading reports: see above

(e) Exams: based on assigned reading and class discussions; anything we discuss in class is fair game for an exam, including what I say during class; yes, the exams will cover material from the text, and I expect you to have read it in time for class

VII. GRADING

5 hard news stories of 600+ words each: 10 points each	50%
1 feature story of 1,200+ words: 20 points	20%
10 reading reports 1 point each	10%
5 story pitches 2 pt/each	10%
Final exam	<u>10%</u>
Total:	100%

Stories will be graded according to the following criteria: clarity, journalistic style, depth of reporting, number of sources, structure.

The following system is used College-wide and can be found in the College Catalog:

Letter Grade	Quality	Percent Grade	Quality Points
A	Superior	93-100	4.00
A-		90-92	3.67
B+		87-89	3.33
B	Above Average	83-86	3.00
B-		80-82	2.67
C+		77-79	2.33
C	Average	73-76	2.00
C-		70-72	1.67
D+		67-69	1.33
D	Below Average	63-66	1.00
D-		60-62	.67
F	Failure	Less than 60	0.00
WF	Withdrawal While Failing		0.00
XF	Academic Disciplinary Failure		0.00

Not Included in GPA Calculation:

P: Pass

I: Incomplete

W: Withdrawal

WP: Withdrawal while Passing

X: Audit

N: Non-credit course

T: Transfer

VIII. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING)

As found in the Patrick Henry College Catalog

Integrity of Scholarship

The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as absolutely essential in every community of learning. It is expected that these principles will be scrupulously followed in all academic endeavors at Patrick Henry College, including, but not limited to, the preparation of all papers and reports and the taking of examinations. All academic work must be done by the student without unauthorized aid. Any compromise of truth or honesty, including, but not limited to, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, violation of guidelines under which the work is to be done, fabrication of data, unauthorized use of computer data, submission of a paper twice for the same course, submission of the same paper for multiple courses, and excessive revision by someone other than the student, may be considered sufficient grounds for suspension or expulsion from the College. Students may be given a grade of "XF" if it is determined that they have plagiarized or cheated in a course. The "XF" on a transcript indicates that a student violated integrity of scholarship policies. Students

who successfully retake a course for which they have received an "XF" will have the "X" removed from their transcripts although the "F" will remain. The "XF" (or "F") and the grade earned in the retaken course will be used to calculate the grade point average.

IX. ATTENDANCE POLICY

As found in the Patrick Henry College Catalog

Attendance

Students are STRONGLY encouraged to attend each and every class scheduled during the semester. There is no better way to perform well in any class than by attending the regularly scheduled lectures. However, there may be times when students cannot make a lecture, due to illness, participation in a sanctioned college event, or other conflicting commitments. While students should strive to avoid such conflicts, college is a very busy time and conflicts may occur. Patrick Henry College does not mandate an academic penalty for a student who misses a class, although a zero may be received for any unfulfilled class requirements. Students participating in college sanctioned events will know about any conflicts well in advance and are expected to discuss these with their professors to arrange for dealing with affected assignments prior to the absence.

Freshmen and Sophomores who log two absences not attributed to being involved in a college sanctioned event will be subject to an interview with any professor teaching a core course. It is the expectation of the College that students will grow more mature in managing their schedules as they progress through their time at Patrick Henry College. After graduation, this kind of time management will be an indispensable skill, and the College seeks to train students in this skill while they are enrolled.

X. ADDITIONAL RESOURCE READINGS

See the "Documents" section of CAMS for this course for required readings.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Week #	Week of	Topic	Reading Due (Wed. unless noted otherwise)	Due dates that week
1	8/26	UNIT 1: Basic Skills Basic News Story	Rich 2 “The Basic News Story” and Rich 7 “Leads and Nut Graphs”	Pitch 1 (Fri)
2	9/2	Finding Stories and Sources	Rich 5 “Sources and Online Research”	Story 1 (Wed 9/2)
3	9/9	Interviewing	Rich 6 “Interviewing Techniques”	Pitch 2 (Fri)
4	9/16	Writing Style (no class Fri for Faith and Reason Lec)	Sillars “Introduction to Stylebooks” (CAMS)	Story 2 (Wed 9/16)
5	9/23	UNIT 2: Intro to Journalism Theory--Nature of News	Rich 1 “Changing Concepts of News”	Pitch 3 (Fri)
6	9/30	Biblical Objectivity	Olasky <i>Telling the Truth</i> Intro, ch. 1 and 2	Story 3 (Wed 9/30)
7	10/7	Storytelling	Olasky Lesson 5 “Story-Telling” (on CAMS)	Pitch 4 (Fri)
8	10/14	UNIT 3: More Basic Skills--News Photo	Sillars “Introduction to News Photography” (on CAMS)	Story 4 (Wed 10/14)
9	10/21	Feature Stories I	Rich 8 “Story Organization” and 9 “Story Forms”	Pitch 5 (Fri)
10	10/28	Feature Stories II (no class Fri)	Rich 10 “Storytelling and Feature Techniques”	Story 5 (Wed 10/28)
11	11/4	Color and Detail	Olasky Lesson 18 “Macro and Micro Writing” (on CAMS)	
12	11/11	UNIT 4: More Theory--Mass Comm. Theory I		
13	11/18	Mass Comm. Theory II	none	Feature (Wed 11/18)
14	11/25	No class this week; Thanksgiving	none	
15	12/2	Review for Final		
16	12/7	Exams begin		