



*"We listen. We observe. We ask questions. We try to understand. We document. We report what we see. We are professionals, bound by ethics and a commitment to the power of truth. "*

-JCCF Reporters' Code

**Loyola University Chicago  
Spring 2015  
COMM 205: Reporting and Writing  
M,W,F 2:45pm-3:35pm**

**Instructor:** Richelle F. Rogers

**E-mail:** rrogers2@luc.edu

Please allow up to 24 hours for a response to e-mail. Remember to include your name and the course number on your subject line. Please use your Loyola e-mail account when sending e-mails. Please limit your email inquiries to 7a.m. – 6 p.m. CST.

**Office:** SOC 204 - Second Floor

**Office Hours:** M, F 11AM-1PM; W, Noon-1PM

(All appointments must be scheduled via the class Sakai page under the sign up tab. The Instructor will not see students without an appointment.)

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

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

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- Learn the fundamentals of news gathering, writing and editing
- Learn the skills essential to accurate and informed reporting and writing.
- Apply principles of accuracy and fairness and how to avoid bias in reporting
- Learn how to deliver a quality news story on deadline

## **IDEA COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing
- Learning to *apply* course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)

## **TEXT AND ASSIGNED READING:**

The Responsible Journalist, Jennie Dear, Faron Scott; Oxford University Press

Associated Press Stylebook

Webster's Dictionary (recommended)

In addition to the required text, students are required to read additional publications as part of their coursework.

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:**

Students are required to purchase [Reporters Notebooks](#) a [Voice Recorder](#) and an external or flash drive for class assignments.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

It's imperative that students attend every class and arrive on time. When you miss a class, or arrive late you miss important information that can easily place your grade in serious jeopardy.

## **IDEAS LAB (ILab)**

Inspired by the 1871 innovation lab and Harvard University's CS 50 course, students from various courses will meet to seek additional guidance and to brainstorm/trade ideas. The purpose of the ideas lab is to encourage students to seek answers collaboratively in a high-energy environment. Ideas lab will meet once a month from 4pm-6pm (location/dates TBA). Reporting and Writing students will cover Ideas Lab as a part of a class project. Students who are not registered for the class will not be able to attend.

## **CLASS ASSIGNMENTS/ WEEKLY UPDATES AVAILABLE VIA SAKAI**

*Sakai* will serve as the course hub. You are expected to check on Sakai before each scheduled class. The syllabus and updated class assignments are available via Sakai.

## **DRESS CODE FOR REPORTING FIELD TRIPS**

For the duration of this course, you are professional reporters and writers. Occasionally, I will require the class to wear casual business attire for reporting field trips. Students represent Loyola University at all times and are expected to look and act as a professional.

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

This course will often feature high-profile guest speakers. Students are required to be well prepared for all discussions and participate in question and answer sessions.

## **SOC EQUIPMENT**

The School of Communication has a variety of equipment that we can use for class-related projects. This equipment may be checked out through Andi Pacheco in SOC 004 (contact [apacheco@luc.edu](mailto:apacheco@luc.edu); phone 312-915-8830).

## GRADING

**A**  
**B**  
**C**  
**D**  
**F**

Class assignments: 30 percent

Interview Project: 20 percent

Ideas Lab Project: 20 percent

Final project (Student's Choice): 30 percent

## ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are required to complete classroom assignments and the following projects:

- **Interview Project**
- **ILab Project**
- **Final Project**

## ASSIGNMENTS AND DEADLINES

Unless specified by the instructor, assignments are due at the beginning of class (2:45PM) via the class Sakai website. Assignments must be submitted online and will not be accepted after 2:45PM. UNLESS INSTRUCTED, DO NOT EMAIL ASSIGNMENTS.

## ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC

| Grade          | Description   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>A range</b> | Story is ready for print. The story addresses the six basic questions (who, what, when, where, why and how). The story is written in AP style. The details in the story are clear and well structured. Thorough research and documentation of ideas are present. The story is balanced and objective, The story is free of punctuation, spelling, grammatical glitches and errors of fact. All the necessary details, documentation, quotes, are accurate and properly sourced. |

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>B range</b>    | Story needs minor revisions. The story addresses the six basic questions. The story is written in AP style. The details in the story require additional clarity. The writing may need to be streamlined. Story structure needs minimal editing. Errors of fact (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, source, or date, etc.) show inattention to detail/accuracy although content is above average.   |
| <b>C range</b>    | The story needs considerable editorial revisions. The story is missing more than two of the six basic questions. The story is poorly organized and confusing. Although basic facts most likely are there, the story lacks appropriate attribution or quotes. Story is not written in AP style and has multiple style, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word usage errors. Story inaccuracies (incorrect spelling of a title, reference name, wrong source, date, or page number, etc.) show inattention to detail and accuracy. |
| <b>D –F range</b> | Weak, unfocused work. Student needs to rethink the execution of the assignment. The story is missing several of the six basic questions. Story structure, organization and clarity are below average. The story is not written in AP style and has numerous grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors. The story is inaccurate or libelous.  |

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Loyola University and the School of Communication expect academic integrity and have policies regarding academic dishonesty. Specifically for the SOC:

A basic mission of a university is to search for and to communicate truth as it is honestly perceived. A genuine learning community cannot exist unless this demanding standard is a fundamental tenet of the intellectual life of the community. Students of Loyola University Chicago are expected to know, to respect, and to practice this standard of personal honesty.

Academic dishonesty can take several forms, including, but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, copying another student’s work, and submitting false documents. Academic cheating is a serious act that violates academic integrity. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, such acts as:

- Obtaining, distributing, or communicating examination materials prior to the scheduled examination without the consent of the teacher;
- Providing information to another student during an examination;
- Obtaining information from another student or any other person during an examination;
- Using any material or equipment during an examination without consent of the instructor, or in a manner which is not authorized by the instructor;

- Attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted;
- Unauthorized collaboration, or the use in whole or part of another student's work, on homework, lab reports, programming assignments, and any other course work which is completed outside of the classroom;
- Falsifying medical or other documents to petition for excused absences or extensions of deadlines or
- Any other action that, by omission or commission, compromises the integrity of the academic evaluation process.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism is the appropriation of ideas, language, work, or intellectual property of another, either by intent or by negligence, without sufficient public acknowledgement and appropriate citation that the material is not one's own. It is true that every thought probably has been influenced to some degree by the thoughts and actions of others. Such influences can be thought of as affecting the ways we see things and express all thoughts. Plagiarism, however, involves the taking and use of specific words and ideas of others without proper acknowledgement of the sources, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one's own material copied from a published source, such as Internet, print, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.;
- Submitting as one's own another person's unpublished work or examination material;
- Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit; or
- Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper. The above list is in no way intended to be exhaustive. Students should be guided by the principle that it is of utmost importance to give proper recognition to all sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. Any failure to do so, whether by intent or by neglect, whether by omission or commission, is an act of plagiarism.

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 (e.g., 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 naive is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing sources.

Plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will result minimally in the instructor's assigning the grade of "F" for the assignment or examination. The instructor may impose a more severe sanction, including a grade of "F" in the course. All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported by the instructor to the appropriate area head and to the office of the Dean of the School of Communication.

The School of Communication maintains a permanent record of all instances of academic dishonesty. The information in that record is confidential. However, students may be asked to sign a waiver which releases that student's record of dishonesty as a part of the student's application to a graduate or professional school, to a potential employer, to a bar association, or to similar organizations.

You are expected to be familiar with and abide by Loyola's code of academic integrity. You can find Loyola's policies regarding academic integrity at:

[http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg\\_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml)

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students are urged to contact the instructor 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 the instructor early in the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD).

Any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentially to the instructor. The instructor will accommodate that student's needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

## **THE COURSE (Subject to change)**

### **Week 1: Introductions/News and Responsible Journalism Defined**

*Jan. 12:* Introductions/Syllabus review/Class assessment

**Assignment:** Read the syllabus, Read pages 1-15

*Jan. 14:* Defining news media in an era of new media

**Assignment:** Complete exercise 1-2 from text (page,15) bring a copy to class to share

*Jan. 16:* News story analysis discussion

**Assignment:** Read Chapter 3, pages 57-74

### **Week 2: How is news language different?**

*Jan 19:* Class does not meet

**Jan. 21:** What makes a story newsworthy?

**Assignment:** Reread Page 73

**Jan. 23:** An introduction to AP style /Class exercise

**Assignment:** Complete exercise 3-5 (page 76) from text  
Read pages 77-85, 93-97

**Week 3: How do you tell a basic news story?**

**Jan. 26:** What is a news lead?/The Inverted Pyramid

**Jan. 28:** Lead class exercise

**Jan. 30:** Lead class exercise

**Assignment:** Complete exercise 4-4 (page 99) from text

**Week 4: Mastering the Lead/Rewrites**

**Feb. 2:** Lead class exercise

**Feb. 4:** Lead class exercise

**Feb. 6:** Lead class exercise

**Assignment:** Read pages 219-224, 234-240 from text

**Week 5: How do you report what sources say?**

**Feb. 9:** Defining and identifying sources

**Feb. 11:** Class exercise

**Feb. 13:** How to avoid defamation

**Assignment:** Read pages 203-217

**Week 6: How do you conduct an interview?**

**Feb. 16:** Planning/Knowing how to contact your sources

**Assignment:** Complete Exercise 9:1 from text – a and b only (page 218)/Bring a copy to class.

**Feb. 18:** How to ask the right questions

**Feb. 20:** Interview class exercise

**Week 7: Interview Project**

**Feb. 23:** Interview project

**Feb. 25:** Interview project

**Feb. 27:** Interview project

**Assignment:** Interview projects are due Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. Please submit work via Sakai and bring a copy to class.

**Week 8: Spring Break – Class does not meet**

**Week 9: Interview project workshop**

**Mar. 9:** Final Interview project due/workshop begins

**Mar. 11:** Interview project workshop

**Mar. 13:** Final interview projects due



**Week 10: Course review/Writing Lab- Story Structure**

**Mar. 16:** Course review/writing lab

**Assignment:** Cover Ideas Lab. Stories are due March 23.

**Mar. 18:** Course review/writing lab

**Mar. 20:** Course review/writing lab

**Week 11: Leading with something different**

**Mar. 23:** When to use other kinds of leads

**Assignment:** Read pages 267-278 from text

**Mar. 25:** Class exercise

**Mar. 27:** Class exercise

**Assignment:** Finalize class assignments; Read pages 283-291

**Week 12: Multimedia news stories**

**Mar. 30:** Transitions

**Assignment:** Read the NYTimes Snowfall project:

<http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/#/?part=tunnel-creek>

**Apr. 1:** Class exercise

**Apr. 3:** Class does not meet

**Week 13: Writing lab/Student's Choice Project Prep**

**Apr. 6:** Class does not meet

**Apr. 8:** Writing lab/Project prep

**Apr.10:** Writing lab/Project prep

**Week 14: Student's Choice project begins**

**Apr. 13:** Class project

**Apr. 15:** Class project

**Apr. 17:** Class project

**Week 15: Student's Choice Project continues and ends**

**Apr. 20:** Rough Draft due

**Apr. 22:** Finalize project

**Apr. 24:** Class does not meet – Final projects are due via the class sakai website by 3:35pm.

**Week 16: Final Grades delivered**