

Journalism 415: Television News
Fall 2009/Hill
Wednesday, 9 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

Office and Hours:

MZ332

Ext. 7241

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Monday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., MZ 332

Wednesday, noon-1 p.m.

Course Purpose: This course introduces students to TV news with lecture, text and experience in the class, field and studio. Emphasis is on TV news reporting. Students write and produce TV stories under deadline.

Students research, script, report, tape and edit news stories or features. **Each student is required to produce four news packages by the end of the semester.**

Students are divided into two-teams and will shoot, produce and report television news packages every other week.

Most of the semester, the entire class will meet as scheduled at 2 PM. Once, and if, the newscast production begins, the team producing the newscast will meet at 8 AM and work through the day. The deadline for airing the newscast for that day will be 4 PM, when it will be taped. The newscast is then replayed for critique. **Therefore, students should not plan on leaving class early.** The team not producing a newscast will meet with the instructor at the regular class time of 2 PM. These sessions are vital. They will be used to critique the previous week's newscast, including production, writing, reporting and editing. **Class attendance is compulsory. Student's final grade will be reduced one full grade for each class missed.**

Note: Every attempt will be made to occasionally bring working journalists into the classroom to share their expertise. They go to great lengths to clear their hectic schedules, and volunteer their time for your benefit. You are expected to come to such class meetings with written questions, and to fully engage these professionals.

This class is not directly related to J-445, the Monday Valley View News (VVN) class, but exceptional material produced here may be aired on the VVN newscast. It is our goal to bring J-415 and J-445 closer together toward the end of the semester, but this will depend on class progress.

Students must buy their own video tape cassettes. The Department also requires students show proof the lab fee has been paid, if applicable.

Lincoln Harrison and Blasco Felipe (ext. 4989) are the teaching assistant/technical supervisors assigned to the course and are responsible for all equipment and labs. Do not consult them on decisions or problems related to the journalistic aspects of the course.

There will be heavy emphasis on TV news writing, shooting and editing. Students are required to learn all these skills to get a passing grade.

Students are required to watch TV news and read appropriate newspapers, magazines and texts. We will discuss their relationship to journalism ethics during the semester.

Grades:

50% of the grade will be determined by the four packages done by each student. The grade is based on choice of subject, research, outline, writing, shooting, editing and producing. To a far lesser extent, on-air ability will also be considered.

The remaining 50% of the final grade will come from three areas:

Contribution to and attitude toward the class based on result and evaluations by the instructor.

Attendance and class participation during critique sessions.

Performance in the lab.

Cheating:

The Journalism Department of California State University, Northridge is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone caught cheating will be reported to the administration and will receive a failing grade in this class. For a further explanation of the behavior defined as cheating, and a more detailed discussion of disciplinary procedures, please consult pages 587-588 of the 2008-2010 CSUN catalog.

Please also remember that much of the information posted on the Internet is protected by U.S. copyright laws. Passing this information off as your own is a violation of CSUN's plagiarism policy and carries the penalties outlined above.

Regarding classroom computers: Computers are for coursework only, and students are not to use them for any other purpose. Students who violate this rule will be given a grade of F for any work done for that day. This rule also applies to use of students' personal computers, cell phones and other electronic devices. Do not use them in class.

Students in this course are strongly encouraged to broaden their journalistic experiences, with the instructor's help, by including in their work people and subjects such as ethnic,

racial and religious minorities; the elderly, disabled and poor; gay men and lesbians; and other similar groups. The intent is to ensure that student work reflects the diversity of the community.

Course grades may include plus or minus. Each assignment and the overall result will be graded as follows:

10 = Work is professional, outstanding	A
9 = Work is professional	A-
8 = Work could be professional, with minor changes.	B
7 = Work could be professional, with several minor changes.	B-
6 = Work could be professional, with major changes.	C
5 = Work could be professional, with several major changes.	C-
4 = Work has fundamental problems	D
3 = Work has many fundamental problems	D-
2 = Work is not fit for broadcast	F
1 = Work was not turned in as required	F

Texts:

The Elements of Style, Strunk & White

Broadcast News Handbook, Brad Kalbfeld

***Suggested text (not required): *On Camera: How to Report, Anchor & Interview*, by Nancy Reardon. *Sound Reporting*, by Jonathan Kern.**

Note: Journalism majors and faculty this semester will be part of a “reading community”, centered on *Shaking the Foundation: 200 Years of Investigative Journalism in America*, edited by Bruce Shapiro. All students are required to read the book, and when applicable, it will be incorporated in the lessons of this course. Be prepared for class discussions, assignments and quizzes.

Schedule
(Pending approval of furlough days for faculty)

Week 1:

Introduction to the course. Demonstrations on shooting video for a news package. This will take place in the classroom. After a short break, we will convene in the television news lab, MZ150, for a demonstration of tape logging and package editing.

Assignment: Write a script for a television news package on the day's class.

Week 2:

Read scripts. Edit a story using a student script. Review story ideas.

Assignment: Rewrite scripts for week three.

Week 3:

Review rewritten scripts. Divide into teams. Discuss story ideas. Study news packages produced by students in previous J-415 classes. Rewritten scripts are due.

Assignment: Story research and outline due week four.

Week 4:

Approve news package outlines.

Assignment: Shoot and edit news packages. Team number one news packages due week five.

Week 5:

View and critique team one news packages.

Assignment: Team two news packages due week six.

Week 6:

View and critique team two news packages.

Assignment: Team one shoots and produces package two.

Reading:

Week 7:

Team one package two is critiqued in class.

Assignment: Team two shoots and produces package two.

Week 8:

Team two turns in package two. Class critiques.

Assignment: Team one produces third package.

Week 9: Team one turns in third packages, and the class critiques them.

Assignment: Team two members produce their third packages.

Week 10:

Team two turns in third packages, and class critiques them.

Assignment: Team one produces fourth packages.

Week 11:

Team one turns in fourth packages. Class critiques them.

Assignment: Team two produces fourth packages.

Note: The class may have opportunities to produce half-hour newscasts, comprised of the packages done for the course. This will depend on availability of the television studio. If studio time is not available, students will be assigned video essays.

Week 12: Team two presents fourth packages for class critique. **Assignment:** Team one shoots video essay, or prepares to produce a newscast.

Week 13: Students will choose between newscast production and video essays.

Reading:

Week 14: Produce newscast or view video essays.

Week 15:

Class critique of video essays/newscast.

Assignment: Team two shoots video essays, or prepares to produce a newscast.

Reading:

Week 16: Review.

Review.

