

California State University Northridge  
Department of Journalism  
Fall 2009

## Journalism 110: News Reporting

Tuesdays, 7 p.m.-9:50 p.m.

Instructor: Bob Rawitch  
Room: Manzanita Hall, 360  
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### Course Description:

Journalism 110 introduces students to fundamental principles of news reporting and writing, interviewing, speech/meeting coverage, news copy preparation, traditional and electronic information-gathering and ethics. The course will address news story organization with special emphasis on leads, paragraph and sentence development, accurate reporting, use of grammar, Associated Press style, editing and rewriting. Students will develop the listed skills through numerous hands-on exercises, including writing on deadline.

### Prerequisites:

Typing proficiency and a "C" grade or better in English 155 or its equivalent is required for admission to Journalism 110. **Students must earn a "C" or better in Journalism 110 to enroll in Journalism 210 or Journalism 310. A "C-" grade does not count as a "C."**

### Required Texts:

- "Writing and Reporting the News: A Coaching Method." 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Carole Rich
- "Shaking the Foundations," by Bruce Shapiro
- "Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law," Perseus Publishing, 2004 Ed.
- You will be expected to read the L.A. Times daily to prepare for weekly news quizzes and to study how stories are written and reported.
- Optional but strongly recommended either: "Elements of Style," by William Strunk, "When Words Collide: A Media Writer's Guide to Grammar and Style," by K Kessler and D. McDonald, "Working with Words" by Brooks, Pinson and Wilson. or other basic grammar book

**Grading:**

Final grading will follow the university catalog and use the plus and minus system. A = outstanding; B= good, solid work; C – average work; D =barely passing; F = failure. Each written assignment or news quiz will be scored from 0-10. A = 9-10; B = 8; C=7; D =6; F=0-5. Deadlines in journalism are critical. **Therefore, writing assignments must be completed on time and any writing assignment that includes a misspelled name or a misidentified title automatically will receive a score of 5 or an F.** Frequent and substantive grammatical errors also will cause a lower grade on writing assignments. Writing assignments will be judged on whether they address all elements of a news story: writing, organization, factual accuracy, and AP style. If you miss an in-class writing assignment, it cannot be made up. In calculating your final grade, your lowest news quiz and another writing or non-writing assignment will be dropped. Improvement demonstrated in later writing assignments will also be taken into consideration.

**Attendance:**

Most classes will involve lecture, discussion and sometimes writing assignments. Since we meet only one a week for nearly three hours, it is therefore important that you not miss a class. You cannot make up a missed in-class writing assignment. University policy defines an excused absence as illness/injury, family death/emergency, religious holiday, jury duty/other government obligation or a CSUN-sanctioned activity. Requests for excused absences must be documented before being considered. If you do miss a class, get notes from a classmate as well as any out-of-class assignment. A missed out of-class assignment can only be made up if you experience a certifiable medical emergency, a verifiable death in your immediate family or some other extenuating circumstance.

**Diversity:**

Students in Journalism 110 are strongly encouraged to broaden their journalistic experiences 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 greater community covered by the news media.

**Plagiarism:**

The Department of Journalism 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 receive a failing grade in the class and will be reported to the university for possible further disciplinary action, including possible suspension from the university. For a further explanation of the behavior defined as cheating and a more detailed discussion of disciplinary procedures, consult the university catalogue. Remember that much of the information posted on the Internet is protected by U.S. Copyright and should be attributed accordingly. Passing this information off as your own

is a violation of CSUN's plagiarism policy and carries the penalties outlined above. The same is true of copying a classmate's work and both students will be penalized if there is complicity with one another.

**Syllabus  
Journalism 110  
Fall, 2009**

Date	Topics	Assignment
Aug. 25	Introduction/ What is News/ News Judgment	Chap. 1,2,4
Sept. 1	How to write news leads/ Editing symbols	Chap. 3, 8
Sept. 8	Story ideas/ Writing process	Chap. 5, 9
Sept. 15	Structure of stories	Chap 9, 10
Sept. 22	Interviewing/ Note taking	Chap 6, 7
Sept. 29	Reporting numbers/Research	Chap. 21
Oct. 6	Speeches/ News Conferences/ Meetings	Chap. 20
Oct. 13	Obits/Profiles/ Mid Term	Chap. 18
Oct. 20	Breaking News/ Police/Courts	Chap. 22
Oct. 27	Breaking News/ Disasters/Fires	Chap. 23
Nov. 3	Politics/ Beat Reporting	Chap. 19
Nov. 10 16	Libel/Ethics	Chap. 15,
Nov. 17	Multicultural approach/ Sensitivity/Web Writing	Chap. 17
Nov. 24	“All the President’s Men” film	
Dec. 1	Computer-assisted reporting/ Careers	Chap. 13, 24
Dec. 8	Review/catchup	
Dec. 15	Final Exam	

\*Schedule subject to change because of faculty furloughs.