

## Center for Talent Development-Northwestern University Journalistic Writing Honors

Instructor: Lida E. Criner

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to the newspaper industry as they learn strategies for effective newsgathering and the specialized formats and styles of straight news and feature stories. In addition, students develop an understanding of techniques for ensuring objectivity in reporting, as well as gain exposure to legal and ethical issues faced by journalists. Students refine their critical thinking, writing, and editing skills while authoring articles for publication

### Course Goals and Objectives:

- The first half of the course is devoted to the art and craft of journalistic writing and
- The second to application of knowledge and techniques.
- Gain an understanding of print and broadcasting media
- Describe the laws, ethics, and policies of journalism
- Define news and sources for news
- Understand and practice the interview
- Develop in depth reporting and journalistic style
- Know the difference between features and editorials
- Write columns, features, reviews, and sports news
- Learn publication design, and photo journalism
- Learn the purpose and qualities of effective headlines
- Learn copyediting and production
- Organize and design a yearbook
- Gain an overview of the magazine business
- Write for broadcast
- Understand the role of advertising

**Evaluation Process:** Students will be evaluated based on assigned homework, writing hard news and feature stories, quizzes, and discussion board assignments on Blackboard. Grading scale: 100-97 A, 96-93 A-, 92-89 B, 91-88 C  
Final Grade: Five Essays/News, Four Quizzes, and Student Project (Interview)

**Texts and Materials--Required:**

- **Textbook:** *Introduction to Journalism* (2001) by John Reque, Susan Hathaway Tantillo, Judy Babb, Meilissa McIntosh, and Bryan Denham. McDougal Littrell, a Houghton Mifflin Company, ISBN 0-618-00377-0. The text may be purchased at [www.varsitybooks.com](http://www.varsitybooks.com).
- **Textbook:** *The Elements of Journalism* by Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel, 2001 ISBN: 0-618-00377-0. The text is available at [www.varsitybooks.com](http://www.varsitybooks.com).

**Suggested Reading:**

College Dictionary suggested.

- The student who plans to take advanced courses in journalism may wish to invest in the *Associated Press Style Book and Libel Manual* (1999). The Associated Press New York.
- In addition, *The Art and Craft of Feature Writing* (1988) by William E. Blundell, The Penguin Group, New York, may be an excellent source of information for those who want to focus on feature writing.
- *How to Write Articles for Newspapers and Magazines* (2002) Dawn Sova, Peterson's at Thomson Corporation. ISBN: 0-7689-1079-X.

**Course Schedule:**

Essay-First Month

- Chapter 1: The Challenge of Journalism p. 1
- Chapter 2: Laws, Ethics, and Policy p. 14

Feature Story--Second Month

- Chapter 3: Defining the News p. 33
- Chapter 4: Sources for News p. 43

Feature Story--Third Month

- Chapter 5: Interviewing p. 63
- Chapter 6: The News Story p. 81

Feature Story--Fourth Month

- Chapter 7: The Right Way to Quote, 111
- Chapter 8: In Depth Reporting p. 134

**Exam--Fifth Month**

- Chapter 9: Journalistic Style p. 156
- Chapter 10: Features p. 178

### Exam--Sixth Month

- Chapter 11: Editorials p. 195
- Chapter 12: Columns and Review p. 213
- Chapter 13: Sports Writing p. 228

### Exam--Seventh Month

- Chapter 14: Photo-Journalism p. 243
- Chapter 15: Publication Design p. 265

### Exam-Eighth Month

- Chapter 16: Headlines p. 288
- Chapter 17: Copyediting and Production p. 312

### Exam--Ninth Month

- Chapter 18: Working on the Yearbook p. 336
- Chapter 19: Magazines p. 356

### Study: Ninth Month No Exam over these chapters

- Chapter 20: Broadcast Journalism p. 371
- Chapter 21: Advertising p. 387

### Student Project:

- **Due Date: Students may submit the Interview/Feature on or before the end of eighth month of the school term. Instructions for completing the Student Project will be emailed as Word Document attachment on or about mid-term.**
- **Note: The Interview/Feature Project Form is posted on the course website under Assignments.**

**Office Hours:** Available by appointment. Call to schedule a telephone conference at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email xxxxxx@ritternet.com. We cannot receive email on the Blackboard course website, [though teachers and students can send email to students/teacher from CTD Blackboard website.](#)

### Assignments:

- Due the last day of every month: Essays, News, Features, and Quizzes
- Due the last day of every month: Blackboard Discussion Board Posts
- Due on or before the eighth or ninth month: Student Project-Interview

**Note: All Assignments are to be submitted as attachments in MS Word**

### Brief Instructor Biography:

Lida E. Criner has taught courses in social sciences for almost 20 years. She received her BA in Religious Studies from the University of Colorado at Boulder and the MA from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. She also earned the doctorate in Adult and

Higher Education, at the University of Arkansas, where she conducted an experimental study in thinking and reasoning in adult learners, at a community college. She taught Introduction to Philosophy, World Religions, Ethics, Logic, and College Survival Skills at Arkansas State University (1985-1998). She taught Introductory Philosophy online at Southern Arkansas University (SAU) Tech, and designed, and taught Internet reading and writing courses at SAU, correlating textbooks with American Education Corporation's K-12 standards' based curriculum *A+nyWhere Learning System*. She currently teaches Honors' Journalistic Writing, Introduction to Philosophy, Logic and World Religions at the Center for Talent Development (CTD) at Northwestern. Her philosophy of education is " . . . improved reading and writing and the facilitation of critical thinking, in learners, are the most important skills to be developed for lifelong learning, in a fast changing information-based society" (Lida Criner: 2009).

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