

Middlesex Community College
COM 226: Journalism I

Spring 2015
3 Credits
Online Course

CRN (section): 1903
Professor: Adam Chiara
Email: achiara@mxcc.edu
Class Website: professorchiara.com

Course Description:

This course is designed to teach students the basics of journalism by analyzing the media and learning to write for the news. Students will also contribute to *The Flying Horse*, MxCC's student newspaper.

Emphasis will be placed on learning general reporting and news gathering skills. Students will learn specific writing techniques for news articles, like: researching strategies, learning how to judge appropriate news content, interviewing techniques, constructing stories, revising and editing techniques, fact-checking, and legal and ethical concerns for journalists.

Required Text:

Mencher, Melvin. *News Reporting and Writing*. 12th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011

Grade Breakdown

(4) Stories	35%
Classwork/ *Discussions	25%
Chapter Readings	25%
Final Assignment	15%

* See the *Discussion Guidelines* and *Discussion Rubric* for more information.

Course Calendar:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Content</u>
Week 1	Introductions Journalism in the Modern Era Journalism Basics
Week 2	What is News? What Makes Something "Newsworthy?" How to Conduct an Interview The Basic Structure of an Article Introduction to AP Style
Week 3	Story Structure: Inverted Pyramid (Lead, Nutgraph & Quotes) Practice AP Write a Profile Piece
Week 4	Finding Story Ideas Note Taking Style and Voice Start Your Feature Story
Week 5	News vs. Opinion Bias Practice Writing Leads
Week 6	Media Law Libel and Slander Inaccuracy Begin Your Hard News Story
Week 7	Developing Sources Researching Editing Clutter and Subjective Words
Week 8	Photojournalism Tools for Journalists Choosing Quality Quotes
Week 9	Opinions Editing Review Begin Writing Your Opinion Story

Week 10 Public Information
 Freedom Of Information (FOI)
 Investigative Journalism

Week 11 Press Releases
 On and Off the Record
 Begin Your Final Story

Week 12 Ethics
 News Values
 Internet News
 Social Media

Finals Final Assignment

- *Schedule and deadlines are tentative, and may be adjusted during the semester if needed.*

Grading:

A – Publishable. Style, content, and construction are all excellent. Word count adheres to requirements. No errors.

B – Great. Needs some editing, but the piece is well organized, few errors, and well thought out.

C – Average. Has to be rewritten. Issues with structure, errors, content. Story may be too long or too short.

D – Below Average. Student obviously put little time or thought into this assignment. There are careless errors. Has to be rewritten and possibly re-reported.

F – Failure. Did not complete assignment, plagiarized, falsified quotes.

- *If you have questions about a grade on an assignment, or your final grade for the course, please contact me. If a mistake is discovered, I will change your grade accordingly, but some evidence to support your claim is needed.*

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The following people have been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and practices:

- Primary Title IX Coordinator
Dr. Adrienne Maslin
Dean of Students/Title IX and Section 504/ADA Coordinator
amaslin@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5759; Founders Hall Room 123
- Secondary Title IX Coordinator
Ms. Mary Lou Phillips
Director of Human Resources, Middlesex Community College
mphillips@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5751; Founders Hall Room 115
- Secondary Title IX Coordinator
Ms. Queen Fordham
Coordinator of the Meriden Center Welcome Desk
qfordham@mxcc.edu; 203-608-3011