

Middlesex Community College
COM 226: Journalism I

Spring 2016
3 Credits
Online Course

CRN (section): 1230
Professor: **Adam Chiara**
Email: **achiara@mxcc.edu**

Course Description:

This course is designed to teach students the basics of journalism by analyzing the news media and by having students 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. To achieve this, the course will cover areas such as: researching strategies, using critical thinking, learning how to judge appropriate news content, interviewing techniques, constructing stories, revising and editing techniques, fact-checking, and knowing the legal and ethical concerns for journalists.

Course Objectives:

- Students will write a variety of articles which adhere to the best practices of the industry.
- Students will research and analyze specific aspects of the news media and will then synthesize findings in discussion posts.
- Students will learn the process of how a story is developed, reported on, written, edited, and published.

Grade Breakdown:

(4) Stories	400 points
Final Story	200
Assignments	200
Discussions	200
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Total	1,000 points

Required Text:

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

Time Requirement: Expect to spend at least nine hours per week on this course.

Course Calendar:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Content</u>
Week 1	Introduction Syllabus Review Course Expectations Blackboard Orientation
Week 2	The Basics What Makes Something Newsworthy? Introduction to AP Style
Week 3	Story Structure: Inverted Pyramid (Lead, Nutgraph, Background & Quotes) Interviewing Begin Your Profile Story
Week 4	The Lead Profile Story
Week 5	Bias Finding Story Ideas Features Begin Your Feature Story
Week 6	Media Law Actual Malice Practicing Leads Profile Story
Week 7	Researching for Background AP Style and Story Structure Review
Week 8	Ethics News Values Begin Your Hard News Story
Week 9	On & Off the Record Edit for AP Mistakes

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Week 10	Social Media Hard News Story
Week 11	Opinions Begin Your Opinion Story
Week 12	Public Information Investigative Journalism FOI Opinion Story
Week 13	Modern Journalism Begin Your Final Story
Week 14	Guest Speaker Editing: Put it All Together
Week 15	Course Evaluation Work on Final Story
Finals	Final Story Due

- ***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. Directions were not followed.

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. Directions were not followed.

F – Failure. Did not complete assignment, was turned in after the deadline, plagiarized, falsified quotes.

Late work will not be accepted.

- *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 123J

- 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