HU3621 Introduction to Journalism

Room: 109 Walker
Time: 9:35-10:25 TTh; plus one hour of lab by arrangement (one-on-one brainstorming for topics and review of drafts for each article)
Semester: Fall 2009
Instructor: Associate Prof. Craig Waddell
Office Hours: 11:00-12:00 TTh; other times by appointment
Office: Room 302 Walker
Phone: 487-3261 (office)
E-mail: cwaddell@mtu.edu
Class List: journalism-I@mtu.edu (Replies to messages to this list are posted only to the message originator)

(Introduction to Journalism is included on the General Education Program’s “World Cultures” distribution course list.)

Required Texts

Waddell, Craig. Introduction to Journalism, ninth edition. Houghton, MI: 2009. (I’ll provide you with a .pdf file of this document. Please print a copy, put in it a three-ring binder, and bring it to class regularly.)


Michigan Tech University Identity Standards and Editorial Guide http://www.mtu.edu/id-standards

You will also need an Ampad Reporter's Notebook (available in the Campus Store) and a tape recorder (preferably a digital or a micro-cassette recorder). You can borrow a digital tape recorder from Department of Humanities Secretary Kim Puuri in Walker 319B. You may have to provide your own mini-disks; see Kim for details.
Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the history and practice of journalism, including critical analysis of journalistic coverage, journalistic style and editing, and legal and ethical issues in journalism. Hence, the course includes not only journalistic writing, but also media history, media law, media ethics, and media criticism.

Class time each week will be spent discussing assigned readings, viewing and discussing videos about journalism, and completing various journalism exercises. The course also includes a laboratory section, which includes (1) one-on-one meetings to brainstorm for topics, sources, and research and interview questions for each article; (2) one-on-one meetings to review drafts of each article; and (3) interviewing sources and otherwise researching your stories and submitting your final drafts to one of the media outlets described below. (One of the best research tools for many stories is the Advance Search option of Google [http://www.google.com/advanced_search]1)

Media Outlets for Your Stories

Please consider submitting your work to any of the following media:

   Matt Wilson, Editor in Chief mawilson@mtu.edu

2. (K) Keweenaw Now [http://www.keweenawnow.com] and The Keweenaw Now Blog
   [http://keweenawnow.blogspot.com]
   Michele Anderson, Editor micahander@mtu.edu

3. (T) Technobabe Times [http://www.technobabetimes.org]

   Larry Holcombe, Managing Editor lholcombe@mininggazette.com

5. (M) Michigan Tech Magazine [http://www.mtumagazine.mtu.edu]
   Bonnie Gorman, Executive Director, University Marketing and Communications
   bgorman@mtu.edu

6. (P) Portage Health System publications (Health Connections, etc.)
   Jane Nordberg, Communications Specialist, Portage Health Communications Department 483-1561 or jnordberg@portagehealth.org

7. Another possible outlet for your work might be The Pilgrim, a new paper that has been proposed for the Marquette to Copper Harbor area. I’ve asked the fonder for an update on this project.
Work submitted to any of the above outlets is subject to editing for length, grammar, spelling, factual accuracy, libelous content, and consistency with AP Style.

Depending on which outlet(s) you choose, you may work on news, sports, opinion, health, education, features, or other categories of articles. These will all be non-breaking pieces. (Non-breaking pieces are pieces that do not lose their relevance in a matter of days; hence, they can be published even weeks after they have been submitted.) The last of these pieces must be developed in depth; you choose which one this will be, and mark “in-depth” at the top of this piece before you submit it. The general length guideline is 350-700 words.

Format of Your Articles

For each of your drafts and for each of your final pieces, submit to me one double-spaced hard copy. I encourage you to wait until you’ve received my comments on your final draft before submitting a revised copy of this draft for publication.

After revising your final draft, submit it to the appropriate editor (and simultaneously to me) via e-mail as a Word attachment. For the Gazette, copy-and-paste your article into an email message (use straight quotes and make a dash with two hyphens rather than using an em-dash); for Keweenaw Now, submit both a Word and a PlainText attachment. Please give attachments file names that indicate the topic of your article and the version of your draft (e.g., “CrimeRate2”).

Your work should be word processed and printed on 8.5” x 11” white paper in a 12-point font with one-inch margins on all four sides. Include at the top of the first page the following information (single-spaced): your name, the course title, the date, your article number (1-4), your draft number (1 or 2), the word count, and the proposed outlet (and section if appropriate), headline, and pull quote. Be sure to also mark your in-depth piece “in-depth.”

Hence, the top of your first page should look something like this:

John Smith
Introduction to Journalism
Oct. 17, 2009
Article #2
Draft #1
Word Count: 578
Proposed Outlet: Lode/Features
Proposed Headline: Litter threatens environment
Proposed Pull Quote: “Randomly discarded trash, even items as small as cigarette butts, endangers our environment, our wildlife and our economy.” Joe Brown
Evaluation

Your final grade will be determined approximately as follows:

- Up to 100 points for participation in class: 100 points
- Up to 20 points for each of 4 brainstorming conferences: 80 points
- Up to 15 points for each of 4 story proposals: 60 points
- Up to 20 points for each of 4 drafts: 80 points
- Up to 20 points for each of 4 draft-review conferences: 80 points
- Up to 100 points for each of 4 final pieces: 400 points
- Up to 50 points for each of 4 quizzes: 200 points
- Total: 1,000 points

Extra credit

25 points for bringing to class before the end of week 3 the required texts with your name permanently marked in or on them.

10 points for each verified submission for publication: when you submit your work electronically to the editor, copy the email message to me, and use Submission as the first word in your subject line.

A: 930-1000 points
AB: 880-929 points
B: 830-879 points
BC: 780-829 points
C: 730-779 points
CD: 680-729 points
D: 600-679 points
F: 599 or fewer points

Course Portfolios

Please keep a portfolio of all of the work you have completed for the course: the hard copies of your articles as I’ve marked and returned them to you, and copies of everything you have had published. You may need these portfolios later in the semester.

The Michigan Tech Writing Center

Michigan Tech has an excellent Writing Center, which is located in Walker 107. I encourage you to schedule, regular weekly appointments with a writing coach. Establish a schedule early in the semester, because appointed times (as opposed to drop-in times) tend to get booked quickly. For more information, call 487-2007 or check the Center’s Web page at www.mtu.edu/wc.
Late Assignments

I won’t accept any assignment that’s more than two days late. There’s no penalty for one late paper (as long as it’s not more than two days late); subsequent late papers, however, will be lowered by one part of a letter grade (e.g., from a BC to a C).

Attendance Policy

“Eighty percent of success is just showing up.” Woody Allen

Excused absences include (but are not limited to) a medical excuse signed by your physician or a personal emergency authorized in writing by the Dean of Students. For a more detailed description of what constitutes an excused absence, see the Michigan Tech Student Handbook [link].

I keep a record of attendance for two reasons:

1. Because if you’re doing poorly in class, these records can help me to determine if poor attendance is part of the problem.

2. Every professor at Michigan Tech is required to submit attendance-verification rosters. These rosters are used for two purposes:

   a. To identify before it’s too late to make the appropriate corrections students who

      • think they are registered for a course, attend all semester and complete the work, but receive no grade at the end of the semester because they were never registered;

      • have never attended a class because they mistakenly think they have dropped the course and, hence, wind up receiving a failing grade at the end of the semester;

      • attend an incorrect section of a course and receive a failing grade at the end of the semester from the section for which they are registered but which they never attended.

   b. To comply with federal law that stipulates that universities must verify that students who receive Title IV financial aid are attending the classes in which they are enrolled. (Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended in 1998 establishes general rules that apply to student financial assistance programs, including Pell Grants, Academic Competitive Grants, National SMART Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Direct Loans, Federal Perkins Loans, and Federal PLUS Loans. Approximately 85 percent of Michigan Tech students receive some form of financial aid.)
Policy on Religious Observance (also from the Michigan Tech Student Handbook)

"Michigan Tech permits students to be excused from class on holidays observed by their religious faith. Students who wish to be absent for a religious holiday are responsible for making arrangements in advance with their instructors to make up classwork and exams. Instructors may expect a reasonable limit to the number of absences requested."

Michigan Tech’s Academic Integrity Policy

"Academic integrity and honesty are central components of a student’s education, and the ethical conduct maintained in an academic context will be taken eventually into a student’s professional career. Academic honesty is essential in a community of scholars searching and learning to search for truth. Anything less than total commitment to honesty undermines the efforts of the entire academic community. Both students and faculty are responsible for insuring the academic integrity of the university.

This policy applies to the academic conduct of all persons at Michigan Technological University who have ever matriculated at the University, whether or not the person is enrolled at the time an allegation of academic dishonesty is made.

This policy addresses academic dishonesty in course work. Allegations of dishonesty in research or publication are addressed under the Scientific Misconduct Policy.

Procedures to ensure fairness and due process for all parties involved in any apparent violation of the Academic Integrity Policy will be developed, and periodically reviewed, by the Dean of Students Office in consultation with the members of the Academic Integrity Committee appointed by the University Senate."

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

A Plagiarism: Knowingly copying another’s work or ideas and calling them one’s own or not giving proper credit or citation. This includes but is not limited to reading or hearing another’s work or ideas and using them as one’s own; quoting, paraphrasing, or condensing another’s work without giving proper credit; purchasing or receiving another’s work and using, handling, or submitting it as one’s own work.

B Cheating: Intentional, unauthorized use of any study aids, equipment, or another’s work during an academic exercise. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized use of notes, study aids, electronic or other equipment during an examination; copying or looking at another individual’s examination; taking or passing information to another individual during an examination; taking an examination for another individual; allowing another individual to take one’s examination; stealing examinations. All graded academic exercises are expected to be performed on an individual basis unless otherwise stated by the instructor. An academic exercise may not be submitted by a student for course credit in more than one course without the permission of all instructors. [Note: This is known as self-plagiarism.]
C Fabrication: Intentional and/or unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation during an academic exercise. This includes but is not limited to changing or adding an answer on an examination and resubmitting it to change the grade; inventing data for a laboratory exercise or report.

D Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: Knowingly or recklessly allowing or helping another individual to plagiarize, cheat, or fabricate information.

Sanctions for academic dishonesty range from warnings to expulsion from Michigan Tech. For more information, visit http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html

The Americans with Disabilities Act

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, your department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).

(Tentative) Schedule of Assignments and Class Activities

Dates indicate when reading and writing assignments are due, not when they are given. I've used the following abbreviations for our texts: IJ = Introduction to Journalism (IJ); NRW = News Reporting and Writing. The Associated Press Stylebook is for reference. Please bring to class each day the book we are currently reading.

Week 1:

TU 9/1: Overview of course and syllabus; self-introductions; brainstorm for story ideas; IJ "Story Ideas" and "Researching and Composing the Story" (pp. 12-18)
TH 9/3: NRW Ch. 1 "The Nature of News"; Discussion topic: "Some Key Features of Quality Journalistic Writing" (IJ pp. 23-24) and "Style" (IJ pp. 51-53); video: "News Writing Language and Style"; general style and Associated Press style pre-quiz; review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette

Week 2: Meet this week to brainstorm for topics, sources, and research and interview questions for piece #1

TU 9/8: Class visit by Michigan Tech Lode Editor in Chief Matt Wilson; NRW Ch. 2 "The Changing News Business"
TH 9/10: Review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette; NRW Ch. 3 “Interviewing”
Week 3:
TU 9/15: NRW Ch. 4 “In Their Own Words”
TH 9/17: Draft of piece #1 due; NRW Ch. 5 “Gathering Information”; review for quiz 1

Week 4: Meet this week to discuss drafts of piece #1
TU 9/22: NRW Ch. 7 “The Inverted Pyramid”; IJ “Interviewing” (pp. 18-23); reading and discussion quiz #1
TH 9/24: NRW Ch. 8 “Writing to be Read”; IJ “Media Law” and “Photojournalism Law” (pp. 25-34)

Week 5: Meet this week to brainstorm for topics, sources, and research and interview questions for piece #2
TU 9/30: NRW Ch. 9 “Beyond the Inverted Pyramid”; IJ “Invasion of Privacy Law” (pp. 35-37)
TH 10/1: Final version of piece #1 due; IJ “Media Ethics,” “SPJ Code of Ethics,” “Guideline on Gifts, Free Meals, and Other Favors” (pp. 38-43)

Week 6:
TU 10/6: IJ “Photojournalism Law and Ethics”; film: “Tell the Truth and Run”; Draft of piece #2 due
TH 10/8: IJ “Access to Busy People” and “Unavailable for Comment, Did Not Respond, Declined Comment”; film: “Tell the Truth and Run”; review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette

Week 7: Meet this week to discuss drafts of piece #2
TU 10/13: NRW Ch. 11 “News Releases”; Review for quiz 2; video: “Media Law”
TH 10/15: reading and discussion quiz #2; review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette

Week 8: Meet this week to brainstorm for topics, sources, and research and interview questions for piece #3
TU 10/20: NRW Ch. 20 “Writing for Online Sources”; video: “Journalism Ethics”; final version of piece #2 due
TH 10/22: review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette

Week 9:
TU 10/27: NRW Ch. 22 “Media Law”
TH 10/29: Draft of piece #3 due; review for quiz 3: film: excerpts from “All the President’s Men”

Week 10: Meet this week to discuss drafts of piece #3
TU 11/3: Reading and discussion quiz #3; NRW Ch. 23 “Ethics”
TH 11/5: Film: excerpts from “Absence of Malice”

H1U621 Introduction to Journalism Dr. Craig Waddell
Week 11: Meet this week to brainstorm for topics, sources, and research and interview questions for piece #4
TU 11/10: IJ “In-Depth Reporting: Investigative, Explanatory, and Beat Reporting” (pp. 44-46)
TH 11/12: final version of piece #3 due; in-class prose style exercises; review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette

Week 12: Meet this week to discuss drafts of piece #3
TU 11/17: IJ “Beyond the Summary Lead: Story Telling” (pp. 47-50); in-class exercises based on IJ reading
TH 11/19: Draft of piece #4 due; IJ “Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence” (pp. 53-58); in-class exercises based on IJ reading; review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette

11/21-11/29 Thanksgiving Break

Week 13: Meet this week to discuss drafts of piece #4
TU 12/1: style exercises
TH 12/3: Review for quiz 4; review Wednesday’s Lode or Gazette

Week 14:
TU 12/8: Reading and discussion quiz #4
TH 12/10: Final version of piece #4 due; summary; course evaluations