# Writing Course Review Form  (12/1/08)

## I. General Education Review - Writing Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dept/Program Subject</th>
<th>Journalism Reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course # (i.e. ENEX)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jour 270</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## II. Endorsement/Approvals

Complete the form and obtain signatures before submitting to Faculty Senate Office. Please type / print name, signature, and date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Clem Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone / Email</td>
<td>x2160 <a href="mailto:clem.work@umontana.edu">clem.work@umontana.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Program Chair       | Carol Van Valkenburg |

## III. Overview of the Course Purpose/Description:

Provides an introduction to the subject matter and explains course content and learning goals.

Jour 270 teaches students the fundamentals of reporting and writing news stories. It emphasizes techniques of gathering and evaluating newsworthy information and then organizing and presenting that information in written form for the news media.

## IV. Learning Outcomes:

Explain how each of the following learning outcomes will be achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student learning outcomes</th>
<th>The student reporters learn to research and write about a variety of unfamiliar topics, and to make their stories understandable to a general readership.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts</td>
<td>Journalists are taught to keep their own opinions out of their writing. But they must be able to understand and to clearly and concisely state the opinions of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing</td>
<td>Students learn to analyze and consider the specific audience for each news story they write, and then tailor the story to that audience. They get experience writing for both print and online publications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose</td>
<td>Instructors write extensive comments and suggestions on all assignments and orally critique assignments in class, using passages from current students’ work. The students have the option to rewrite some assignments, but are required to rewrite at least two of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise written work based on constructive feedback</td>
<td>Students must gather information through various means including research of printed and digital sources, interviews, and observation. They learn to think critically about the information they gather and decide what to include in their stories and what to leave out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Find, evaluate, and use information effectively (see <a href="http://www.lib.umontana.edu/informationliteracy/">http://www.lib.umontana.edu/informationliteracy/</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions</td>
<td>In this class, students must learn and demonstrate a proficiency with specific writing styles and usage for print and online stories. They must use writing conventions spelled out in the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate appropriate English language usage</td>
<td>Instructors require proper usage, grammar, style and punctuation for all assignments. The students are held to the standards of professional reporters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**V. Writing Course Requirements Check list**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is enrollment capped at 25 students? If not, list maximum course enrollment. Explain how outcomes will be adequately met for this number of students. Justify the request for variance.</td>
<td>X Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum enrollment is 20.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are outcomes listed in the course syllabus? If not, how will students be informed of course expectations?</td>
<td>X Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are expectations for Information Literacy listed in the course syllabus? If not, how will students be informed of course expectations?</td>
<td>X Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are detailed requirements for all written assignments included in the course syllabus? If not how and when will students be informed of written assignments?</td>
<td>☐ Yes X No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students receive detailed requirements about writing assignments in class, on class blogs and/or as downloadable files on Blackboard. Nearly every lecture addresses the expectations for course assignments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What instructional methods will be used to teach students to write for specific audiences, purposes, and genres?</td>
<td>Students learn to analyze various audiences and to write specific news stories for print, radio and online publication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will written assignments include an opportunity for revision? If not, then explain how students will receive and use feedback to improve their writing ability.</td>
<td>X Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VI. Writing Assignments:** Please describe course assignments. Students should be required to individually compose at least 16 pages of writing for assessment. At least 50% of the course grade should be based on students’ performance on writing assignments. Clear expression, quality, and accuracy of content are considered an integral part of the grade on any writing assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal Graded Assignments</td>
<td>About 80 percent of the grade in this class is directly tied to writing assignments, which average one a week. Students receive written comments from the instructor on each writing assignment, and they rewrite some assignments. Students also get peer feedback during class critiques of many writing assignments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Informal Ungraded Assignments

The instructor gives general feedback to the class on common mistakes and areas that the students need to improve. Several of the initial stories are marked up, but not graded, to give students a chance to try writing stories in news style.

### VII. Syllabus:

Paste syllabus below or attach and send digital copy with form. The syllabus should clearly describe how the above criteria are satisfied. For assistance on syllabus preparation see: [http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/syllabus.html](http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/syllabus.html)

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### Journalism 270

Section 3  
Fall Semester  
School of Journalism  
University of Montana

**Reporting**  
Instructor: Clem Work  
Office: Anderson 428  
Class: MW, 12:10 - 1:30  
Room: Anderson 004  
Phone: (o) 243-2160  
(h) 728-2760 (until 10 p.m.)  
clem.work@umontana.edu

**What this course is about**  
Journalism 270 is a 3-credit, writing-intensive, practical course in beginning reporting and news writing, with emphasis on print and online reporting. You will learn what news is and is not; techniques of newsgathering through observation, research, interviews, sources, events and beats; how to organize and write accurate and relevant news stories that grab and hold readers' attention, and how to spot legal problems such as libel and invasion of privacy. You will learn to think critically about the information you gather and decide what to include in their stories and what to leave out. We will discuss journalism ethics throughout the semester.

**Reading**

- Please read the *Montana Kaimin* and *The Missoulian* and listen to KUFM news and NPR daily.  
• Get in the habit of reading a national or metropolitan newspaper such as The New York Times or Los Angeles Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, The Seattle Times, etc. Watch PBS news and news shows such as 60 Minutes or CNN. Listen to NPR. Read national newsmagazines such as Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report. You can read these online as well.
• Read lots of good fiction and non-fiction.

In-class writing in the journalism computer lab will sharpen your deadline-writing skills. Grammar, usage and style exercises will help you sharpen these important building blocks to a successful journalism career. Fact-finding exercises will help you learn how to ferret out critical information quickly. Quizzes (see below) help you, as an aspiring news professional, to realize the importance of keeping up with the world around you. Out-of-class reporting and writing assignments will become more complex as you become more proficient in newsgathering and news writing.

Tests and grading
There will be unannounced current events and general knowledge quizzes from time to time. Grades will be based primarily on your writing and reporting assignments, and also on quizzes, class participation and your faithful attendance. These are my general guidelines for letter grades:
A  Excellent, superior work with only a few minor problems.
B  Good work, but as Emeril says, you can kick it up a notch with more sources, stronger writing!
C  Satisfactory, but needs better reporting and/or writing.
D  Has some serious problems with accuracy, mechanics, sourcing.
F  You didn't do the assignment, failed to meet the deadline or the assignment has other fatal flaws.

Deadlines
Will be STRICTLY enforced. Assignments handed in late without an approved excuse will receive an F. You must notify your instructor in advance if you cannot meet a deadline. In-class writing exercises will help you get used to handing in good copy on deadline.

Course Overview
How the class unfolds will depend in part on events on campus, how well you perform on assignments inside and outside of class. Here’s a general outline of what we’ll cover. Always talk to me if you’re having trouble understanding something.
■ What is news? Who decides? How? Why?
■ Story ideas and resources
■ A basic story (obituary, for example)
■ Leads and nut graphs
■ Story organization and good writing
■ Mechanics of attribution and quotation
■ Interviewing
■ Listening and note-taking skills
■ Speeches and news conferences
■ Spot news
■ Journalism ethics and legal issues
■ Multicultural sensitivity
■ In-depth Reporting: Issue stories and profiles
■ Story telling and feature techniques
Successful Jour 270 students will be able to:

- Write accurate, clear, concise, and interesting stories
- Learn and follow print and broadcast writing rules and organization
- Demonstrate good news judgment
- Exhibit strong research and interviewing skills
- Understand and use various print, online and radio broadcast story formats
- Show an understanding of legal and ethical issues facing reporters

Class outline, including reading assignments

Week 1
What’s news, news budgets; blogs
Reading: pp. 16-28
Identifying news for various audiences. Understanding the role of a reporter/who is a journalist?
Get blogging…. You'll be posting comments, stories, to the class blog.
Write your own obituary, paying attention to AP style, p. 55
Discuss which stories you would choose from a news budget, why. Obit critiques.

Weeks 2-3
How to write hard-news leads, organize stories
Reading: pp. 34-41
Discussion of inverted pyramid leads, emphasizing clear, concise writing and identifying important news elements. News leads lab.

Weeks 3-4
What comes next? How stories are organized
Reading: pp. 42-54. Writing the simple stories, both for homework and on deadline.

Weeks 5-6
Class 5: How to handle quotes and attribution
Reading: pp. 80-83. Stories quoting multiple sources. In-class news conference and labs.
Covering meetings, speeches, press conferences
Reading: pp. 94-105. You'll attend an out-of-class speech and write the story on deadline.

Weeks 7-8
How to find enterprise stories, interview sources
Reading: pp. 66-79/ Research into how and where to find good story ideas and how to formulate good news approaches. Additional assignments on stories you propose.
Discussion of project story ideas. Interview of classmates based on a set of questions provided. Write profile of a classmate, which includes several sources. Work on project story.

Weeks 9-10
How to interview. Exercises, examples of conducting good interviews.
Interviewing techniques, the necessity of multi-source stories.
Writing the feature story
Reading: pp. 112-121
Weeks 11-12
Interview story critiques & rewrites. We'll workshop your stories and prepare you to improve them on rewrite.

Weeks 13-14
Writing news for online
Reading: pp. 154-163. You'll have homework and lab assignments addressing writing for the web and for news radio.
Reading: pp. 164-173

Week 15
Multicultural sensitivity; Libel & ethics
Reading: pp. 136-151. Final project rewrites due.

Same Work for Multiple Classes in J-School
You may not submit for this course any assignment that has previously or will be concurrently submitted for another class unless you receive prior approval from the professor for this course. To do so without permission will result in an “F” for the assignment and could result in an “F” for the course.

Academic Honesty
All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
This course is accessible to and usable by otherwise qualified students with disabilities. To request reasonable program modifications, please consult with the instructor. Disability Services for Students will assist the instructor and student in the accommodation process. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at www.umt.edu/dds

Help!
Please come see me before or after class if you are having any difficulty in understanding concepts or assignments, if you want to discuss a graded paper, or need help in some other aspect of the class. I will also schedule short one-on-one conferences with each of you about mid-semester.

"The Journalist is not the axis of anything, but rather the echo of everything"