Course Name: Writing for Media  
Course Number: WR 201  
Course Meeting Place: Moreland Hall 334  
Course Meeting Time: MWF 1400-1450

Instructor name: Jillian St. Jacques  
Instructor email: jillian.stjacques@oregonstate.edu  
Instructor office: Moreland 352  
Instructor office hours: Mondays from 1300-1400

Course Description  
Introduction to newspaper style. Introduction to reporting. (Bacc Core Course) PREREQS: Grade B or higher in WR 121 or WR 121H and 30 wpm typing speed.

Course Overview  
WR201 Writing for Media introduces students to reporting news across traditional and new media forms. Students compose stories in newspaper, radio, broadcast, blog, digital reporting and multimedia styles. The course requires students to conduct interviews, compile research, and turn in publishable articles by deadline. The final assignment in this course (the multimedia package), is a team assignment and will require scheduling time outside of class for its completion.

Learning Resources
- **Canvas.** I have gone through a great deal of effort to provide open source materials for your required readings. Because links go dead at a moment’s notice, please be patient if this happens. Then write to me at the email address above; I will freshen broken links as soon as humanly possible. That said, all reading materials placed on Canvas are **required reading** – there is no “optional reading” here. It is your responsibility to be thoroughly familiar with Canvas, download all learning materials in a timely fashion, and complete the required readings during any given week. You will not pass the final exam without a working knowledge of your assigned reading -- and your stories won’t be very good, either.

- **Goldstein, Norm. The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual.** Access to Associated Press Style and AP proofreading marks is mandatory for passing your style quizzes. The Beaver Bookstore has plenty of stylebooks new for a reasonable fee, but because the AP style rules I will be teaching you here haven’t changed since 1964, any edition of the AP Stylebook will do, no matter how old or battered. This means you can buy the book used on Amazon or wherever. There are some open source AP Style materials available out there, and I will place them online as chance allows – but there is **nothing** as comprehensive as the real deal.
Types of Assignments and Commitments

There are five general types of assignments in this course: Reporting, Quizzes & Exams, Critique and Teamwork. Some of these assignments require substantial work outside of class. To write a good story, one must often conduct interviews, which take time to arrange and orchestrate. To make a decent team presentation, one must communicate and contribute materials. To engage in a meaningful critique, one must bring finished material to discuss, and participate in a concise and enthusiastic manner. The profession of journalism is based on having professional time management skills and people skills. If you are looking for a “laid back writing class,” journalism is definitely not it!

Grading Timelines and Portfolios

Because this is a writing class, and because the goal of grading your papers is to help improve your writing, I typically manage to grade assignments within 10-14 days of their submission -- but depending on the length and complexity of the work, this timeline may vary. That said, your outputs in this course will be graded in three major ways:

1. Most of the quizzes and exams you take on Canvas will be graded instantly.
2. Your critique scores will be based on: 1) The shape of your piece when you bring it for critique, and; 2) The quality of your participation in critique sessions overall. HINT: Hanging back and sitting on your hands, or actively subverting critique, will result in a very low critique score. As an indicator of how you are doing with writing and critique, I will levy an initial 6-point critique score around Week Five and the remaining 9 points at the end of the course. If you consistently bring unfinished work to critique sessions, you can anticipate these grades to be low.
3. A “final grade” will be given to your media content when it appears as a component in one of two portfolios: 1) the Print Journalism Portfolio, which you submit in Week Five, and; 2) the Multimedia Portfolio, which you submit at the end of Dead Week.

If you have concerns about your grades at any point, it is up to you to contact your instructor to arrange office hours and conferences.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify the traditional forms of media (television, radio, newspapers, magazines, etc.) and new media forms (blog, multimedia, social media)
  - Learning Activities: Online readings and seminars
  - Measurements: Performance on final exam, short topical drills, etc.
- Create compelling, publishable news packages in the new digital arena
  - Learning Activities: Research, write and edit news stories in multiple media forms.
  - Measurements: Produce publishable stories in print, broadcast, and multimedia styles, with a special emphasis on new media applications. Compose blogs, storyboards, and a multimedia news package.
- Set up interviews and use computer research to deepen journalistic content
  - Learning Activities: Conducting interviews with strangers. Doing computer research.
  - Measurements: Use of interviews and research in stories.
- Modify, rewrite and edit journalistic using Associated Press criteria
  - Learning Activities: Seminars on AP Style
 Measurement: Performance on style quizzes, the ability to produce stylistically perfect news copy. Performance on final exam.

Bacc Core/Slash Course/WIC
Successful completion of this course partially fulfills OSU’s Baccalaureate Core WRII course requirements.

- Apply multiple theories, concepts, and techniques for creating and evaluating written communication.
  - Activities: Use open source readings and seminar forums to identify Ten Criteria of Newsworthiness, compare and contrast hard and soft news, identify structural elements of a news story, use inverted pyramid and other styles of prioritizing information to produce compelling news stories
  - Measurement: Performance on final exam and in-class exercises.
- Appraise the writing of self, peers and professional journalists in rigorous group critique and revision
  - Activities: Produce self-generated news stories for diverse audiences in a variety of forms, while adhering to journalistic conventions and Associated Press style
  - Measurement 1: Compose news stories in print, broadcast, and multimedia styles
  - Measurement 2: Use formal journalistic criteria to critique work of peers.
  - Measurement 3: Edit journalistic content based on Associated Press criteria
- Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions
  - Activities: Appraise the writing of self, peers and professionals in rigorous critique
  - Measurement: Graded critique sessions.

Evaluation of Student Performance
This is how your learning outcomes will be measured in points (exams, projects, discussions, etc.)

- Story Critiques – 15 points
- Four AP Style Quizzes — 20 points
- Five Skills Quizzes – 14 points
- Print Journalism Portfolio – 15 points
- Broadcast Journalism Portfolio – 15 points
- Team Participation Points – 10 points
- Final Exam – 6 points
- Class Participation – 5 points
- Total – 100 points

Letter Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>Percent Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Content**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syllabus &amp; Introductions</td>
<td>Open Source Readings</td>
<td>Headline Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Powerpoint Seminars</td>
<td>Summary Leads Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ten Criteria Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media Basics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media Forms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The News Brief</td>
<td>Open Source Readings</td>
<td>Inverted Pyramid Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Powerpoint Seminars</td>
<td>AP Style Quiz 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>News Brief Assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Short Feature</td>
<td>Open Source Readings</td>
<td>Quotes Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Powerpoint Seminars</td>
<td>Short Feature Assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>First Critique (News Brief)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Public Relations and The</td>
<td>Open Source Readings</td>
<td>AP Style Quiz 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press Release</td>
<td>Powerpoint Seminars</td>
<td>Press Release Assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Second Critique (Short Feature)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Assignments</td>
<td>Learning Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Print Journ. Portfolio DUE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Video/Television</td>
<td>Open Source Readings, Powerpoint Seminars</td>
<td>Storyboard Assigned, Fourth Critique (Voice Rpt.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AP Style Quiz 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Blogosphere</td>
<td>Open Source Readings, Powerpoint Seminars</td>
<td>Liveblog Assigned, Fifth Critique (Storyboard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Multimedia Package I</td>
<td>Open Source Readings, Powerpoint Seminars</td>
<td>Multimedia Story Assigned, Sixth Critique (Liveblog), AP Style Quiz 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Multimedia Package II</td>
<td>Open Source Readings, Powerpoint Seminars</td>
<td>Multimedia Story, Team Work Continues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>No Class on Monday, May 27: Memorial Day. Thanks to all Vets for your SERVICE!</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Critique Week</td>
<td>Open Source Readings, Final Lecture</td>
<td>Team Presentations, <strong>Multimedia Portfolio DUE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finals</td>
<td>Finals Week</td>
<td>Take Your Final Exam!</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course Policies**

◊ **Late work.** In Journalism Land, the most important requirement of our job is turning in publishable copy by **deadline**. In this course, there will be no provisions given for late work, as hitting your deadline is absolutely intrinsic to journalistic praxis. Similarly, there will be no “make up” assignments given for in-class homework under any circumstances, with the exception of athletes who are away at games (coach’s letter mandatory). If you cannot land an assignment by deadline for whatever reason, have a friend, relative, or fellow student bring it in for you. Some points are better than none.
◊ **Format requirements.** All writing assignments must be typed using either a Times 12-point font or a Helvetica 10-point font (like this syllabus). Assignments written in overlarge or exotic fonts will be downgraded. Typing in colored ink or on colored or scented papers will also result in lowered grades for an assignment, as will generally dishevelled work. Unless otherwise advised, all assignments that run more than one page in length must be stapled in the upper left-hand corner (do not use paper clips or origami-style folding techniques). All assignments should have one-inch margins at the top, bottom and sides, and be typed on letter-sized white bond paper. The standard point deduction for neglecting any of the above conventions is two (2) full points per error, with a standard three-point deduction for neglecting to use spellchecker. Assignments that do not meet format requirements will be returned to the writer, and the rules for late work will apply.

◊ **Improvement.** I carefully evaluate whether your assignments improve along with your knowledge and ability in this course. As the term progresses, I adjust grades increasingly lower for coursework that continuously contains the same errors (a consistent failure to use spellchecker is a common culprit). Likewise, work that demonstrates concentration on areas of improvement receives a higher grade.

◊ **Grading.** Because we are working with a numeric grading system, I use “half points” on many assignments (1.5, 2.5, etc). Please refrain from asking questions about your grades by e-mail, as OSU discourages this practice for security reasons. Any questions about grades should be delivered in person during office hours or after class.

◊ **Attendance.** I take attendance at the beginning of every class. Learning your name is the first step in the process of finding out who you are as a human being. That said, if you miss more than three classes without a signed doctor’s excuse or other supporting evidence (coach’s note, letter from sponsor of academic event) you can anticipate your final grade will be lowered by one full grade. It is your responsibility to make sure you are marked present in the log book if you are late for class. My general policy is to fail students who do not attend at least 50 percent of the classes. *Athletes: make sure your coaches provide me with a list of your “away dates”; also be aware that I am pals with your academic/athletic advisors, and they regularly contact me to monitor your progress.*

◊ **E-mail.** I am sure we all agree — e-mail has become a vital part of academic life in the 21st century. That said, I welcome all of your questions by e-mail, so long as they do not involve issues of grading. Be aware, however, that I never “check out” assignments by e-mail, nor do I accept late work (or any work) by email.

◊ **Laptops.** Technology is nice, but laptops, smart phones, iPads and the rest can be distracting to other students if used for inappropriate purposes (e.g., browsing the Internet, checking Facebook, reading personal email, gossiping on Twitter). Out of courtesy to fellow students, do not use laptops for purposes other than taking notes. The use of smart phones in AJ311 is expressly forbidden, and there is a three-point deduction for their unwarranted use in class. NOTE: If student feedback indicates the use of laptops in the class distracts from learning, I will ban the use of laptops altogether.

◊ **Exams.** Taking a quiz on Canvas requires time and concentration. Remember to take Canvas quizzes at one sitting, no matter what Canvas says about logging out and “saving” your answers, etc. If you log out of a Canvas quiz, Canvas will submit your quiz with incomplete results and you will get
a less than satisfactory grade. I only allow students to “re-take” a Canvas quiz if Canvas officially registers you as having a technical difficulty – otherwise, do not ask.

◊ **Revision.** In this class, you will write a lot of short news articles. Those articles will be critiqued in class. Based on these critiques, you will receive:
  1. Valuable **input** for revising your pieces to place in a portfolio for instructor grading
  2. **Points** for the ability to engage in constructive criticism energetically

◊ **Teamwork.** Poor performance in team efforts (particularly critique and team presentations) will obviously result in a lower class participation score (see below).

◊ **Docking points from cumulative scores.** Be advised that in WR201, there are several ways to lose points from your cumulative score other than poor performance on assignments. Neglecting to attend a critique will cost you five (5) points from your cumulative score. You must also turn in **all stories** for this course in order to receive a passing grade. Aside from the standard point deductions for turning in late work, I reserve the right to dock your cumulative score by a full letter grade for failing to submit all of the articles for this course by the end of term. I will also minimize your class participation score, should this occur. In most cases, this results in an unsatisfactory grade.

**Class participation.**

Do not take class participation points for granted; only the best academic performance will gain all five points. To gauge your class participation, I assess individual attentiveness, leadership and curiosity, the ability to engage in critical discourse, taking a leading edge in teamwork assignments – and, above all, scholarly maturity. And keep in mind that I have been known to boost class participation scores with ample extra credit should you prove yourself worthy.

**How Will My Writing Be Evaluated?**

I assess the following factors when I evaluate (i.e., *grade*) your written work:

A. **Getting the story**
   1. Did the reporter **follow assignment instructions**?
   2. Did the reporter verify that their story idea was worth writing about?
   3. Did the reporter get **all the required interviews**?
   4. Did the reporter do the required research?
   5. Did the reporter use an identifiable organizational style?
   6. Did the reporter utilize an appropriate lead and kicker style?
   7. Did the reporter do the required research—and then some?
   8. Did the reporter properly attribute their sources?
   9. Were quotes and facts incorporated into story in a meaningful manner, or they “popped in” to achieve assignment minimums?
   10. Did the writer **verify** all names, dates, titles and other facts, and ensure such items were **spelled correctly**?

B. **Style and grammar**
   1. Were resources used to fine-tune results? These include stylebook, spellchecker, dictionary, textbook, Canvas materials, etc.

C. **Multimedia Acuity**
1. Did the graphics, photos, moving images and sound bites add anything to the story, or did they merely come along for the ride?
2. Did the multimedia elements distract from the story?
3. Was there a clear and present relationship between text and multimedia?

D. Structural soundness
   1. Does the writing include all of the structural elements that were assigned in the tip sheet? (headline, dek, lead, quotes, kicker, etc.)

E. Formatting
   1. Was assignment typed and spaced correctly?
   2. Was the assignment stapled, if necessary, or placed in the proper folder?
   3. Did the assignment have the correct word-count, page count, etc.?
   4. Did the reporter correctly slug their piece? (name, course number, etc.)

F. Originality
   1. Did the finished assignment show more than a passing interest in the topic, as evidenced by research, depth and personal angle?
   2. Did the assignment demonstrate an ability to gather more than the most obvious details and facts?

Incompletes
If you are having any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please don’t wait until the end of the term; let me know right away. Incompletes are easy enough to arrange, and can buy a bit of extra time in case of emergency.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities
Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval, please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at http://ds.oregonstate.edu. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Expectations for Student Conduct
Student conduct is governed by the university’s policies, as explained in the Student Conduct Code. Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the university’s regulations regarding civility.

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For further information, visit Student Conduct and Community Standards, or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

Tutoring and Writing Assistance
NetTutor is a leading provider of online tutoring and learner support services. The Oregon State Online Writing Lab (OWL) is also a good one.

TurnItIn
Your instructor may ask you to submit one or more of your writings to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service. Your assignment content will be checked for potential plagiarism against Internet sources, academic journal articles, and the papers of other OSU students, for common or borrowed content.