

Journalistic Communication Syllabus

Instructors

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Office Location

Ortega y Gasset Bld.,
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Office Hours

Online

By appointment due to
covid-19 restrictions

Course Overview

This course offers an introduction to the craft of journalism. The course consists of three parts: first, an overview of journalism as a profession and as a business; second, a review of the main reporting genres: news stories, interviews and features; third, an explanation of the peculiarities of broadcast journalism, both in radio and TV.

The class assembles twice a week, first for a theory lecture (on Wednesdays, online) and second for a practical training session (on Mondays, on campus). Since the coronavirus pandemic might force us to move all our activities online, or might prevent you from attending class if you or any close contact of yours gets infected, this course can be followed online entirely.

As you can read on the Grading Policy section below, the final exam is worth 40% of your final grade, whereas various practical assignments will be worth 60%.

Required Texts

There are no required texts for this course. You will find the sources for each lecture in the final slide of the Powerpoint files that you may download from our Aula Global course page. However, if you are looking for a textbook, the following one by Tim Harrower offers a nice introduction to journalism in the American context:

- *Inside reporting: A practical guide to the craft of journalism*, Tim Harrower (McGraw-Hill, 2006)

For the book essay (please, see the full description of the assignment on Aula Global) you will have to read one of these two books by George Orwell:

- *Down and out in Paris and London* (1933)
- *Homage to Catalonia* (1938)

Key Dates

There are three main graded assignments (one per each main journalistic genre) and one book essay before the final exam:

- News story deadline: March 17, 2021
- Profile interview deadline: April 4, 2021
- Feature deadline: April 21, 2021
- Book Essay deadline: May 12, 2021
- Final Exam: May 31, 2021

Course Schedule

Week	Lecture (on Wednesdays)	Classwork (on Mondays)
Week 1	Journalism as a profession	A day in the life of a reporter
Week 2	Journalism as a business	A day in the life of a reader
Week 3	Journalism and democracy	The massless media
Week 4	News stories	Press conference
Week 5	Interviews	Deconstructing Viva
Week 6	Features	Universal prompts
Week 7	Newspaper design and typography	Personality types
Week 8	Photojournalism	Would you publish that?
Week 9	Illustration	Memes as news puns
Week 10	Infographics	A story in three infograms
Week 11	Radio journalism	A radio show about books
Week 12	TV journalism	Wolfman on campus
Week 13	Magazine journalism	Cover design

Homework Schedule

Due date	Assignment	Length in number of words
March 17, 2021	News story	300-500
April 4, 2021	Profile interview	500-1,000
April 21, 2021	Feature article	800-1,500
May 12, 2021	Book essay	800-1,500

Covid-19 Grace Period

If you personally experience difficulties related to the coronavirus, you may turn in any missed homework assignments by the last day of class, May 19, 2021. This extension does not apply to coursework assignments, which are not graded.

Grading Policy

The final grade for this course will be result of the sum of the following items:

- **Coursework (15%).**- During our practical training hours, students will write short essays and a variety of journalistic texts.
- **Homework (25%).**- Students will have to write a news report, a profile interview, and a feature piece. These will involve fieldwork and writing outside the classroom.
- **Book essay (20%).**- Students will write an essay in response to one of these two questions, related themselves to a book by George Orwell:
 - "Are tramps like the rest of us?" To answer to this question, students will have to read *Down and out in Paris and London* (1933)
 - "Was the Spanish Civil war as you had imagined it?" To answer this question, students will have to read *Homage to Catalonia* (1938)
- **Final exam (40%).**- A online-based quiz exam with 20 questions, to be completed in 20 minutes. Wrong answers are not penalized more than blanks, so if unsure of which is the correct answer, try to guess.