

Syllabus
IMPERIAL VALLEY COLLEGE: INTRODUCTORY JOURNALISM (JRN 100)
Spring 2010 Three (3) credits CRN 20316
T&Th, 8:35 a.m. to 10 a.m., Room: 902
Instructor: Gina Germani
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Course Website: IVCJournalism.com/JRN100

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will help develop the student as a journalist with the fundamental skills for reporting news accurately, fairly, clearly, creatively and visually. The student will learn, among other things:

- Basic newswriting structure, different styles of newswriting
- Ethical considerations and responsibilities of a journalist
- How to cover a story fairly and comprehensively
- Dealing with news sources in the field and how to use press releases
- How to work through the newsgathering process by developing a story, proposing it, researching it, conducting interviews, identifying and gathering appropriate visual elements, writing it and getting it published

The culmination of the student's learning will be a final semester project to be proposed for publish on the University of Texas, El Paso's Borderzine.com. Final grades for this course are NOT contingent on the student's work being published by Borderzine.com. All final projects completed with a passing grade will be published at IVCJournalism.com.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

English Language Proficiency

A sound and enjoyable learning experience in JRN 100 requires that you are proficient in writing and speaking English. If you do not possess the skills for writing and speaking English fluently, then I urge you to take—and pass—an English 101 course prior to enrolling in this journalism course.

If I determine that you do not possess the skills for writing and speaking English fluently, then you agree that I have the right to use my discretion as your instructor to ask that you voluntarily drop the course, or I will do so for you.

Required Textbooks

1. Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism, by Tim Harrower
ISBN: 0073526142

2. The Associated Press Stylebook, edited by Norm Goldstein
ISBN: 046500489X, Basic Books, 2007 (NOT the 2009 edition)

In addition to the textbooks, you will be required to read *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and/or *The Christian Science Monitor*. The *Imperial Valley Press* is also required reading. Since it is unlikely you will find the first three newspapers in print locally, then you may access their online news sites via the Internet.

Assignment Deadlines and Course Work Outside of Classes

You will be required to meet each deadline for assignments in this course. If you miss the deadline, then you will score a zero (0) on the assignment, although I will still edit your assignments and give you the necessary feedback for improvement. You are also required to submit your assignments in DOCUMENT format, either in Microsoft Word or Notepad and send them to me via email. *Please do not copy and paste your assignment submissions into the body of the email you send me; you must attach your assignment document to the email.*

Many of your assignments will require you to attend public meetings and other community events outside of the classroom—including evenings and weekends.

I will make no exceptions for these requirements.

Laptop Computer/Word Processing Device/Cameras

JRN 100 is being taught as a digital age journalism and newswriting course, which requires digital age tools. In order to fulfill in-class assignments for JRN 100 you are required to have a laptop computer or other device on which you can type and then output Microsoft Word or Notepad documents digitally with thumb drive/USB port capabilities. You will be required to bring your laptop, or other device, to the classes I designate throughout the semester in order to fulfill your course work.

If you cannot meet the laptop computer/word processor requirement, then you must see me BEFORE the third class on February 23.

It is NOT required, but it will be beneficial to your course work if you own or have access to a digital still and/or video camera as well as an audio recorder. Otherwise, school-issued cameras will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. These devices will be required to complete your final semester projects.

Writing Materials

Always bring a pen/pencil and a note book with you to class.

Email Account and Internet Access

You are required to have a working email account that you must check daily. You will be required to submit your assignments to me, and also receive correspondence from me via your email account. That also means you must have Internet access either at home or by the use of IVC campus computers, or by other means. **I WILL ACCEPT NO EXCUSES FOR LACK OF ACCESS TO YOUR EMAIL ACCOUNT DURING THIS COURSE.**

Most of your course work will rely on you having Internet access. Additionally, you will need Internet access to frequently check the [course website](#) for weekly writing and reading assignments as well as other class notices.

I will make no exceptions for these requirements, and I will not accept any excuses—technical or otherwise—that you are unable to access assignments or other course information.

Cell Phones in Class

I do not require students to turn off their cell phones in class. However, I do require that you leave the room during class periods if you need to make or receive a phone call. I also expect you to promptly return to class within two minutes of making or receiving a phone call.

Do not abuse this courtesy I am extending you.

Personal Entertainment Devices

You will not wear head or earphones in this class unless the use of those devices relates to learning in this class. You will not play games on a portable gaming device in this class. If you choose to do so, you will be asked to leave the class and it will be marked as an unexcused absence.

Attendance

The success of any journalism organization—even a college journalism class—relies on the personal responsibility of every single person related to the organization. The following requirements regarding prompt and reliable attendance are intended to instill a professional attitude toward fellow journalists and/or students, but ultimately toward your own performance as a young adult and professional.

I expect you to attend all 32 class sessions in this semester. However, I do understand that illness, personal emergencies and other unforeseen problems may prevent your attendance. In those events, I require you to call me *before* your absence in a class at the provided phone number listed at the top of this syllabus.

Please, do not assume that emailing me before or after a scheduled class that you intend to miss or you have missed will be sufficient for excuse. It will not be.

You must call me, or personally speak to me, to obtain an excused absence prior to the class you will miss.

If you incur any number of unexcused and/or excused absences which I believe jeopardizes your learning experience and/or the learning experience of other class members, then you agree that it will be my right, and it will be left to my discretion as the instructor, to ask that you be dropped from the course—at any time during the semester. ***Additionally, if you fail to attend any three of the first six class sessions of this course—excused or not—I will promptly drop you from the course.***

Being Late

In the same vein as responsible attendance, I require you to call me—not email me—so that I am aware you will be late to a class.

If you know that you will be regularly late to class, please talk to me about it so we can work out an arrangement and so I may understand the circumstances that will cause you to be late.

Plagiarism and Fabrication

If a student is found to have committed plagiarism, which is literary theft of another's original work, or if a student fabricates facts, which is lying, in any of his or her writings for this course, then the student will receive an "F" for the entire course.

Grading

A perfect semester score in JRN 100 is 1,000 points. You will have 10 assignments, three quizzes, one midterm, and one final semester project. Your attendance and your *meaningfully active* participation in classes will also count in your score.

The following lists the weight of each portion of your grade:

Written Assignments	200 points
Quizzes	100 points
Midterm	200 points
Final Project	400 points
Attendance & Participation	100 points

Extra Credit

If during the course of the semester you feel that your current grade can be improved by completing an extra-credit assignment that you and I agree upon, then I urge you to talk to me about it so we can make arrangements for such an assignment.

Disability Information

Any student with a documented disability who may need educational accommodations should notify the instructor or the Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSP&S) office as soon as possible: Room 2117 Health Sciences Building, 760-355-6312.

Office Hours

I do not hold office hours, although I warmly welcome meetings with my students—in person or by phone. I am easily reached by email or at the phone number listed in the heading of this syllabus. Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns about your coursework at any time.

SPRING 2010 JRN 100 COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule may or may not change as the course progresses. If and when there are changes, students will be notified via email, via in-class instruction, and/or via the [course website](#). Detailed written, reading and other assignments will be announced in class and may also be found on the [course website](#).

Class 1: Tuesday, Feb. 16: Welcome; syllabus; student and instructor obligations

Class 2: Thursday, Feb. 18: Basic news story elements; Assignment #1 assigned

Class 3: Tuesday, Feb. 23: Basic news story, continued; attribution, quotation, paraphrasing, accuracy; in-class story writing

Class 4: Thursday, Feb. 25: Basic news story and style issues; in-class story writing; Assignment #2 assigned

Class 5: Tuesday, Mar. 2: Ethics & Media Law, journalism history; in-class story writing; Assignment #3 assigned

Class 6: Thursday, Mar. 4: QUIZ #1; Ethics & Media Law continued; Assignment #4 assigned

Class 7: Tuesday, Mar. 9: Curiosity and analytical thinking; in-class story writing

Class 8: Thursday, Mar. 11: Victor Brabble, Public Affairs Specialist for the El Centro sector U.S. Border Patrol, will address the class; in-class writing assignment; Assignment #5 assigned

Class 9: Tuesday, March 16: Quiz #2 on ethics, law, analytical thinking as a reporter, week's news; Covering the news, public agendas, press releases, press conferences, police blotters

Class 10: Thursday March 18: Interviewing techniques and style; Assignment #6 assigned

Class 11: Tuesday, March 23: Quiz #3; Covering news events, continued; Borderzine.com discussion; interviewing and in-class writing.

Class 12: Thursday, March 25: TBA

Class 13: Tuesday, March 30: Mid-term preparation

Class 14: Thursday, April 1: MIDTERM EXAM

Class 15: Tuesday, April 13: Zita Arocha, the director of Borderzine.com at the University of Texas, El Paso will address the class; Assignment #7 assigned

Class 16: Thursday, April 15: Setting up personal website accounts for uploading last assignments and final assignment; broadcast writing and scripting

Class 17: Tuesday, April 20: TBA

Class 18: Thursday, April 22: Researching, interviewing and visual story-telling; Assignment #8 assigned

Class 19: Tuesday, April 27: Research, interviews, visuals continued; photo do's and don'ts

Class 20: Thursday, April 29: Pitching your story idea; Assignment #9 assigned

Class 21: Tuesday, May 4: TBA

Class 22: Thursday, May 6: Overview of final semester projects, scoring/graduated assignments/deadlines for the next three weeks

Class 23: Tuesday, May 11: Share/discuss projects—interviews, research, visuals, photo captions; Assignment #10 assigned

Class 24: Thursday, May 13: TBA

Class 25: Tuesday, May 18: Independent final project work and individual student-teacher conferencing on final project progress

Class 26: Thursday, May 20: Independent final project work and individual student-teacher conferencing on final project progress

Class 27: Tuesday, May 25: TBA FINAL PROJECTS DEADLINES BEGIN

Class 28: Thursday, May 27, TBA FINAL PROJECTS ARE SUBMITTED BY DEADLINE

Class 29: Tuesday, June 1, TBA

Class 30: Thursday, June 3, TBA

Class 31: Tuesday, June 8: Reviewing final projects

Class 32: Thursday, June 10: Reviewing final projects