

Journalism 1A: Introduction Course Syllabus

What you will learn in this course

Journalism 1A: Introduction

Are you a storyteller at heart? Are you always the first one to know what's going on at school or in your town and excited to share the latest breaking news? If so, you are the kind of person every online, print, and broadcast news outlet is searching, and Journalism 1a: Introduction is the perfect course for you! Explore the history of journalism and see how social media and the digital world has changed the way news media operates. Learn the basics of press law as well as the code of ethics journalists should follow. Finally, understand how to make your writing and speaking more powerful, and discover the importance of pictures and images when telling a story.

Unit 1: The History of American Journalism

In this unit, you will learn about the changes in American journalism between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 21st and how advancements in technology helped speed these changes along. Focusing on key figures and events in American history, this unit will help you see the connection between each generation of journalism, from print to radio to television to digital. You'll see how everyone from William Randolph Hearst to Jon Stewart has changed the way we understand news—and how you, as reader and citizen, participate in it.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Identify the major historical trends in American journalism from the end of the 19th century into the 21st.
- Recognize the connection between the changes in journalism and the introduction of new technology.
- Understand how key events in American history reflect the changing trends in journalism.
- Recognize major figures in American journalism and their contributions.

Unit 2: New Media Versus Old Media

In this unit, you'll learn about how the Internet and the digital world we now live in has changed how the four major types of news media—newspapers, magazines, radio, and television—do their primary work. We'll first examine the focus of each medium, identifying how journalists tell their stories and what the focus of each medium is. We'll also discuss interesting figures and events within the newspaper, magazine, radio, and television worlds to demonstrate how the genre's focus is reflected. Then we will discuss how each of these traditional types of news media has been absolutely transformed by the digital world.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Identify the roles of each genre of news media and its unique approach to communicating the news.
- Analyze how the focus of each type of news media is reflected in particular stories, figures, and events.
- Discuss the definition of “new media” and how it has changed journalism.
- Explain how each type of news media has been affected uniquely by the Internet.

Unit 3: Press Law & Journalistic Ethics

Being a member of the press comes with serious responsibilities. It’s not enough to tell a great story—journalists are also responsible for following the law, both international and American. But more than that, everything a journalist does should follow a set of ethics that goes beyond the law. In this unit, you’ll learn the important basics of press law and its history, the code of ethics journalists should follow, and a few cases of journalists who have gone very wrong. By the end of this unit, you’ll understand not only what a journalist can’t do but also what every journalist should strive to do every day.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Understand the history of press law, including the Constitution and international development of copyright law.
- Identify the basic elements of press law, including copyright law and fair use exceptions.
- Understand the basic code of journalistic ethics.
- Analyze the difference between ethics and law.
- Examine how a few key examples crossed the line of journalistic ethics and see the consequences of those acts.

Unit 4: Understanding Rhetoric, Bias, & Point of View

Every journalist is a storyteller, and those stories have a structure. Understanding how to be the best journalist possible is more than just knowing the facts or finding a great person to interview—it’s about understanding how to know your audience and speak directly to them. In this unit, you’ll learn about rhetoric, or the act of speaking or writing, and more about the three key parts of that act: the author/speaker, the subject, and the audience. By the end of this unit, you’ll understand how you can make your writing and speaking more powerful, in journalism or other media, by understanding your role within the rhetorical triangle.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Understand the basics of the rhetorical triangle, including your role as author or audience member.
- Identify how point of view and bias can change the way an author or speaker approaches a subject.
- Identify the role that bias plays in creating propaganda.
- Analyze how journalists use rhetorical appeals and, potentially, logical fallacies.

- Examine the dynamic relationship among audience, subject, and author/speaker, and understand how to adapt to different audience needs.

Journalism 1A Midterm Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first four units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Unit 5: Photojournalism, Social Media, & Advertising

If you live an online life, as most of us do, you're probably more likely to respond to a picture than to words. Whether you are on Facebook or Twitter or someone's blog or a newspaper's website, when you see an interesting picture, you'll stop and "read" it much faster than if that story were told in words.

The power of the image has created an entire profession—photojournalism. But can photojournalists be replaced by cell phone cameras and Instagram? As social media affects journalism more and more, the changes to the way we tell stories continues to change as well. In this unit, we'll tackle that question, and show you that the world of photojournalism, social media, and advertising are linked around one thing—the power of the image.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Understand how photojournalism developed and changed based on technology.
- Explain the differences and similarities between journalism and photojournalism ethics.
- Identify the way photojournalism has been affected by the Internet and cell phone technology.
- Trace the beginnings of social media and how social networking affects journalism and journalists.
- Identify the types of advertising and advertising's relationship to journalism.

Unit 6: Freelance Journalism

The field of journalism is constantly evolving. While one time journalists all followed a similar path where they started as a "cub" reporter for a newspaper and worked their way up to get their own beat, there are now many more options. Not every journalist will end up working on a staff at a newspaper or magazine, even if they start out at one of these media outlets. Thanks to technology that allows people to work from anywhere at any time, some journalists will choose to venture out on their own to freelance. In this unit, we'll look at what it takes to be a freelance journalist and how to make a pitch.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Understand what it means to be a freelance journalist
- Identify the steps required to become a freelance journalist

- Explain how a freelance journalist can make a pitch
- Explore the benefits and risks associated with being a freelance journalist

Unit 7: Documenting Life

In the past, watching a documentary often meant viewing a stuffy, boring video with sleep-inducing voiceover done by a monotone narrator. But in this genre of non-fiction, fact-filled movies capture or document an event, a person's life, or everyday reality. What could be more exciting than real life? That's thrilling stuff! As we'll learn in this unit, thanks to advances in technology and distribution, documentary filmmakers now are making captivating, thought-provoking movies that rival narrative cinematic films — and they are often even debuting on the big screen. By the end of the unit, we'll have explored the various types of documentaries, reviewed the work of several famous documentarians, and learned some of the essential steps for making a documentary film.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Understand the purpose of a documentary
- Identify genres of documentaries
- Recognize famous documentary makers and their contributions
- Describe guidelines for making a documentary

Unit 8: Citizen Journalism

Pretty much everyone carries a camera in their pocket today. That means that anything that happens can, and will, be captured as a photo or video. And with an estimated 244 million Americans using social media in 2018, they won't be keeping it to themselves. Think of what might have happened if, back in November 1963, Abraham Zapruder had instantly been able to see the film he captured of President John F. Kennedy being shot and share it with millions of people within minutes. The Zapruder film is one of the earliest examples of **citizen journalism**. That's when regular people report or spread news, often based on a firsthand, eyewitness account. If you think back to significant events over the past few years—school shootings, wildfires and floods, terrorist attacks, or sports upsets—it's likely that the news first broke on social media with reporting by a citizen journalist.

What will you learn in this unit?

- Describe citizen journalism
- Explain what caused the rise of citizen journalism and its effects
- Understand the ethical responsibility of being a citizen journalist
- Explore tools used to create news as a citizen journalist

Journalism 1A Final Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.

- Take a course exam based on material from units five to eight in this course – the last four units. (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

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