

Crafton Hills College Course Outline

1. **Discipline:** English
2. **Department:** Language Arts
3. **Course Title:** Fundamentals of News Writing
4. **Course I.D.:** ENGL 120
5. **Prerequisite(s):** ENGL 101
Corequisite(s): None
Departmental Recommendation(s): None
6. **Semester Units:** 3
7. **Minimum Semester Hours:**
Lecture: 48 Lab: 0 Clinic: 0 Field: 0

8. **Need for the Course:**

An introductory journalism course is an essential part of any communication curriculum and is needed as the college establishes a series of courses for students interested in journalism, broadcasting, radio/television/film and media studies. JOUR/ENGL 120 will provide students who previously had interest, but no guidance and direction, the opportunity to express themselves through appropriate and mature journalistic writing and provide the basis for establishment of a college newspaper. This course applies to the associate degree and transfers to CSU and UC.

9. **Goals of the Course:**

- A. To offer a course as a foundation for further study in journalism, communication and broadcasting
- B. To prepare students for careers in journalism
- C. To introduce students to the process of evaluating, gathering and writing the news
- D. To provide students the opportunity for more intensive practice in writing, specifically in the journalistic style
- E. To equip students with the skills of researching, critical thinking and meeting deadlines valuable in other college level work

10. **Catalog Description:**

Study of the basic principles of journalism. Development of skills associated with evaluating, gathering and writing news in accepted journalistic style. Introduction to the role of the reporter in news organizations, news reporting techniques and legal and ethical issues related to journalism. This course is also offered as JOUR 120.

11. Schedule Description:

Study of the basic principles of journalism. Development of skills associated with evaluating, gathering and writing news in accepted journalistic style.

12. Entrance Skills:

A. Requisite Skills:

Upon entering this course, students must be able to:

1. generate topics about which to write
2. write a coherent paragraph, sustaining one idea for at least 100 words, using facts, details, incidents, examples, reasons and appropriate support
3. write an expository essay, consisting of an introduction, body and conclusion with a clear statement of thesis
4. organize paragraphs into a logical sequence
5. use sentences of varying structure and type in order to emphasize meaning, relationship and importance of ideas
6. find books, articles, periodicals and newspapers related to particular subjects
7. integrate the ideas of others through paraphrase, summary and quotation
8. revise, proofread and edit their essays for public presentation so they exhibit no gross errors in English grammar, usage or punctuation

B. Recommended Skills: None

13. Course Objectives:

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

- A. discuss the role of journalists and news organizations in society
- B. identify and define the principles of journalism
- C. demonstrate proficiency in basic journalistic skills through accurate news writing and reporting
- D. demonstrate effective news gathering techniques
- E. evaluate and organize sources of information and draw sound inferences from these sources
- F. distinguish factual statements from judgment and opinion
- G. write basic news stories in accepted journalistic (AP) style
- H. compare and contrast the techniques used in news stories, features, editorials, and investigative reporting.
- I. discuss current legal and ethical issues facing journalists
- J. demonstrate sound judgment and professional journalistic ethics
- K. evaluate news stories and articles from content and style

14. Representative Texts and Instructional Materials:

Fedler, F., Bender, J.R., Davenport, L. & Drager, M.W. (2004). *Reporting for the Media (8/e)*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Itule, B.D. & Anderson, D.A. (2003). *News Writing and Reporting for Today's Media (6/e)*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Scanlan, C. (2002). *Reporting and Writing: Basics for the 21st Century*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Goldstein, N. (2002). *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*. New York: Perseus Publishing.

Daily newspapers including the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times* and *USA Today*

15. **Course Content:**

- A. Introduction to Journalism and the News Industry
 - 1. The role of the journalists in democratic society
 - 2. The nature of news
 - 3. Newspapers and other publications
 - 4. The news audience
 - 5. Roles and responsibilities within the news organization
- B. Basic Principles of Journalism
 - 1. Accuracy
 - 2. Clarity
 - 3. Conciseness
 - 4. Attribution
 - 5. Objectivity
- C. Gathering and Evaluating the News
 - 1. Reporting techniques including observation, interviewing and research
 - 2. Verifying sources of information
 - 3. Assessing information based on sufficiency, objectivity and relevance
 - 4. Distinguishing factual statements from opinion
- D. Writing the News Story
 - 1. Writing and revising leads
 - 2. The inverted pyramid
 - 3. Organizing and synthesizing information into the news story
 - 4. Journalistic style and usage
 - 5. Attributing sources and using quotes
 - 6. Rewriting and revision
- E. Types of Journalistic Writing
 - 1. News stories
 - 2. Feature writing
 - 3. Editorial writing
 - 4. Investigative reporting
 - 5. Obituaries
 - 6. Sports and arts
- F. Press Law and Ethics
 - 1. Libel
 - 2. Open meeting laws
 - 3. Freedom of information
 - 4. Privacy
 - 5. Constitutional and case law affecting journalists
 - 6. Journalistic ethics
- G. Editing and Evaluating the News
 - 1. Analyzing news stories
 - 2. Assuring objectivity and fairness
 - 3. Ensuring against libel
 - 4. Editing for errors in fact, grammar, and style

- 16. Methods of Instruction:**
- A. Lecture-discussion
 - B. Intensive writing both in and outside of class
 - C. Daily assigned readings
 - D. Peer review and workshops
 - E. Evaluation of news stories
- 17. Assignments and Methods of Evaluation:**
- A. News stories and other writing (60-70%)
 - B. Style quizzes (10-20%)
 - C. Other quizzes, tests or exams (0-20%)
 - D. Portfolio of work (0-20%)
 - E. Reporter's notebook or journal (0-20%)
- 18. Distributed Education Methods of Instruction: None**