

## **JOUR 275: Introduction to Journalism**

DePaul University, College of Communication

Section 401, Class 10229, Fall Quarter 2017

Room 1130 Daley, Loop Campus, Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:50-1:20 p.m.

Instructor: Dr. Jill Hopke, Assistant Professor of Journalism

Contact: [jhopke@depaul.edu](mailto:jhopke@depaul.edu) (*I strive to respond to emails within one business day, excluding weekends*); 312-362-7641 (office)

Office location: 1123 Daley, 14 E. Jackson, Loop Campus

Office hours: Mondays 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. and Wednesdays 2 to 3 p.m. (*or by email appointment*)

Twitter: [@jillhopke](https://twitter.com/jillhopke) Course hashtag: #JOUR275

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jillhopke>

### **Course description and learning objectives**

JOUR 275 "Introduction to Journalism" is the gateway course to the journalism program at DePaul. It is the program's foundational newsgathering and news writing course. In this course you will learn strategies you'll use in deciding what news is, how to prioritize the various elements in a news story and how to communicate that story under deadline pressure. You will acquire skills in news writing within the content of the social responsibility of journalists to serve the public with news worth knowing to make democracy, self-government, and self-actualization more possible.

This course emphasizes how to think and write as a journalist. It is primarily about how to be a journalist, more than it is about the world of journalism.

Our learning objectives for the quarter:

1. To give students considering careers in journalism and media the introductory researching, interviewing, writing and editing skills that are a foundation for successful newsgathering and dissemination.
2. To give students an understanding of the social responsibility of a journalist to serve the public with the news they need to know that makes democracy and self-governance possible.

By the end of the quarter you should be able to:

- ✓ recognize what makes information newsworthy;
- ✓ prioritize information by privileging the most recent and relevant elements of a story;
- ✓ deliver stories under deadline pressure consistent with real world deadlines;
- ✓ write a basic news story with awareness of structure, mechanics, lede and nut graph conventions;
- ✓ understand the ethical and professional values embedded in the job of a journalist, as well as how you might apply these values in related fields; and
- ✓ understand the social responsibility of a journalist to serve the public interest with information that makes democracy and self-governance more possible.

## Course materials

### 1) Required texts – There are two required textbooks:

Associated Press. (2016). *The Associated Press stylebook 2016*. New York: The Associated Press.

You are responsible for ensuring all of your assignments conform to proper AP style and grammar as established by the stylebook.

Note: A copy of an earlier version of the stylebook will be on reserve at the Loop Campus library.

Strunk, W. & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style* (fourth edition). New York: Longman.

Note: A copy of this book will be on reserve at the Loop Campus library.

In the interest of keep the cost of course texts reasonable, additional readings will be available through the class D2L site. These are marked (D2L) in the course schedule.

### 2) Daily attention to news media – In order to be successful in this class (and as a journalist) you need to become familiar with good journalism to be able to emulate it. Get in the habit of consuming a variety of news sources of local, national and international scope on a daily basis through a recommended list of news organizations. The course will include assignments drawn from these general news sources (in addition to course readings) Find my list of recommended sources here: <https://twitter.com/jillhopke/lists/jour-275>

You also should become familiar with DePaul campus media to understand what news you might cover and also identify opportunities for publication. You have an extra credit opportunity to work for campus student media this quarter.

### 3) Monitor and participate on class D2L site – Regularly check the class D2L site for updates. Readings marked (D2L) in the course schedule are available as PDFs on our D2L site. You will turn in your assignments via the D2L dropbox, unless otherwise noted.

### 4) Professional Twitter account – Set-up professional Twitter account (can be a previously held account, if you choose) by second week of the quarter and tweet at least four (4) times per week through the quarter (minimum requirement). Follow general news sources and those specific to your beat.

## Reporting assignments overview

You will turn-in all assignments via the course d2l site dropbox.

**News brief story** – Short news brief (~250 words) with the facts provided on a timely news topic chosen in consultation with your editor (the professor).

**First news story** – Building on your news brief, write a 400 to 500-word news story on the same topic, with attention to news hook, lead and nut graph. Include at least two in-person “on-the-street” news reaction interviews.

**Second news story** – Conduct at least three in-person interviews to write a news story on a timely topic in consultation with your editor (the professor) from primary sources (400-500 words).

**Working with numbers/data visualization assignment** – Create a data visualization based on a dataset assigned by me. Your data visualization should follow principles of good design and indicate an understanding of accurately representing the statistics included. The goal is to tell a story with numbers. You’ll turn in both the final data visualization along with a brief one-page narrative explaining the data and the rationale behind your design choices, along with at least one draft showing a different way you considered visualizing the data, a file with the raw dataset and a reference list of all sources used in creating the visualization.

**Science feature story** – Write a news feature based on a recently published peer-reviewed research study (400-500 words) on a topic chosen in consultation with your editor (the professor). Include at least two in-person interviews.

**Final in-depth reporting project** – A piece of original reporting (500-750 words), based on in-person interviews (minimum four, including at least one expert) and writing not included in previous stories, integrating a basic data visualization appropriate to your topic, and/or integration of numbers from a peer-reviewed research study. You will be expected to distribute your final project online (e.g. through the social blogging platform Medium) and promote it via social media.

You will submit a one-page proposal for this project in week seven. You are required to do original reporting for the project, which has not been previously published in any form and is timely as of the project deadline. Note, if you do not turn in the final project you will not have enough percentage points to pass the course. Late work will not be accepted.

We will also be doing a lot of in-class writing and have a written in-class midterm exam in the sixth week of the quarter.

## Verification

You are required to provide contact information for every person you interview, including phone number and e-mail address. You will submit your notes for every story you do. You will include all the source material for every story you do and a reference list.

Failing to include contact information for each interviewee will result in a zero (0) for the assignment.

## **Plagiarism and academic integrity**

Plagiarism means taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as your own. You are expected to provide sources for all material that cannot be reasonably considered common knowledge (e.g. Chicago is located in IL; Chicago has two baseball teams). This includes any idea or piece of information that is not original to you. Plagiarism will result in an "F" for the assignment and for the course. It may lead to dismissal from the university.

Failing to act with academic integrity is detrimental to DePaul's values, including the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. University academic integrity violations include, but are not limited to, the following: cheating; plagiarism; fabrication; falsification; misuse of academic resources; alteration or falsification of academic records; and academic misconduct.

Conduct that is punishable under the Academic Integrity Policy could result in additional disciplinary actions by university officials. Furthermore, all work done for this course should comply with the University Academic Integrity Policy available in the student handbook or at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>.

## **Grading**

The conventional 10-point letter-grade scale will be used. The specific grading scale follows the recommendation of the College of Communication: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D (60-69), F ( $\leq$  59).

Late work will not be accepted. You will receive a zero for any missed assignments. One thing is for sure in journalism and that's deadlines.

**20% of your grade comes from the in-class midterm exam.**

**35% of your grade comes from your reporting and writing assignments.** You will receive an assignment sheet prompt for each story. Please refer to these on D2L for additional guidelines and with questions.

**15% of your grade comes from class participation (10% in-class and 5% Twitter)** and active engagement in our shared learning community. This includes in-class activities as well as online through the D2L site and Twitter #JOUR275 hashtag.

I expect that you will have set-up your professional Twitter account by the second week of class and tweet at least four (4) times per week throughout the quarter (this is the minimum requirement and doesn't guarantee full credit). Aim for at least once per weekday. Interactive engagement is encouraged and expected!

*Note:* I don't require that you follow my account. I expect you to follow the course hashtag (#JOUR275). I will use this hashtag for course-related material.

**5% of your grade comes from four (4) comparative news discussion posts to the course D2L discussion forum.** Discussion posts are due in weeks 2, 4, 7 and 9. For each round of posting, you will respond to at least two of your colleagues' posts. We will also discuss topics and your analyses in class.

For each, you will be required to post a brief comparative analysis of a news event you saw covered in the past week in the mainstream and/or alternative press. News analyses are due Mondays in weeks 2, 4, 7 and 9 at 11:59 p.m. via the D2L "Discussions" board for that week. Your analyses should be thoughtful but concise (<300 words).

To receive full points (worth 5 each), you should include quotes or screenshots from the coverage and include your own thoughts on why similarities or difference between types of media might occur. For another 5 points, you will respond to at least two of your colleagues' posts by class time on Wednesday of the week the post is due.

**25% of the grade comes from your final reporting project.** It is due during finals week. Late work will NOT be accepted for the final project under any circumstances.

**Extra credit** – You have an extra credit option to work for 14 East, Good Day DePaul (TV), Radio DePaul or *The DePaulia* this quarter. It will be worth up to one-half a letter grade of extra credit. You must begin this work by the third week of the quarter and continue in that work throughout the quarter. I will verify your involvement. I strongly recommend you take advantage of this opportunity. Additional extra credit may be available throughout the quarter.

Your work for the class should be original reporting and if published in a student media outlet, this should be following submission for class assignments.

An overview of the grading expectations is as follows:

**A-level work:** Very little improvement necessary to be published. Challenging and interesting story idea executed completely as requested by the assignment. The story is thorough, informative and well written. No minor grammatical, AP style or other writing errors.

**B-level work:** Needs a little more retouching. Good story idea, solid reporting and writing behind the product, but more time spent on story development and revision required to improve the output. Typically, needs improvement on story focus.

**C-level work:** Effort and promise, but much execution must be improved in multiple categories. Commonly, repeated grammatical errors, basic style errors, lack of attention to detail and/or shoddy reporting are present. Document met only basic minimum satisfactory requirements and expectations.

**Unsatisfactory-level work (D or F):** Very little effort was made. Instructions were not followed. Reporting incomplete or only part of assignment completed. Major revisions necessary, did not make an attempt and/or plagiarized.

## **Sexual harassment**

This class will faithfully follow university guidelines on sexual harassment. Such behavior will not be tolerated and may lead to dismissal from the university.

## **Writing support**

The Writing Center, at the Lincoln Park and Loop campuses, is available for consultation on all aspects of writing assignments. Writing Center tutors are specially trained undergraduate and graduate students who can help at any stage of the quarter or in your process. Visit <http://www.depaul.edu/writing> for more information.

## **Attendance**

Doing well in this class requires you to be in class and actively participate. Class attendance is mandatory, except in the case of university-authorized absences. More than two (2) absences will negatively impact your course grade. In addition, “phoning” (see below) in class will result in you being counted absent for the class period.

Your attendance and active participation are expected and required. Participation grades are factored by considering how often you participate in class and how that participation advances our overall learning (i.e., I will consider how your questions help lead us to a greater understanding of concepts and skills, as well as how your contributions further our discussion). If you miss very few classes and your participation level is excellent, you can expect an “A” for this portion of your grade. If you miss very few classes and your participation level is above average (i.e., you participate during most class sessions rather than every class session), you can expect a “B” for this portion of your grade. If you miss very few classes and your participation level is average (i.e., you contribute sometimes or your contributions don’t elevate our thinking enough), you can expect a “C” for this portion of your grade. If you miss a significant number of class meetings and your participation level is average, you can expect a “D” for this portion of your grade.

If you miss class, please follow-up with me to find out what you have missed.

## **Late work**

If you need to miss class on the day an assignment is due, it is YOUR responsibility to complete the work and submit it IN ADVANCE of the deadline. No late work is accepted in this class. Missed assignments will receive a zero.

The only exceptions to this policy I will consider are for a Dean of Students Office verified excused absence for a “medical, mental health or personal reason.” Information on the Dean of Students Office’s “absence notification” policy and the form to submit to their office can be found at: <http://offices.depaul.edu/student-affairs/support-services/academic/Pages/absence-notification.aspx>

It is your responsibility to have any absences that may fall under the Dean of Students Office policy verified and submit any necessary documentation directly to their office in a timely fashion. Even in cases of verified absences excessively late submissions will not be permitted and any extensions are at the sole discretion of the faculty member.

If you have a personal situation affecting your performance and engagement in our class, please contact me so that I can help identify campus resources that could be of assistance.

## **Classroom etiquette and equipment**

No *phoning* (aka, non-course related device usage) in class! It is a distraction to your classmates and disrespectful to me—the instructor—and will lower your course grade.

In the interest of supporting a focused, engaged learning community this quarter ALL devices (computers, tablets, mobile phones) are to remain in your backpacks, bags, etc. (i.e. in silenced mode, out of your hands and out of sight) throughout each class period, unless specifically required for a classroom activity (see below for guidelines on note-taking on laptops). Disregarding this rule will negatively impact your grade.

***A note on electronic note-taking:*** You are welcome to take notes on a laptop. *However, this is a privilege. If you use a laptop for noting-taking, please do so responsibly. Make sure you are engaged with the class and that it’s not a distraction for your colleagues or for me as the instructor.* I reserve the right to request you email me your notes on-the-spot. *Students abusing the privilege of taking notes on a laptop (e.g. by being on email, chat, social media, websites, etc.) will be disallowed from using a laptop during class for the rest of the quarter.* When we’re using the internet, etc. for a classroom activity, I’ll give you the OK to go online on devices.

## **CDM Equipment Center checkout**

The College of Communication owns a variety of reporting equipment that you can access and checkout for free from a location in the Loop with a DePaul ID from the CDM Equipment Center (in the lower level from the State Street lobby of the Daley Building). See D2L for checkout policies.

## **Professionalism**

Remember that out in the Chicago community you are representing DePaul and our Journalism Program. My expectation is that you will conduct yourself appropriately and professionally wherever your reporting takes you this quarter.

## **Academic accommodations**

Students who require accommodations for any type of disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your individual situation, it is preferable if you contact me during the first week of class. Also, make sure that you have contacted the Center for Students with Disabilities. They are located at (and reachable via email at [csd@depaul.edu](mailto:csd@depaul.edu)):

### Lincoln Park

Center for Students with Disabilities  
2250 North Sheffield Avenue - Student Center 370  
Chicago, Illinois 60614-3673  
773.325.1677 main phone  
773.325.3720 fax  
773.325.7276 TTY

### Loop

Center for Students with Disabilities - Lewis Center 1420  
25 East Jackson Boulevard  
Chicago, IL 60604-2287  
312.362.8002 main phone  
312.362.6544 fax

On a personal note, I am hard-of-hearing and may request that you speak-up during classroom discussions, because I want to hear from you!

## **JOUR 275 Course Schedule** (*subject to change with advance notice*):

### **WEEK 1 – Introduction to News Writing and Reporting**

#### **Reading(s):<sup>1</sup>**

AP: “The Associated Press Statement of News Values and Principles” (pp. 469-481).

Struck and White: Chapter 1 “Elementary Rules of Usage” (pp. 1-14).

#### **Wednesday (9/6):**

Getting to know each other, course overview, review syllabus and assignments.  
Introduction to news writing and reporting.

Core questions: Where do you go for news and information? What does it take to be a journalist today? How might you apply journalistic skills in other professional settings and careers?

#### **Assignment(s):**

- Start following the news. First comparative news D2L discussion post due next week.
- Set-up professional Twitter account (***due via D2L Wednesday, 9/13 11:59 p.m.***).

### **WEEK 2 – Leads, Headlines and Inverted Pyramid Structure**

#### **Reading(s):**

D2L: Brooks, B. S., Pinson, J. L., & Wilson, J. G. (2013). “Writing as a Journalist,” chapter 11 in *Working with Words: A handbook for media writers and editors*. Boston; New York: Bedford / St. Martin’s.

D2L: Brooks, B. S., Kennedy, G., Moen, D. R., & Ranly, D. (2014). The inverted pyramid. *In News reporting and writing* (11<sup>th</sup> edition). Boston; New York: Bedford / St. Martin’s.

#### **Monday (9/11):**

Core news values, introduce story structure and inverted pyramid. Workshop setting-up professional Twitter accounts.

#### **Assignment:**

- News brief (***due via D2L Monday, 9/18 11:59 p.m.***).

#### **Due:**

- **Comparative news discussion post #1 due via d2l discussion forum by 11:59 p.m.** You should respond to at least two of your colleagues’ posts by class time on Wednesday.

---

<sup>1</sup> Please complete the assigned readings *before the Monday class meeting of each week* so that we can build on this material in our discussions and in-class activities.

**Wednesday (9/13):**

Writing leads, headlines and nut graphs. In-class news brief writing activity.

**DUE:**

- Professional Twitter account should be set-up and have sent first tweet using #JOUR275 hashtag. Turn in the Twitter account information form via D2L before class.

**WEEK 3 – Sourcing and Interviewing**

**Reading(s):**

Strunk and White: Chapter 2: “Elementary Principles of Composition” (pp. 15-33).

D2L: Tompkins, A. (2012). The art of the interview. In *Aim for the heart: Write, shoot, report and produce for TV and multimedia* (pp. 77-96). Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

**Monday (9/18):**

Conducting background research and sourcing stories, choosing who to interview and how to interview, in-class interviewing practice.

**Assignment(s):**

- First news reporting assignment. Write a 400-500 word news story, with attention to news hook, lead and nut graph and at least two in-person interviews (**due Monday, September 25 via D2L 11:59 p.m.**).

**DUE:**

- News brief (250 words).

**Wednesday (9/20):**

More on conducting background research and sourcing stories, digital trends in how journalists find and develop stories. In-class writing activity.

**WEEK 4 – Verification, Quoting and Attribution**

**Reading(s):**

AP: “A Guide to Punctuation” and “Editing Marks.”

Strunk and White: Chapter 3 “A Few Matters of Form” and chapter 4 “Words and Expressions Commonly Misused” (pp. 34-65).

D2L: Silverman, C. (Ed.). (2014). *Verification handbook: A definitive guide to verifying digital content for emergency coverage*. Maastricht, the Netherlands: European Journalism Centre. Retrieved from <http://verificationhandbook.com/book/> (**Recommended reference for verification tools and methods.**)

**Monday (9/25):**

More on interviewing (focus on quoting and attribution) and verification. In-class AP style activity and editing practice.

**DUE :**

- **Comparative news discussion post #2 due via d2l discussion forum by 11:59 p.m.** You should respond to at least two of your colleagues' posts by class time on Wednesday.
- First news reporting assignment via D2L by 11:59 p.m. Write a 400-500 word news story with at least two in-person interviews, with attention to news hook, lead and nut graph.

**Assignment(s):**

- Second news reporting assignment. Write a 400-500 word news story, with attention to news hook, lede and nut graph and this time including at least three in-person interviews (*due via D2L Monday, 10/2 11:59 p.m.*).

**Wednesday (9/27):**

Verifying content in a digital age, in-class research and sourcing activity. In-class writing activity.

**WEEK 5 – Social Responsibility of Journalism and Ethics**

**Readings:**

Strunk and White: Chapter 5: An Approach to Style (With a List of Reminders)" (pp. 66-86).

D2L: Kovach and Rosenstiel: Chapter 8: "How to Find What Really Matters" (pp. 146-169).

D2L: Society of Professional Journalists. (2014, Sept. 6). SPJ code of ethics. Retrieved from <http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>

**Monday (10/2):**

History of the press as a watchdog institution. Legal considerations of doing journalism, professional ethics.

**DUE:**

- Second beat reporting assignment via D2L by 11:59 p.m. Write a 400-500 word news story with at least three in-person interviews, with attention to news hook, lede and nut graph and this time including at least three in-person interviews.

**Wednesday (10/4):**

Researching and writing journalistic "pitches." In-class writing activity.

**Assignment(s):**

- Review for next week's in-class midterm essay and writing activity. This will cover all readings, topics and course material through week 5.

## WEEK 6 – Assessing What We’ve Learned So Far and Midterm

### **Reading(s):**

Midterm this week. No additional readings assigned.

### **Monday (10/9):**

Review for Wednesday’s in-class midterm.

### **Wednesday (10/11):**

In-class midterm exam.

### **Assignment(s):**

- Submit final reporting project one-page proposal, aka “pitch,” for final reporting project. Include ideas of who you could interview and primary sources you might use (**written proposal due via D2L 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, 10/18**).

## WEEK 7 – Working with Numbers

### **Reading(s):**

D2L: Walter Kille, L. & Wihbey, J. (2015, Apr. 16). Data journalism lesson with crime stats: Parsing close-call numbers and producing valid stories. *Journalist’s Resource*. Retrieved from <http://journalistsresource.org/tip-sheets/reporting/basic-data-analysis-making-the-call-on-statistics-and-story-focus>

D2L: Chicas Poderosas. (2014, May 18). Alberto Cairo’s tips for more effective data visualization. Retrieved from <http://www.chicaspoderosas.org/las-tips-de-cairo-para-visualizar-de-una-manera-mas-efectiva/> (**Supplemental reading and video on data viz.**)

### **Monday (10/16):**

(Very brief) introduction to data journalism and working with statistics; brainstorm for final projects.

### **DUE:**

- **Comparative news discussion post #3 due via d2l discussion forum by 11:59 p.m.** You should respond to at least two of your colleagues’ posts by class time on Wednesday.

### **Wednesday (10/18):**

More on data journalism. In-class data visualization activity.

### **DUE:**

- One-page final reporting project proposal “pitch.”

**Assignment(s):**

- Working with numbers/data visualization assignment. Your data visualization should follow principles of good design and indicate an understanding of accurately representing the statistics included. The goal is to tell a story with numbers. You'll turn in both the final data visualization, along with at least one draft showing a different way you considered visualizing the data, a file with the raw dataset and a reference list of all sources used in creating the visualization. **(DUE via D2L Wednesday, 10/25 11:59 p.m.).**

**WEEK 8 – Covering Science and Writing Science Feature Stories**

**Readings:**

D2L: D2L: Brooks, B. S., Kennedy, G., Moen, D. R., & Ranly, D. (2014). Social science reporting. *In News reporting and writing* (11<sup>th</sup> edition). Boston; New York: Bedford / St. Martin's.

D2L: Wihbey, J. (2015, March 6). Guide to critical thinking, research, data and theory: Overview for journalists. *Journalist's Resource*. Retrieved from <http://journalistsresource.org/tip-sheets/research/guide-academic-methods-critical-thinking-theory-overview-journalists> (Recommended)

**Monday (10/23):**

Reporting on science and writing feature stories.

**Assignment(s):**

- Write a news feature based on a recently published peer-reviewed research study (400-500 words) on a topic chosen in consultation with your editor (the professor). Include at least two in-person interviews **(due via D2L Monday, 10/30 by 11:59 p.m.).**

**Wednesday (10/25):**

In-class science beat writing activity.

**DUE:**

- Working with numbers/data visualization assignment.

**Assignment(s):**

- Work on final reporting project.

**WEEK 9 – Sourcing from Social Media and Verifying Social Content**

**Reading(s):**

AP: "Social Media Guidelines" (pp. 367-398).

D2L: Hermida, A. (2014). The news now. *In Tell everyone: Why we share and why it matters* (pp. 31-52).

**Monday (10/30):**

Discussion of social media for news, production and consumption.

**Due:**

- **Comparative news discussion post #4 due via d2l discussion forum by 11:59 p.m.**  
You should respond to at least two of your colleagues' posts by class time on Wednesday.
- Science feature story.

**Wednesday (11/1):**

More on social media and mobile trends in journalism. In-class writing activity.

**Assignment(s):**

- Work on final reporting project.

**WEEK 10 – Peer Review Final Projects and The “Next” Journalism(s)**

**Reading(s):**

D2L: Kovach and Rosenstiel: Chapter 4: “Completeness: What Is Here and What Is Missing?” (pp. 57-73).

**Monday (11/6):**

Thoughts, yours and mine, on the future of journalism(s). Time to work on final projects and fill out online course evaluations. Share final reporting projects challenges and successes.

Core questions: What will you take-away from this course? What do you wish we'd spent more/less time on? What are your thoughts on the future of “journalism”?

**Wednesday (11/8):**

Peer review drafts of final reporting project, get informal “editor” feedback.

**Due:**

- Bring two (2) hard-copies of final project draft for in-class peer review. Optional to turn-in via d2l for my informal editor feedback.

**WEEK 11 – Present Final Reporting Projects and Course Wrap-up**

**Monday (11/13):**

Students “pitch” final reporting project stories for news organization homepage and course wrap-up.

**FINAL PROJECTS DUE by 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, November 15:** Turn in final reporting project via D2L dropbox by 11:59 p.m. No late work will be accepted.