

MODULE GUIDE: JOURNALISM PRACTICES

JOM411 LEVEL 7 SEMESTER 1

CREDITS: 15

Module leader: Lucy Smy

Room MB308;

Email:

Seminar tutors/speakers: Prof Brian Cathcart; Michelle Hather; Sara McConnell; Lucy Smy; Dan Townend; Adam Westbrook

Week 1: lectures and seminars as timetabled (see Programme section below)

DESCRIPTION

This week-long module at the beginning of your course is designed to launch you straight into journalism and start you thinking and working journalistically, with a team of tutors and guest speakers who are all practising journalists.

During the week, you will cover a range of core skills and industry issues essential both for successful completion of your degree and for your subsequent career in the industry. You will work with your colleagues on the course on a range of tasks including going out and finding stories, developing angles and editing copy. You will debate ethical dilemmas typically encountered in newsrooms and have the opportunity to question experts about media law and the vital importance of knowing enough to avoid a libel action. Other sessions will explore the workings of a newsroom, the editorial hierarchy (the editor's decision is final) and the difference between a news story and a feature. You will use the content of some or all of these sessions to put together a presentation or other submission to the rest of your group as part of the assessment for the module (see assessment).

Guest speakers and tutors will set practical sessions in the context of a changing industry in which traditional print media are facing growing challenges from online news operations and multi-skilled journalists able to write both for print and web are in heavy demand.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: on successful completion of the module, you will be able to:

Develop story ideas and identify ways of working stories up into good copy for appropriate readerships

- Understand how a newsroom works and how you as a journalist function within a media organisation
- Engage critically in debates about the newspaper and magazine industries and the challenges facing working journalists

- Begin to operate effectively as a journalist within established frameworks of industry codes of practice and appropriate ethical standards
- Work as part of a team to produce and present work to a defined brief and reflect critically on your own performance and contribution

ASSESSMENT

The assessment for this module will be in three parts.

- 1) Work in small groups to produce a presentation and seminar facilitation on a chosen topic at the end of the Journalism Practices module on **Thursday September 29 2011 – documentation to be handed in to student office by Thursday October 6 2011**
- 2) Participation in group blog debate on specified topics over weeks 1-4 until **Thursday October 13 2011**
- 3) Submission of a 2,000 word case study of a media organisation by **Thursday October 27, 2011**

The case study will be worth 50% of the mark, group presentation/facilitation 30% and the blog 20%.

MARKING CRITERIA

Case study. You will be marked on your ability to: choose an appropriate media organisation for your assignment; analyse (rather than describe) the industry challenges and issues faced by the organisation; back up your analysis with a range of examples from appropriate reading (including books, journals and websites); write in appropriate academic rather than journalistic register, using correct Harvard referencing (see link on Study Space)

Presentation: see separate assignment briefing and guidelines

Blog: You will be marked on your ability to: work with other members of your presentation team to devise and frame a discussion topic for the forum in a way that will generate and encourage discussion; demonstrating critical thinking, and using appropriate referencing; respond to other users’ comments appropriately; share and set links to other websites, Twitter feeds, blogs and other appropriate social media.

HOW LEARNING OUTCOMES LINK TO ASSESSMENT

LEARNING OUTCOME	ASSESSMENT
On completion of the module, you will be able to:	
Develop story ideas and identify ways of working stories up into good copy for appropriate readerships	Work in class – no formal assessment
Understand how a newsroom works and how journalists function within a media organisation	Critical case study of a media organisation 50 % of the module mark

Engage critically in debates about the newspaper and magazine industries and the challenges facing working journalists	Online debate on Studyspace on selected industry issues 20% of module mark
Begin to operate effectively as journalists within established frameworks of industry codes of practice and appropriate ethical standards	Work in class – no formal assessment

CURRICULUM CONTENT (*INDICATIVE*)

- Introduction to the journalism industry: threats, pressures and opportunities
- How a newspaper or magazine office works; the editorial hierarchy and the role and functions of editors, writers, picture desk and production desk
- Where stories come from: sources, research techniques and how to make work original. Structures of news stories and features.
- Introduction to journalism ethics and law – how to keep out of legal trouble as a journalist and sleep soundly at night
- The journalist as team member: working with colleagues effectively

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY (*INDICATIVE*)

This module will be delivered through a combination of seminars and workshops over a continuous four day period at the beginning of the academic year. You will be expected to participate in a range of practical exercise as well as carrying out research individually and in groups and participating in online debate. You will be asked to work together to present research findings to others in your group at the end of the module and critically evaluate your own performance and that of the group.

In summary the module will be made up of:

Lectures/seminars: 20 hours
 Directed and independent learning 130 hours
 Total module study time, classes and independent study time – 150 hours.

PROGRAMME

Monday September 26 (Room JG5002)

10-11 Introduction to module – Dan Townend
Talk: Why journalism matters – Prof Brian Cathcart

11-12 The future of the written word: What next for the journalists of the future?
(Michelle Hather and Adam Westbrook)

1-4 Start of preparation for group presentation, explanation of assignment, initial group discussion of presentation topics (LS)

Tuesday September 27 (JG5002)

10-12 News – What is it? What a news story looks like? Who chooses what is news and what is not? The discipline of journalism or Yes, your copy will be changed. Intros, angles, what's the story? Sub-editing and copy cutting – making copy work (LS/DT)

1-4 Finding the story – getting out on the streets (LS)

Wednesday September 28 (JG5002)

10-11 Libel law and why you need to understand it as a journalist (or risk costing your employer millions). (DT)

11-12 The ethical journalist. Newsroom ethical dilemmas and how to resolve them (SM)

1-2 Journalism Lunchtime Lecture series – Jacqueline Wilson Hall – Main Building
Sean Langan Bafta-nominated documentary maker – going against the official line

2-4 Work on presentations/seminars in groups and with tutor (LS)

Thursday September 29 (JG5002 and JG3003)

10-12 and 1-4
Group presentations for assessment

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Core Text(s):

Allan, Stuart (2006) *Online News* Open University Press
Frost, Chris (2011), *Journalism, Ethics and Regulation (3rd)*. London: Pearson
Harcup, Tony (2009) *Journalism Principles and Practice* 2nd edition London; Sage
Keeble, Richard and Mair, John eds. (2011) *Face the Future- The Internet and Journalism Today*, Arima
Keeble, Richard (2001), *The Newspapers Handbook* Routledge
McKay, Jenny (2005) *The Magazines Handbook*, (2nd edition) Routledge

Recommended Reading:

- Allan, Stuart ed. (2005), *Journalism: critical issues*, Open University Press
Allan, Stuart (2004), *News Culture*, Open University Press
Beckett C (2008), *Super media: Saving journalism so that it can save the world*, Blackwell
Conboy, Martin (2005) *Tabloid Britain* London: Routledge
Curran, James and Seaton, Jean (2009), *Power Without Responsibility: The Press and Broadcasting in Britain (7th edition)* . London: Routledge.
Davies, Nick (2008), *Flat Earth News*, London, Chatto and Windus
Engel, Matthew (1996), *Tickle the public: One hundred years of the popular press* London; Orion
Friend, Cecilia and Singer, Jane (2008), *Online Journalism Ethics: traditions and transitions*, ME Sharpe
Williams Andrew and Franklin Bob (2007) *Turning around the tanker: implementing Trinity Mirror's online strategy*, Cardiff
Walsh, T. Greenwood, W. and Banks, D. (2009) *Mc Nae's Essential Law for journalists (20th edition)* Oxford University Press
Williams, Kevin (2009) *Get me a murder a day (2nd edition)* London: Bloomsbury

Journals

- Bill Hagerty (ed), *British Journalism Review*. <http://www.bjr.org.uk/> London: Sage. (Quarterly).
Journalism Studies. London: Routledge. (bi-monthly).
Press Gazette. <http://www.pressgazette.co.uk/>

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