



**UNSW**  
SYDNEY

Australia's  
Global  
University



# MDIA5001

Writing for Media

Term One // 2020

## Course Overview

### Staff Contact Details

#### Convenors

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The School of the Arts and Media would like to Respectfully Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Art & Design Campuses) and the Ngunnawal people (Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra) of the lands where each campus of UNSW is located.

## **Course Details**

### **Credit Points 6**

### **Summary of the Course**

In this course you will be introduced to key media writing skills. The course will cover a range of genres and roles in the journalism and communication field. You will learn the fundamentals of journalistic prose, research, interviews and news story structure.

The emphasis will be on writing for print journalism but the skills learnt will form the basis of a portfolio of skills that will be useful across all media and communications contexts. You will learn how to structure and edit a news story, how to use quotes and how to engage readers. You will read and analyse a range of news stories and will learn to research, interview for and write both 'hard' and 'soft' news stories. You will learn about the values and production constraints that guide the selection of news items.

This course engages with the history of the news genre and with the question: what is news? You will learn about balance, bias and ethics. This course will also require you to think about the ethical and professional aspects of your work and its social, economic and political role.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

1. Plan and undertake the research needed to write an effective news narrative
2. Obtain sources, conduct interviews and use information in a professional and ethical manner
3. Write, structure and edit a hard news story for a specific medium, format and audience
4. Write, structure and edit a soft news feature story that narrativises events, places and characters

### **Teaching Strategies**

This course will be taught face to face in a seminar room environment with a strong emphasis on encouraging your participation in the process of learning. During the course you will be actively engaged in solving problems posed by the lecturer. Your learning will be enhanced by the use of case studies.

## Assessment

### Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Multimedia News Story	40%	01/05/2020 05:00 PM	1,2,4
News Research & Interview portfolio	30%	17/04/2020 05:00 PM	1,2
News Story for print/online	30%	20/03/2020 05:00 PM	3

### Assessment Details

#### Assessment 1: Multimedia News Story

**Start date:**

**Length:** 750 words

**Details:** 750 words, qualitative feedback provided via Turnitin.

**Submission notes:**Hard news story required.

**Turnitin setting:** This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

#### Assessment 2: News Research & Interview portfolio

**Start date:** Not Applicable

**Length:** 750 words

**Details:** 750 words, qualitative feedback provided via Turnitin.

**Submission notes:**This assignment draws upon research and interviewing skills learned in the course and brings them together in a hard news story incorporating these elements.

**Turnitin setting:** This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

#### Assessment 3: News Story for print/online

**Start date:**

**Length:** 500 words

**Details:** 500 words, qualitative feedback provided via Turnitin

**Submission notes:**This is a hard news story for print and online outlets using all that's been learned

during the trimester about different media forms and applicable works.

**Turnitin setting:** This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

## Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

## Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

### Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 17 February - 21 February	Lecture	<p>The lecture and tutorials start this week. Before the lecture:</p> <p>A) Follow the instructions in the Getting Started section of this Moodle site;</p> <p>B) Read chapters one and two of Lamble (covering the history and theory of journalism).</p>
Week 2: 24 February - 28 February	Lecture	<p>What makes something newsworthy? What are its special attributes and what challenges are there in reporting news in a fair and balanced way?</p> <p>From the textbook (<i>News As It Happens: an introduction to Journalism</i>, 3rd Edition, 2016, by Stephen Lamble), read and contemplate the following:</p> <p>Chapter 3: News Values;</p> <p>Chapter 5: The Newsroom and Tips For Finding Stories;</p> <p>Chapter 7: Journalism Research.</p>
Week 3: 2 March - 6 March	Lecture	<p>Interviewing for beginners - preparing and conducting the news interview. How do I get the best out of an interview, and conduct it and reporting of it in an ethical manner?</p> <p>Pre-class readings:</p> <p>From the textbook, <i>News As It Happens</i> by Stephen Lamble, please read and contemplate Chapter Eight (8): Interviewing.</p>
Week 4: 9 March - 13 March	Lecture	<p>The content and structure of writing "hard" news.</p> <p>Please read:</p> <p>Lamble, S 2016, <i>News as it Happens: An</i></p>

		<p><i>Introduction to Journalism</i> 3rd edition, Oxford University Press, Melbourne: CH. 9 'Writing News for Print' pp. 119-134;</p> <p>Gissler, S 2000, 'Tips: Leads', see:  <a href="http://www.columbia.edu/itc/journalism/gissler/tips/Tip-ledes.html">http://www.columbia.edu/itc/journalism/gissler/tips/Tip-ledes.html</a></p> <p>Duncan, J 1993. "The Structure of a News Story" in <i>The Front Page and Beyond</i>. Australian Centre for Independent Journalism, University of Technology, Sydney.</p>
Week 5: 16 March - 20 March	Lecture	"Hard" news pt 2. What are the differences between reporting local, national and international news? What special challenges are posed in reporting international news?
Week 6: 23 March - 27 March		No classes this week. This is your chance to review readings done previously and do other set readings for the course.
Week 7: 30 March - 3 April	Lecture	Digital news. Does the newspaper have a future or will all news be delivered online and on broadcast media? What are the special challenges of producing digital news?
Week 8: 6 April - 10 April	Lecture	<p>How do we write news with punch and style so that it cuts through the sheer volume of media that people deal with and gets noticed, read and considered closely?</p> <p>White, S. (2000) <i>Reporting in Australia</i>, 2nd Edition. South Yarra, MacMillan Education:</p> <p>* CH. 9 'The Language of News Writing' pp. 153-175</p> <p>* CH, 11. 'The Hard News Follow Through' pp. 203-226.</p> <p>AND Conley, D. (2002) <i>The Daily Miracle: An Introduction to Journalism</i>. 2nd edition. Oxford University Press. South Melbourne:</p> <p>* CH. 5 'The Lead: Will the Reader Follow?' pp. 74-89</p> <p>* CH. 7 'Upside Down Pyramids' pp. 113-125</p>

Week 9: 13 April - 17 April	Lecture	No lecture this week. No Monday tutorial but Tuesday tutorial(s) will go ahead as per normal, recapping what we've learned so far in the course.
Week 10: 20 April - 24 April	Lecture	<p>Writing for a mobile world. What is the role of social media in reporting news, and what special attributes does it possess?</p> <p>Lamble, S 2016, News as it Happens: An Introduction to Journalism 3rd edition, Oxford University Press, Melbourne:</p> <p>* CH. 11 'Writing News for Online and Portable Devices' pp. 148-162</p>
Week 11: 27 April - 28 April	Lecture	What have we learned about "hard" news and how to report it in this unit? What is the role of research and interviewing, and how do we best distill what we glean from research and interviews into punchy, accessible reportage?

## **Resources**

### **Prescribed Resources**

- News as it Happens: an Introduction to Journalism

### **Recommended Resources**

- Interviewing: A Guide For Journalists and Writers
- Understanding Journalism
- A History of News
- Australian Broadcast Journalism
- Media and Journalism: New Approaches to Theory and Practice
- The Electronic Reporter

### **Course Evaluation and Development**

## **Submission of Assessment Tasks**

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### **Turnitin Submission**

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on [externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au](mailto:externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au) . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

## Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

**Copying:** using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

**Inappropriate paraphrasing:** Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

**Collusion:** working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

**Inappropriate citation:** Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

**Duplication ("self-plagiarism"):** submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>

## **Academic Information**

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

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