JOURNALISM 205     NEWS WRITING
3 CREDITS (Writing Intensive)

INSTRUCTOR: Elizabeth “Libby” Young
OFFICE: Hale Akoakoa 239
OFFICE HOURS: 1:30 – 3 p.m., T, Th or anytime by appointment
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EFFECTIVE DATE: Spring 2015

WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT
Windward Community College offers innovative programs in the arts and sciences and
opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of Hawai‘i and its unique heritage. With a
special commitment to support the access and educational needs of Native Hawaiians, we
provide O‘ahu’s Ko‘olau region and beyond with liberal arts, career and lifelong learning in a
supportive and challenging environment — inspiring students to excellence.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION
An introductory course in news writing, news gathering and journalistic ethics.
Prerequisite: Eng 100
Activities Required at Scheduled Times Other Than Class Times: One or two field trips.
Conferences on major assignments.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
The student learning outcomes for the course are:

1. Analyze the quality of coverage in stories produced by the mass media and other students
to become a more informed consumer of news.
2. Identify basic journalistic concepts and principles, including news values, news and
feature story structures and issues relating to communication law and ethics.
3. Apply basic journalistic concepts and principles to produce a range of articles (press
release, short news, profile, timed deadline pieces, news story and in-depth news or
feature) that meet standards for readability, accuracy, news style and mechanics.
4. Conduct background research and interviews to gather information accurately and
comprehensively.
5. Edit and proofread their own and others’ stories for readability, clarity, accuracy, news
value, conciseness and mechanics.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION
This course will be taught with a variety of methods, including considerable practical experience
in writing, small group sessions and conferences for discussion and feedback on assignments,
guest speakers from the press and field trips. Students will have story assignments that may
involve fact-gathering and interviewing on campus or in the community. The emphasis will be
on learning by doing.
COURSE CONTENT

Concepts or Topics

• Becoming a more informed consumer of news
• Sharpening communication skills to write effective news articles, including listening, observing, questioning, writing and editing.
• Developing an understanding of journalistic terms and principles.
• Developing news judgment and an appreciation of journalistic ethics.

Skills or Competencies

1. Develop intelligent questions and do background research for interviews.
2. Gather and organize facts; take accurate notes.
3. Distinguish fact from opinion; correct use of quotation and attribution.
4. Write strong lead sentences and readable stories in different formats.
5. Edit for clarity, conciseness and completeness.
6. Explain and apply news terms.
7. Use news style rules as well as correct grammar and mechanics.
8. Meet deadlines.
9. Read a newspaper regularly to develop awareness of issues and journalistic style.

COURSE TASKS

1. Complete a minimum of 70 percent of writing exercises and homework assignments at the OK (meets basic requirements) or + (above average level). Each assignment will focus on specific skills; the skills, in turn, will build on each other to improve your writing. In some cases, you may be asked to revise.

2. Complete at least five articles of varying lengths, including a press release, short news, feature profile, news event and a final in-depth story. These should show that you can fulfill the requirements for a particular type of story at a satisfactory level. Each assignment will have a rough draft and a final version. Individual conferences with the instructor will be required.

3. Complete three sets of short, in-class writings to practice organizing information under time constraints.

4. Demonstrate an understanding of news terms and concepts, copy editing symbols and news style by scoring at least 60 percent on a final quiz.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Grades in this course will be based on:

1. Five story assignments and in-class writing with revisions required 70%
2. One in-class final quiz 15%
3. Class attendance, discussions and homework assignments 15%

The final course grade will be based on completion of all objectives at specified levels. Improvement over the semester is an important consideration in the final grade.

• Attendance - Because your participation is important to the class, you will be expected to attend class regularly and turn in work on time (papers due in class on the due date). Each student is allowed four absences during the semester, but any work done in class must be made up. Additional absences will count against your final grade, and with excessive absences, you
will be advised to withdraw. You will receive an “F” for disappearing rather than officially withdrawing before the deadline. **The last day to withdraw with a “W” is March 31, 2015.** Please email or call me if you cannot attend a class.

**Tardies or cell phone use** - Missing more than 20 minutes of class counts as an absence. Please put your phone on “vibrate” so as not to disrupt class time.

Articles will be evaluated according to criteria provided with each assignment. Generally, these grades reflect the following:

- **A = Excellent** Demonstrates a mastery of news writing skills. Fulfills all objectives of assignment.
- **B = Good** Demonstrates a growing news writing ability with only a few errors or areas of weakness. Fulfills most objectives of assignment.
- **C = Fair** Demonstrates some understanding of news writing skills but may have major weaknesses in content, organization or mechanics. Needs revision.
- **D = Poor** Demonstrates rudimentary grasp of news writing but has major weaknesses in two or more areas of content, organization and mechanics. Needs much revision.
- **F = Unacceptable** Return to the drawing board.

**NOTE:** All articles must be typed, double-spaced and follow news copy format. In accordance with the nature of the news business, *the importance of meeting deadlines* will be emphasized. Late assignments will be marked down one letter grade, unless there are extenuating circumstances. With the student’s consent, stories of high quality may be published in WCC’s student newspaper.

**A final A grade requires:**
- At least 90% of exercises completed at OK or + level.
- Final quiz completed at A or B level
- Completion of story assignments at A or B level.
- Completion of final article at A level.
- 90% and above attendance and active class participation.

**A final B grade requires:**
- 80% of exercises completed at OK or + level.
- Final quiz completed at B level or better
- Completion of story assignments at B level.
- Completion of final article at B level.
- 80% and above attendance and active class participation.

**A final C grade requires:**
- 70% of exercises completed at OK or + level.
- Final quiz completed at C level or better
- Completion of story assignments at a C level.
- Completion of final article at C level.
- 70% and above attendance and class participation.

**A final D grade requires:**
- 60% of exercises completed at OK or + level.
- Quiz completed at D level or better
- Completion of story assignments at D level.
- Completion of final article at D level.
- 60% and above attendance and class participation.

**W =** Formal withdrawal
F = Less than minimal passing achievement
I = Incomplete. Assigned at the discretion of the instructor. A temporary grade for a student who cannot complete a small part of the course because of circumstances beyond his or her control.

LEARNING RESOURCES

Required: Reporting for the Print Media, ninth edition by Fred Fedler.
Recommended: The Associated Press Stylebook

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

JOURNALISM 205

• Development and role of mass media and how it influences us.

• What is news? Discussion of factors that determine newsworthiness of events.

• Answering basic questions in a news story – 5W’s and H; the inverted pyramid story structure. ABCOH – Accuracy, attribution, balance, clarity, conciseness, objectivity, human interest.

• The press release – How to get publicity for your event.

• A short news story – Interview someone about a subject on campus or in the community. Write a short article to interest readers.

• The feature profile – A story based on an interview with an interesting person of your choice. Speaker: A professional feature writer

• The newscast/ news article – Find an issue or event and develop a story based on facts and quotes that is accurate, balanced and fair. Include visuals to help illustrate the story.

• TV news – Field trip to KITV to watch the 6 p.m. newscast, covering “breaking news.”

• Writing with a deadline – How to process information quickly and accurately.

• Editing for clarity, accuracy, grammar and style.

• Journalism ethics, detecting bias, libel law.

• The in-depth final news or feature article – Your choice of subject to explore in depth, using several sources, facts, quotes, human interest examples and background research and drawing on all the skills you’ve learned during the semester.

• Final news quiz – Covers basic concepts learned throughout the semester.

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DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to fully participate in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. Ann Lemke can be reached at 235-7448, lemke@hawaii.edu, or you may stop by Hale ‘Akoakoa 213 for more information.
**Writing Intensive (WI) Courses** are part of a University of Hawai‘i systemwide movement to incorporate more writing in courses from all disciplines. A WI course is a discipline-specific course in which writing plays a major integrated role. Students in course sections designated as a “WI” (preceding the course title in the Schedule of Classes) learn to understand course content through writing and to write in ways appropriate to that discipline.

English 100 is a prerequisite before students take the two required WI courses for the Associate in Arts degree. Students transferring to some bachelor’s degree campuses in the UH system may bring two or three WI courses with them to count for the bachelor’s degree. The hallmarks of a writing intensive course are:

- Writing promotes learning of course content.
- Writing is considered to be a process in which multiple drafts are encouraged.
- Writing contributes significantly to each student’s course grade.
- Students do a substantial amount of writing, a minimum of 4,000 words. Depending on the types of writing appropriate to the discipline, students may write critical essays or reviews, journal entries, lab reports, research reports or reaction papers.
- To allow for meaningful teacher-student interaction on each student’s writing, the class is restricted to 20 students.
- Individual conferences on writing assignments are required in WI courses at Windward CC.