



**eDynamicLearning**

CAREER & ELECTIVE COURSES



**Course Syllabus**



**Course Code:** EDL060

# Journalism: Investigating the Truth

## Course Description

Are you always the first one to know what’s going on at school or in your town? Maybe your Facebook or Instagram accounts are the reliable place for others to find the latest breaking news? If so, you are just the kind of person every online, print, and broadcast news outlet is searching for, and Journalism: Investigating the Truth is the perfect course for you! Learn how to write a lead that really “grabs” your readers, interview sources effectively, and write engaging news stories. You will explore the history of journalism and see how the modern world of social media can provide an excellent platform for news. Turn your writing, photography, and collaborative skills into an exciting and rewarding journalism career!

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## Lesson 1: The History of American Journalism

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### Lesson Summary

In this unit, you will learn about the changes in American journalism between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 21st and how advancements in technology helped speed these changes along. Focusing on key figures and events in American history, this unit will help you see the connection between each generation of journalism, from print to radio to television to digital. You'll see how everyone from William Randolph Hearst to Jon Stewart has changed the way we understand news—and how you, as reader and citizen, participate in it.

### Learning Objectives

- Identify the major historical trends in American journalism from the end of the 19th century into the 21st.
- Recognize the connection between the changes in journalism and the introduction of new technology.
- Understand how key events in American history reflect the changing trends in journalism.
- Recognize major figures in American journalism and their contributions.



## Lesson 2: New Media Versus Old Media

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### Lesson Summary

In this unit, you'll learn about how the Internet and the digital world we now live in has changed how the four major types of news media—newspapers, magazines, radio, and television—do their primary work. We'll first examine the focus of each medium, identifying how journalists tell their stories and what the focus of each medium is. We'll also discuss interesting figures and events within the newspaper, magazine, radio, and television worlds to demonstrate how the genre's focus is reflected. Then we will discuss how each of these traditional types of news media has been absolutely transformed by the digital world.

### Learning Objectives

- Identify the roles of each genre of news media and its unique approach to communicating the news.
- Analyze how the focus of each type of news media is reflected in particular stories, figures, and events.
- Discuss the definition of “new media” and how it has changed journalism.
- Explain how each type of news media has been affected uniquely by the Internet.



## Lesson 3: Press Law & Journalistic Ethics

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### Lesson Summary

Being a member of the press comes with serious responsibilities. It's not enough to tell a great story—journalists are also responsible for following the law, both international and American. But more than that, everything a journalist does should follow a set of ethics that goes beyond the law. In this unit, you'll learn the important basics of press law and its history, the code of ethics journalists should follow, and a few cases of journalists who have gone very wrong. By the end of this unit, you'll understand not only what a journalist can't do but also what every journalist should strive to do every day.

### Learning Objectives

- Understand the history of press law, including the Constitution and international development of copyright law.
- Identify the basic elements of press law, including copyright law and fair use exceptions.
- Understand the basic code of journalistic ethics.
- Analyze the difference between ethics and law.
- Examine how a few key examples crossed the line of journalistic ethics and see the consequences of those acts.



## Lesson 4: Understanding Rhetoric, Bias, and Point of View

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### Lesson Summary

Every journalist is a storyteller, and those stories have a structure. Understanding how to be the best journalist possible is more than just knowing the facts or finding a great person to interview—it's about understanding how to know your audience and speak directly to them. In this unit, you'll learn about rhetoric, or the act of speaking or writing, and more about the three key parts of that act: the author/speaker, the subject, and the audience. By the end of this unit, you'll understand how you can make your writing and speaking more powerful, in journalism or other media, by understanding your role within the rhetorical triangle.

### Learning Objectives

- Understand the basics of the rhetorical triangle, including your role as author or audience member.
- Identify how point of view and bias can change the way an author or speaker approaches a subject.
- Identify the role that bias plays in creating propaganda.
- Analyze how journalists use rhetorical appeals and, potentially, logical fallacies.
- Examine the dynamic relationship among audience, subject, and author/speaker, and understand how to adapt to different audience needs.



## Lesson 5: Photojournalism, Social Media, and Advertising

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### Lesson Summary

If you live an online life, as most of us do, you're probably more likely to respond to a picture than to words. Whether you are on Facebook or Twitter or someone's blog or a newspaper's website, when you see an interesting picture, you'll stop and "read" it much faster than if that story were told in words.

The power of the image has created an entire profession—photojournalism. But can photojournalists be replaced by cell phone cameras and Instagram? As social media affects journalism more and more, the changes to the way we tell stories continues to change as well. In this unit, we'll tackle that question, and show you that the world of photojournalism, social media, and advertising are linked around one thing—the power of the image.

### Learning Objectives

- Understand how photojournalism developed and changed based on technology.
- Explain the differences and similarities between journalism and photojournalism ethics.
- Identify the way photojournalism has been affected by the Internet and cell phone technology.
- Trace the beginnings of social media and how social networking affects journalism and journalists.
- Identify the types of advertising and advertising's relationship to journalism.



## Midterm Exam

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### Learning Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first five units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)





## Lesson 6: How to Write Stellar News Stories

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### Lesson Summary

When you pick up a newspaper or read online about the latest game, community event, or international crisis, you expect to find certain things in each story. You may not even recognize what those qualities are, but you know something is wrong if they are not there. News stories follow a similar pattern and, depending on their topic and focus, even a similar structure. In this unit, you'll learn about the different types of news stories and how you can create your own. You'll learn how to choose a topic, structure your story, and develop and write it following the journalism tradition—and get a chance to practice those skills in your own article!

### Learning Objectives

- Understand the different types of stories that make up journalistic writing.
- Identify the elements of news stories and replicate them.
- Structure a news story based on the journalistic outline.
- Plan and write a news story that fits the criteria for one of the types discussed in the unit.



## Lesson 7: Researching Your Story Wisely and Well

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### Lesson Summary

Journalists are asked to tell the world a story every single day—and their job is to tell the truth. The best way to make sure that you're telling the right story is to make sure that you have the right information. Researching sounds like such a boring task, but the truth is that you research all the time. Any time you ask Siri for the answer to a question or Google to find the directions to a new restaurant, you use research skills. In this unit, you'll learn how to approach research in a digital world, the best strategies to get the best information for your story, and how to decide if the source you've found is the best one.

### Learning Objectives

- Understand the role of research in journalism.
- Identify the difference between fact checking and knowledge-based journalism.
- Distinguish between a primary and secondary source and a credible and not credible source.
- Create a strategy for finding the information you need.
- Use key words and search engines/databases to find information.



## Lesson 8: Using Personal and Observational Sources

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### Lesson Summary

Journalism is all about using your senses and being on the scene. No one really believes that a story can be truly told from behind a computer screen. You can't capture the color and life of a story unless you're there—and that's the reporter's unique challenge. Reporters doing their job are on the ground, pencil or wireless recorder or cell phone in hand, recording what they see so that they can bring it back to their readers. In this unit, we'll talk about the types of sources that form the bulk of every reporter's information arsenal: observational and personal sources. You'll learn how to gather and use this information most effectively, as well as what can happen when these sources are not used as well as they could be.

### Learning Objectives

- Identify the differences between observational and personal sources.
- Understand how to find and cultivate good-quality sources.
- Create effective interview questions and conduct interviews well.
- Use source material to create compelling stories.



## Lesson 9: Preparing Posts for Publication

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### Lesson Summary

Every reporter and journalist produces stories that have to get the approval of one person: the news editor. Whether that editor oversees a newspaper section or a magazine as a whole or is responsible for supervising a broadcast newscast, the process of getting a story approved by an editor is the final hurdle for any journalist. Editors and producers look for not only interesting stories that contain good information but also error-free writing. Editors are, for lack of a better analogy, the “teachers” of the journalism world. They check work, suggest changes, demand revisions, and give approval when a final product meets their criteria. In this unit, we’ll talk about how you can take the skills you’ve already learned throughout your school years about the writing process and apply them to your writing as a journalist, as well as how to understand what an editor may be asking you to change. The revising process is the final part of a writer’s day—and perhaps the most important—so that’s what we’ll talk about here.

### Learning Objectives

- Understand the writing process and how it relates to journalism and writing under a deadline.
- Work step by step through a piece of writing to revise for content and edit for clarity and concision.
- Explore the role of an editor.
- Learn the meaning of proofreader marks used for noting grammatical errors and style.
- Identify and revise common grammatical and writing errors.
- Use attribution successfully in writing and understand the purpose behind it.



## Lesson 10: Understanding the Publication Process

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### Lesson Summary

If you could be a fly on the wall of a newsroom, either broadcast or daily newspaper, on any random day, you might be surprised at how similar the process of creating the news really is. From the morning meeting to assign stories to the pressure-filled race to go to press or on the air, reporters and editors and photojournalists are in a mad scramble not only to get the story right but also to get the story in on time. In this unit, you'll learn about the process of publication from the flow of a day to the layout of a news broadcast or newspaper. You'll learn the steps you need to create your own newspaper or news broadcast. Then you'll take the work you've been doing throughout the course and do just that!

### Learning Objectives

- Understand the steps of creating the content of a newspaper or news broadcast.
- Identify the parts of a news broadcast—including packages, teasers, art, and segments—and learn how to create them.
- Identify the four parts of a newspaper layout—headlines, text, art, and captions/cutlines—and tips to create them well.
- Apply this knowledge to create your own miniature version of a news broadcast or newspaper.



## Final Exam

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### Learning Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from units six to ten in this course – the last five units. (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)