

The Lantern Practicum

COMM2223

M 2:15 -- 4:05 pm (lab)

W/F 12:45 -- 2:05 pm (class)

Spring 2017 Journalism

Office: 275 Journalism Building

Lantern office phone: 614.247.7030

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Monday 10 am -- 2 pm

(or by appointment)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to *The Lantern*!

You are now part of the writing staff of an Ohio State institution that began in 1892. This class, in many ways, will function like a real newsroom. It will not be like any other class you've had at OSU. That's because the Lantern is a real news organization with a daily audience that extends across the globe.

Your goal: to fill *The Lantern*, its website and its social media channels with professional-grade Arts, Campus and Sports stories. You will develop your reporting and writing skills, focusing on the practice of journalism through the best way it can be taught, by practicing journalism. And you will further your multimedia and video reporting skills.

You will have at least 13 published articles by the end of the semester, and many of you will have more. You will learn to think, feel and act as reporters thirsting for news, striving to write and report.

All of you will build on the news writing and editing skills acquired in COMM 2221 to cover the OSU campus. You will talk to real people, get outside your comfort zone, develop expertise within your beats, and meet every deadline.

Your job: write clear, concise, organized and accurate articles, produce photos and multimedia pieces, and act professionally and responsibly based on journalism ethics.

COURSE COALS

By the time this class is over, you will know how to:

1. Report, write and produce various types of stories for *The Lantern*, TheLantern.com and Lantern TV.
2. Understand the practicality and details of media work and how much time and energy go into producing solid journalism.
3. Utilize multimedia and produce content beyond words on a page.

READINGS

Associated Press Stylebook

Online links provided through Carmen/Canvas.

All readings should be done prior to the assigned class period. You should note the difference between “Read” and “Resources” in Carmen/Canvas. Resources are helpful, but not required reading.

To best prepare for this class and writing exercises, read the online versions of *The Lantern*, *Columbus Dispatch*, *The Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *USA Today*, *CNN*, and *Fox News*.

Other great journalism resources include The Poynter Institute and Columbia Journalism Review. Read as much as you can from as many different sources as you can. The more you read, the better you’ll report and write.

GRADING

Final course grades will be calculated in the following way:

- **Professionalism and Tweets (50 points)**
- **Writing exercises (100 points)**
- **Editor feedback on your work (100 points)**
- **Multimedia and photo work (100)**
- **13 articles (50 points each = 650 points)**

These points tallied together will give you your final grade of the following percentages (100-93=A; 92-90=A-; 89-88=B+; 87-82=B; 81-80=B-; 79-78=C+; 77-72=C; 71-70=C-; 69-60=D; 59 - below=E).

Please Note: I am not able to negotiate grades, either during or after the semester.

INSTRUCTORMETHODS

This course is focused on improving your writing and reporting skills. So, as much as possible, this course will be focused on those “hands on” experiences that are designed to help you realize those two goals.

There is no textbook for this course, but there will be readings and other material that I will expect each of you to go through before class. Classes will include sometimes-short lectures and discussions designed to reinforce those points. Labs will feature more hands on experiences, and occasional guest talks from subject matter experts. Many labs will allow time for you to work on and finalize those stories. Both classes can and will include time for mandatory weekly meetings with your editors.

I believe more communication is better communication. At the end of every week you will receive from me an EMAILED reminder where we look ahead at assignments and goals coming in the next week. These are intended to keep us both on track. Please make sure you are receiving these reminders. If not, let me know ASAP. Please let me know also if you have other ideas for what might augment our class or better serve your learning experience.

My goal is to get to know each of you better as students and people, to help your academic goals throughout this semester and beyond. I encourage you to email and tweet any and all questions that arise, to share information you discover outside our class content, and to meet with me during office hours or beyond.

CLASS TOOLS

This class will operate without a textbook. However, you will be expected to access readings and course materials through links I've set up in Carmen. Please let me know if you're having any issues accessing them and we'll get those problems corrected.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Not all classes fit your schedule or your academic plan, and I understand that. Please know, however, that I very much wish to meet with you before you drop (especially the deeper we get into the semester) to see what we can do to work through any challenges together. If you do have questions about how to drop or the impact on your transcript or financial aid, please visit the Academic Advising website.

ASSIGNMENTS

Twitter Attendance and professionalism (50 points)

We take attendance through Twitter, which means every student gets credit for attendance by tweeting something insightful or asking a question from each class session, with the goal of engaging the outside world. Twitter is an important tool for all reporters, as you engage sources and promote your own brand and work product. To that end, you will not just tweet that you were in class. You must reach out to a source, tweet about the story in which you are working, send out a link to a published piece with some details. You can also pitch ideas to me this way. Use the **hashtag #LanternClass** for all posts. Please make sure to follow me (**@spencerhuntosu**) so I can put you in our class list. If you do not have a Twitter account, you will need to set one up.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

While working on your articles, you represent *The Lantern* and the School of Communication, as well as Ohio State as a whole. Please act responsibly and professionally. Any conduct unbecoming your role and responsibilities will impact your grade but, more importantly, will also impact your future career opportunities.

Writing Exercises (100 points)

We will have a writing exercise every Wednesday that will put your deadline writing skills to the test, and improve them. The writing exercise will be based off actual press releases and you will be asked to produce the first three graphs of the story you would publish on the Lantern's website. The exercise is intended to simulate a real life experience of writing under deadline.

Editor Feedback on your work (100 points)

Each Lantern editor that you work with will provide an evaluation of your performance (timeliness, willingness to rewrite, quality of story ideas, receptiveness to constructive comments, etc.) on a percentage scale. The amount of points they assign you will determine the percentage of these points assigned to your final grade. A part of this grade is also attendance at weekly editor meetings.

Multimedia, Video and Photo work (100 points)

Most stories are made more compelling by a photo, graphic or other image. For every article you create, you will need to shoot or submit at least one photo, record a video **OR** help coordinate photo or video assignments with your Lantern editor. This is an all or nothing grade - include these elements in every article you submit, and you will receive the points.

Please note: Students are expected to include video b-roll footage that can be used with stories **at least twice** during the course of the semester.

For those of you who have not shot video before, we will hold a session early on in the semester about how to do this and submit it to Lantern TV station managers. Sports reporters may face some difficulties filling the video requirement. We can discuss those situations individually.

To make sure you get these points, include the photos and videos along with your story submission in Dropbox. If you help arrange that photos are taken of the event for you, note that you have done that, so that I can confirm it with your editor.

Articles (13 articles @ 50 points each = 650 points)

You are responsible for developing 13 story ideas/assignments into articles for *The Lantern*. Unlike COMM 2221, where your goal was submission for a grade, your goal now is publication, and that means each article must achieve one of three levels before it will be graded:

1. The article is good enough for publication (as per a Lantern editor) and gets published.
2. The article is good enough for publication (as per a Lantern editor) and does not get published.
3. A Lantern editor deems the article not worthy of publication.

This means that articles may go through numerous revisions before they are finished, or they may be good to go on your first try.

DEADLINES – IMPORTANT!

Your lantern section editor will work with you to establish a deadline for each of your stories so that they will be ready for publication. So this is not like a class, in which a late submitted story earns a lower grade. Deadlines must be met.

When you file your story with your editor, file a copy of that story to the appropriately numbered class dropbox in Carmen. Each of you will have 13 separate dropboxes in which to file your stories. **IMPORTANT. If you do not file the story in the dropbox when you file the story with your editor, you will lose five points from the story. Stories handed in to the dropbox days after publication will receive this point deduction.**

There are 16 weeks in a semester and you will need to write at least 13 stories, so while you can go a week without filing a story, that will mean you need to write two stories the next week, and so on. That's why it's important to report, write and file at least one story a week. Students that's don't can't quickly find themselves in a big bind as the semester goes on.

This is really important: Any assignments that don't meet deadline will receive **zero points**. You don't want to have this problem. This is why it's critical to stay in touch with your editors and let them know of any issues as soon as they crop up. Your editors might be able to offer a suggestion that gets you back on track. Staying in touch and working out realistic deadlines with your editors will help you avoid issues that can really hurt your grade.

Why zero points? Deadlines are critically important in the news business. When you agree to do a story, you agree to meet that deadline. Missing deadlines creates a hole in a paper or a website that your editors were counting on you to fill. So you need to manage your time, and give yourself as much of it as you need to report, write, self-edit and hand in your stories.

Submission Guidelines

All stories will be submitted to dropbox as follows, or they will be edited, but not graded:

1. *Name the file (this is called a "slug") with this information: LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, ASSIGNMENT NAME, DATE*
2. Save the file as Word document.
3. Put the file in your FOLDER on DROPBOX

Include in the body of each article:

- YOUR NAME
- SUGGESTED HEADLINE
- CONTACT LIST with phone numbers and/or email for your sources, so I can touch base during the semester.

Failure to include any of these items will result in a five point deduction (up to 15 points)

DETAILS ON ARTICLES:

- You will be working a “beat” at *The Lantern*, with the goal of developing expertise, relationships with sources and a deeper understanding of issues.
- You are the master of your own story idea domain. *That means most of the ideas will be generated by you.* Some assignments will come from *Lantern* editors.
- You must have *at least* two human sources, but, more importantly, you must have sources that have expertise to speak on your article topic. Many stories would benefit from having more than two sources, so keep this in mind as you are reporting and writing a story that would satisfy editors and readers.
- **Opinion/Review articles.** First-person reviews of concerts and events have a place in *The Lantern* but they do not in this class. I cannot grade you as a reporter if you are your only source. Similarly, concert reviews with two sources/audience members stuck at the end will not do well in this class. You can, however, preview a concert or event, with the expectation that the sources will be the event organizers and the performers or their representatives.
- You get to write three of your 13 articles for a section other than the one you are assigned.
- If you find a great story idea for someone else’s beat, do not be afraid to share. Collaboration is a key to newsroom success and will earn you extra credit.
- We will seek a mix of news and feature stories, and I will guide you on which style to use with which articles.
- As convenient as they may be, we do not use friends, roommates, relatives, etc., as sources for your stories, photographs, graphics etc. This is a conflict of interest.
- Although you may not write about any activities, organizations, projects, companies, etc. in which you are involved in, you can share story ideas with fellow reporters.
- You get to write a headline for all of your articles!
- Please include contact info for the reporter(s) (including cell phone) in case editors have questions.
- As much as we love to share information, we do not share your stories with other classes.
- Stories done for credit/grade in this class cannot be used for credit in any other class.
- We are a paperless class, so all stories will be submitted digitally. No handwritten or printed stories will be accepted.

EXTRACREDIT

The total amount of extra credit available in this class is 30 points (3 percent). It can be earned in these ways:

- Do extra stories (over and above the 13 required)=5 points for each story
- Alert the newsroom to a breaking news story (1 point)
- Jump on a breaking news story (1 point)
- Share a tip that leads to another writer’s story (1 point)

COPY EDITING

Everyone in class will take a copy-editing test. If you pass and wish to be a copy editor, you will work about four hours per week (two two-hour shifts) and be graded on your efforts. You will then need to write 10 stories instead of 13 for the semester.

GRADING YOUR STORIES

Every assignment starts off with 100 percent, but avoidable challenges that will result in points being deducted include:

- Errors in fact: 10 points (out of 50)
- Misspelled names: 10 points (out of 50)
- Missing facts in lede or nut graph: 3-5 points
- Unclear writing: 3-5 points
- Grammatical errors: 1 point
- Misspelled words: 1 point
- Punctuation and style errors: 1 point

LIBEL

Any story that includes libelous material will result in a zero for the assignment. Examples would be if you describe someone as a murderer in your story before he or she has been convicted, or if you misidentify a subject and implicate someone not guilty of a crime.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS:

College is intended to prepare you for the real world, and for many --- especially in journalism --- your undergraduate career is like a first job. You can and will make a lot of mistakes here, but the goal is to learn from them and not to make them again.

To that end, I will treat you professionally, and need you to do the same. Behaviors that work in the “real world” and here include:

1. Coming on time and ready to work on the material for the day. Read the material on the links before you come to class. If you do not do that work and we have to “catch you up,” you are impacting everyone else in class.
2. Staying in class: I know you have things to do, but we have committed to being in class together for our scheduled class time.
3. You are missed when you are absent: Missing class when we are doing an activity can and will cost you attendance and writing exercise points in the near term and knowledge in the long term.
4. Treating classmates/coworkers with respect: Everyone’s ideas have merit, and allowing a civil discussion, even when we disagree, is a key to future success.
5. Dressing for success: I know this class is college, but you never know who might come to class who could help you with an internship or guide your

- academic or professional career. Please know I don't want to discuss appropriate class dress with you, but I will if need be.
6. Deadlines are deadlines: Assignments must be submitted by the editors' stated deadlines, and submitted shortly thereafter to the dropbox for this class.
 7. I believe in using social media in class. I encourage you to use your devices, and require Twitter for attendance. Remember that, if I can see what you post, so can future employers. Please be responsible about how to present yourself to the world.
 8. To that end, surfing the web or sending non-course email during class is disrespectful and unprofessional.
 9. Lying, cheating or stealing will get you fired: In this class, if you plagiarize or fabricate anything you will **fail the course**, and I will report you to academic misconduct, even if you accidentally do it while taking your notes. We have no wiggle room here.
 10. Read *The Lantern* and the other news organizations' Web sites. Listen to at least one news broadcast every day. You cannot be a good writer or reporter unless you see how it is done in the real world.
 11. Ask questions when you don't understand something.
 12. Don't just spell check...PROOFREAD and SELF EDIT!
 13. Have fun. We get to find out a bunch of cool, interesting things and share them with other people who need to know them. What better job can there be?

SYLLABUS

Every effort has been made to create a syllabus that is as comprehensive and accurate as possible, but each class is a living entity and changes may arise. Please know I will notify you in writing as soon as any syllabus change may arise.

SAFE & HEALTHY

Keeping students healthy and preventing the spread of illness is important to The Ohio State University. Students are encouraged to stay home if they are sick and may be asked to leave class if they are coughing/sneezing. Students who are sick and cannot attend class must contact Prof. Hunt *BEFORE* class to receive class any materials and turn in assignments via the drop box or e-----mail. If you do not notify Prof. Hunt your assignment will not be accepted.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-31-02). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

MANAGING STRESS

College can be a stressful time, and I am always here to help you --- in this class and beyond. If, however, you feel you need more support, I encourage you to reach out to the Student Advocacy Center at 292.1111. They will always work with professors on your behalf.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Lecture/Discussion</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Week 1 M 1/9	1 – 1 Welcome to the Lantern	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to the newsroom • Introductions • Go through syllabus • Go through beats 	Meet with editors in the Lantern, set weekly meeting schedule, Staff photos taken.
W 1/11	1 – 2 Finding stories.	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools for reporting • Finding stories 	Copy Editor Test Press IDs distributed
F 1/13	1 – 3 The Challenge of Newswriting	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of a strong story • First Five Graphs 	
Week 2 M 1/16	<u>NO CLASS</u>	<u>LABOR DAY</u>	<u>NO CLASS</u>
W 1/18	2 – 1 Writing the Lede	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the elements of a strong lede • Different types of ledes 	Writing exercise Practice – not graded
F 1/20	2 – 2 Using the best quotes	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying quotes • When to paraphrase 	Discussion practice writing exercise

Week 3 M 1/23	3-1 The art of the interview	Lecture/Discussion There are no stupid questions...	Writing exercise 1
W 1/25	3-2 Working with the gatekeepers	Lecture/Discussion Working with com. professionals	Panel discussion with OSU PIOs Feedback on
F 1/27	3-3 Developing sources on your beat	Lecture/Discussion Beat Basics Working with Sources	
Week 4 M 1/30	4-1 Reporting Traps	Lecture/Discussion How to recognize and avoid reporting traps. Tips and techniques	Discussion Writing exercise 1/Issues with Practicum stories.
W 2/1	4-2 Breaking News	Lecture/Discussion What counts Urgency and Accuracy	Writing exercise 2
F 2/3	4-3 Shooting Video	Lecture/Discussion Video production and composition	
Week 5 M 2/6	5-1 Translate the Technical	Lecture/Discussion Dealing with/translating difficult technical language in your beat.	Discussion Writing exercise 2
W 2/8	5-2 Journalism Ethics	Lecture/Discussion Traditional media ethics	Writing exercise 3
F 2/10	5-3 Digital Journalism Ethics	Lecture/Discussion How digital alters tradition	

Week 6 M 2/13	6 – 1 Working with Data	Lecture/Discussion Why data and precision reporting is important	Using Excel as a reporting tool W.E. 3 feedback
T 2/15	6 – 2 Enterprise/ Investigative reporting	Lecture/Discussion What does it take to report the big, investigative series?	Writing Exercise 4
F 2/17	6 – 3 Newswriting challenges	Lecture/Discussion Writing the long story	
Week 7 M 2/20	7 – 1 Working with FOI	Lecture/Discussion Your rights to documents and records.	Writing out an FOI letter W.E. 4 feedback
W 2/22	7 – 2 Photography	Lecture/Discussion Photo composition Captions	Writing Exercise 5
F 2/24	7 – 3 Ending stories	Lecture/Discussion Different <u>ways to end</u> stories	
Week 8 M 2/27	8 – 1 Editing: what to do	Lecture/Discussion Editing checklists and how to self edit. Understanding the editing process	Identify style grammar errors W.E. 5 feedback
W 3/1	8 – 2 Editing complicated stories.	Lecture/Discussion Break down and reorganize an article	Writing Exercise 6
F 3/3	8 – 3 The Lantern by the numbers	Lecture/Discussion Taking a look at the first half of stories through analytics	Discussion of best worst stories.

Week 9 M 3/6	9 – 1 Social media in breaking and live reporting.	Lecture/Discussion Social media in reporting Tools you can use	Working with Social Media reporting tools W.E. 5 feedback
W 3/8	9 – 2 Establishing brand identity in social media	Lecture/Discussion Brand identity	Writing Exercise 7
F 3/10	Writing Work Day	Reporting on your stories	
Week 10 M 3/13	NO CLASS	<u>Spring Break</u>	<u>NO CLASS</u>
W 3/15	NO CLASS	<u>Spring Break</u>	<u>NO CLASS</u>
F 3/17	NO CLASS	<u>Spring Break</u>	<u>NO CLASS</u>
Week 11 M 3/20	11 – 1 Specialized reporting topics 1	Lecture/Discussion Sports Government Health	W.E. 7 feedback
W 3/22	11 – 2 Specialized reporting topics 2	Lecture/Discussion Race and gender Crime and police Environment and Science	Writing Exercise 8
F 3/24	Writing Work Day	Reporting on your stories	
Week 12 M	12 – 1 Media management: How digital is disrupting	Lecture/Discussion Uncertainty	W.E. 8 feedback

W 3/29	12 – 2 News Values	Lecture/Discussion What news consumers want Why local news is so important	Writing Exercise 9
F 3/31	Writing Work Day	Reporting on your stories	
Week 13 M 4/3	13 – 1 Rethinking Journalism	Lecture/Discussion Changing expectations Changes in storytelling	Writing Exercise 9 feedback
W 4/5	13 – 2 Alternate Storytelling	Lecture/Discussion The multimedia form of storytelling	Final Writing Exercise
F 4/7	Writing Work Day	Reporting on your stories	
Week 14 M 4/10	14 – 1 Brand Journalism	Lecture/Discussion An old business practice returns. What it means	Writing Exercise 10 feedback
T 4/12	14 – 2 Your online brand	Lecture/Discussion Establish your digital self. Build your online resume	
Th 4/14	Writing Work Day	Reporting on your stories	

Week 15 M 11/21	15 – 1 Breaking down the Lantern	Lecture/Discussion The analytics of The Lantern What worked, what didn't	
W 11/22	15 – 2 Wrapping up	Lecture/Discussion Discussing final week Extra Credit opportunities	
F 11/24	Writing Work Day	Reporting on your last stories	
Week 16 M 11/28	Class, if needed	Final Stories handed in	

