

# Lantern Independent Study

SP25~275 Journalism  
Office: 275 Journalism  
Office Phone: 614.247.7030  
Office Hours: 9-Noon M,T,Th or  
by appointment

Professor: Spencer Hunt  
E-Mail: [hunt.754@osu.edu](mailto:hunt.754@osu.edu)  
Cell: 614.264.5000  
Twitter: @spencerhuntosu

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to *The Lantern*!

In this course, you will help fill *The Lantern*, or *Lantern TV*, and their websites with professional—quality Arts, Campus and Sports stories, photos or serve as design and copy editors. Regardless of your major or prior training, you will build on the fundamental writing, editing, researching and reporting skills you have acquired inside and outside of classrooms and use them to cover the OSU campus. You will get to talk to live human beings and become experts on various campus topics.

The overall goal: to grow your skills as a student journalist, through reporting and writing, photography, design and editing.

## COURSE GOALS

1. Report, write, design edit: all to help produce various types of stories for *The Lantern*, *TheLantern.com* and *Lantern TV*.
2. Work with *Lantern* and *Lantern TV* editors to complete stories suitable for publication or TV packages suitable for airing.
3. Utilize multimedia and produce content beyond words on a page.
4. Behave like a working journalist.

## AVAILABLE RESOURCES:

*AP Style Book* or Online: <http://www.apstylebook.com/online/>

**The Lantern in print and online and Lantern TV**

## GRADING

This course is pass-fail. That means if you come in for your newsroom shift and write articles that get published in *The Lantern*, or produce video packages for *Lantern TV*, you will pass. The actual grade received is either an “S” for satisfactory, or a “U” for unsatisfactory. These marks do not affect your grade point average, but they do appear on your transcript.

You course grade will be calculated as follows:

- **1 credit: one newsroom hour/week, minimum of 4 stories or video packages/semester**
- **2 credits: two newsroom hours/week, 8 stories or packages /semester**
- **3 credits: three newsroom hours/week, 12 stories or packages /semester**
- **design team: assist with four print night layouts and/or produce graphics per credit hour**
- **photography: provide four photos and 1 photo story per credit hour**
- **copy editing: complete one print night shift per week for eight weeks for 1 credit hour (max two credit hours)**

### **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**

#### **Multimedia Training**

If you are interested in working with *Lantern TV*, each of you **must** attend a training session with Lantern TV multimedia editors to learn how to properly use video cameras, audio equipment and editing software needed to produce a finished package or the multimedia elements for your Lantern story. This must be done before you can shoot, capture and edit something for the website. I will provide training times the first week of semester.

Most stories, if not all of them, are more compelling with a photo, graphic or other image. For every article you create, you will shoot and submit to your Lantern editor (and me) at least one photo and/or record a video. You will also help coordinate “art” assignments with your Lantern editor.

This is an all or nothing grade—include these elements in a publishable form in every article or package you submit, and you will receive the points.

#### **Reporter Training**

If you have never worked as a reporter before, you can attend at least three one-hour sessions to go over the basics of reporting and writing. These sessions will be scheduled by me. Attendance is not mandatory. However, they can be helpful for someone who hasn’t reported or written. The sessions will take the place of at least some of the time you are expected to work in the newsroom each week. They will include writing exercises to get you familiar with daily news journalism form and style.

### **Story Pitches + Articles/Video packages**

By Sunday of each week, you will submit by email two to three pitches to an appropriate Lantern or Lantern TV editor (campus, arts, sports) and to me. These pitches will include an idea, a plan of action (including potential interview and other sources), and a proposed deadline. The format for these pitches includes: Slug, Summary, Possible Contacts, Ideal reporter/Lantern personnel involved, Graphic, video and photo suggestions. Ideas deemed news worthy will be developed. If not, editors can also assign a story that can be developed in their place.

You are responsible for developing original content for The Lantern and Lantern TV. Your goal is not just submission—it is publication. That means each article/package must achieve one of three levels before it will be graded:

1. It is good enough for publication/airing (as per an editor) and is published.
2. It is good enough for publication/airing (as per an editor) and does not get published.
3. A Lantern editor deems the article/package not worthy of publication.

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

### **DETAILS ON ARTICLES:**

- You are the master of your own story idea domain. That means the majority of ideas will be generated for you, by you. Some assignments will come from Lantern editors. I encourage you to think outside the box and seek news and features everywhere. Everything is potentially a story idea. We will work together to refine, but don't be afraid a pitch is "bad." Let me help you refine it!
- Aim for at least at least two human sources but, more importantly, you must have sources that have expertise to speak on your article topic.
- 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.
- 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 stories will be accepted.

**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 implicating someone not guilty of the crime.

## **WORKING HOURS**

Time spent in the newsroom is constructive and informative. So a key condition of this class is that for every credit hour you take, you spend at least that much time in the newsroom each week.

I know that everyone's schedule is different, but good journalism is a collaborative effort and cannot be done in a vacuum. To that end, students must work with their editors so that, as much as possible, the one to three hours that must be spent at The Lantern is spent working alongside the editors and fellow reporters.

## **HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS:**

College is intended to prepare you for the real world. For many students—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.

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

1. Spend time in The Lantern, and be ready to work on the material for the day.
2. You are missed when you are absent: When you don't come to the newsroom, we notice, and you are missed personally and for your contributions.
3. Treating coworkers with respect: Everyone's ideas have merit, and allowing a civil discussion, even when we disagree, is a key to future success.
4. Dressing for success: I know this is college, but you never know who might come to the newsroom or who you might meet on assignment who could help you with an internship or guide your academic or professional career. Pajamas are for sleeping. Swimsuits are for beaches. Please know I don't want to discuss appropriate dress with you, but I will if need be.
5. Deadlines are deadlines: Assignments must be submitted by The Lantern deadlines and will not be graded if late.
6. 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.

7. 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.
8. Ask questions when you don't understand something.
9. Don't just spell check...PROOFREAD and SELF EDIT!
10. Have fun. We get to find out a bunch of cool, interesting things and share them with other people who need to know them.

### **OFFICE HOURS**

My office hours are listed on the front of the syllabus, and I would love to meet with you to get you extra, one-on-one article assistance or just to hang out. Everyone will need to set up a meeting with me in the first two weeks of the semester to talk about your semester goals. If you do not come during my office hours or schedule that meeting by the end of the third week, it will significantly impact your ability to receive a passing "grade" for the class.

### **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.*

### **LIBEL and PLAGIARISM**

Any story that includes libelous material or material that is someone else's work but represented as your own 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. Another example would be directly copying Ohio State's written accounts of sports games.

### **Chat GPT/AI in the classroom**

The use of AI in the writing of emails and messages is glamorized in commercials, but seldom are successful in writing new stories. Programs like ChatGPT are designed to provide assistance in generating human-like text responses based on given prompts. In this course, you may use AI tools to brainstorm, come up with ideas, improve your writing, or explore complex concepts. However, it is essential to remember the programs like ChatGPT should complement your efforts, not replace them.

You are permitted to use AI tools in the following ways:

- **Brainstorming:** Used to generate ideas, concepts or potential solutions to specific problems or assignments.
- **Writing Assistance:** Used to enhance your OWN writing, receive suggestions on sentence structure, grammar and style.
- **Concept Exploration:** Used to gain insights into challenging topics, explore different perspectives and deepen your understanding of course materials.

### **Responsible Use and Academic Integrity**

Though AI can be a valuable resource, it is crucial to uphold academic integrity and responsible use. Plagiarism and cheating are strictly prohibited and will result in a report to COAM. When using AI tools, you must always provide appropriate

attribution if you incorporate any generated content into your assignments or projects.

### **Limitations of AI**

Keep in mind that an AI is a machine-learning model and has its limitations. It may not always produce accurate or reliable information. As such, you must critically evaluate the responses generated and verify that information from reliable sources before incorporating it into your work.

### **Support and guidance**

If you are unsure about the appropriate use of AI tools or have any questions related to its use, please ASK before you use and submit!

### **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 come to the newsroom during your regular hour(s) must contact Prof. Hunt *BEFORE your newsroom time*.

### **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](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.

**Food Security** (<https://www.buckeyefoodalliance.org/>, 614-688-2508). The Ohio State University is committed to ensuring that all students have access to adequate and healthy food. Any undergraduate or graduate student with a BuckID may confidentially use the Buckeye Food Alliance food pantries. No proof of need is required. The pantry is located in Lincoln Tower, Suite 150 (1800 Cannon Dr., Columbus, OH 43210). Check the website or call for current hours.

### **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.