

The Lantern Practicum

COMM2223

M 2:15 - 4:05 pm (270 Journalism Bldg.)

T/Th 2:20 - 3:40pm (034 Lazenby Hall)

Autumn 2020

Office: 275 Journalism Building

Lantern office phone: 614.247.7030

Lantern office hours:

Monday 10am - 1pm

(or by appointment)

Professor: Spencer Hunt

email: hunt.754@osu.edu

Cell: 614.264.5000

Twitter: [@spencerhuntosu](https://twitter.com/spencerhuntosu)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to *The Lantern*!

This class will not be like any other class you've had at OSU. Why? You are now part of an Ohio State institution that got its start in 1881. That, in and of itself, is unique.

In many ways, this class will function like a real newsroom. That's because you are now a reporter for *The Lantern*, a digital news organization with an audience that extends across the globe.

Your goal: to fill *The Lantern*'s website, its social media channels and the newspaper it prints twice weekly 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 14 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 - seeing things others can't, going where others aren't allowed, learning what's important and meeting deadlines.

You will build on the news writing and editing skills you 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 grow as journalists.

That means writing clear, concise, original and accurate articles, producing strong photos and multimedia pieces, and acting professionally in a manner rooted in journalism ethics.

COURSE GOALS

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.
4. Behave like a working journalist.

READINGS

Associated Press Stylebook
Online links provided through Canvas.

All readings should be done prior to the assigned class period. You should note the difference between “Read” and “Resources” in 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 (50 points)**
- **Multimedia and photo work (100)**
- **14 articles (50 points each = 700 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.

INSTRUCTOR METHODS

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 and classes will allow time to work with me and your editors to help write and finalize those stories. The Monday lab class will include time for mandatory weekly meetings with your editors.

I believe more communication is better communication. Toward that goal, I will be sending several emails throughout the course of the semester as reminders for upcoming class subjects and to set new goals. 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 Canvas. Please let me know if you’re having any issues accessing them and we’ll get those problems corrected.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

We are conducting this class in an unprecedented time, a pandemic-inspired public health crisis. I have made the choice that I want to be in a classroom working in person with students who want to become journalists. To do this safely, we must be responsible to ourselves and to each other.

So, if you feel ill, or if you feel you should isolate at home because you might become sick, then that is what you should do. I will conduct each class with a live Zoom link, and I will record each session so that if you miss it for any reason you can still view it. Live Zoom links also will be available for weekly editor meetings and writing exercises will be available via Carmen. So, it will be just as easy to meet class goals from home as it will be in person.

In addition, the University policy on how we will conduct ourselves in the classroom is clear:

All students, faculty and staff are required to comply with and stay up to date on all university safety and health guidance (<https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu>), which includes wearing a face mask in any indoor space and maintaining a safe physical distance at all times. Non-compliance will be warned first and disciplinary actions will be taken for repeated offenses.

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.

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. This conduct includes following the SPJ code of ethics, which you will find in Module 1-1 of Carmen. It is one of your first required readings.

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. 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.

Writing Exercises (100 points)

We will have a writing exercise each week that will put your deadline writing skills to the test and improve them. The writing exercise will be based off actual press releases, statements – even social media posts - and you will be asked to produce the first three paragraphs 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 (50 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 produce one video package as a part of this grade. Given the pandemic, the video package must be completed before Oct. 15.

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 Lantern TV station managers. These assignments always work best with your assigned beat. However, there will be a sign up in which you will pick two weeks over the course of the semester to work with Lantern TV to complete this assignment. Completion of the assignment will be a submission of video b-roll to Lantern TV.

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 (14 articles @ 50 points each = 700 points)

You are responsible for developing 14 story ideas/assignments into articles for *The Lantern*. Unlike COMM2221, 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 Carmen assignment in Canvas. Each of you will have 14 separate Carmen assignments in which to file your stories.

IMPORTANT. If you do not file the story in the Carmen assignment when you file the story with your editor, you will lose five points from the story. Stories handed in to the Carmen assignment days after publication will receive this point deduction.

There are 16 weeks in a semester, and you will need to write at least 14 stories, so if 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 who don't can 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 Carmen assignment as follows, or they won't get 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 CARMEN ASSIGNMENT

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 14 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.

EXTRA CREDIT

The total amount of extra credit available in this class is 25 points (3 percent). It can be earned in these ways:

- Do extra stories (over and above the 14 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 11 stories instead of 14 for the semester. Please note that due to the pandemic, this work will likely be done remotely and not within the newsroom.

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 (equals two letter grades)
- Misspelled names: 10 points
- 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 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.

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 Carmen assignment 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 me *BEFORE* class to receive class any materials and turn in assignments via the Carmen assignment or email. If you do not notify me your assignment will not be accepted.

PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF (Your Mental Health):

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing.

If you are, or someone you know, is suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling 614--292--5766. CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on-call counselor when CCS is closed at 614-292-5766.

If you are thinking of harming yourself or need a safe, non-judgmental place to talk, or if you are worried about someone else and need advice about what to do, 24-hour emergency help is also available through the Suicide Prevention Hotline (Columbus: 614-221-5445 / National: 800-273-8255); or text (4hope to 741741); or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org

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.

COVID-19 ACCOMMODATIONS

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university's request process, managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss

options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

CLASS SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Lecture/Discussion</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Week 1 T 8/25	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 your editors. Staff photos taken.
Th 8/27	1-2 Finding stories.	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tools for reporting • Finding stories 	Copy Editor Test
Week 2 M 8/31	2-1 The Challenge of Newswriting	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of a strong story • First Five Graphs 	Press IDs distributed
T 9/1	2-2 Writing the Lede	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the elements of a strong lede • Different types of ledes 	
Th 9/3	2-3 Avoiding the Topic Lede	Lecture/Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use what's compelling • Save boring for later 	Writing exercise Practice – not graded
Week 3 M 9/7	NO CLASS	LABOR DAY	NO CLASS

T 9/8	3-1 The Anecdotal Lede	Lecture/Discussion Pros and Cons When it works and why	Feedback on Practice Writing Exercise
Th 9/10	3-2 Writing the Nut Graph	Lecture/Discussion Identifying context How it works and why	Writing exercise 1
Week 4 M 9/14	4-1 Shooting Video	Lecture/Discussion How to frame, and capture broadcast quality video	Guest Lecturer Bethany Barker Discuss Writing Exercise 1
T 9/15	4-2 Working with the Gatekeepers	Lecture/Discussion Panel with OSU spokespeople (Off the record)	
Th 9/17	4-3 Context is King	Lecture/Discussion Making sure everyone understands	Writing exercise 2
Week 5 M 9/21	5-1 The art of the Interview	Lecture/Discussion There are no stupid questions...	Discuss Writing Exercise 2
T 9/22	5-2 Choosing the Best Quotes	Lecture/Discussion Identifying quotes that don't echo but advance your story	
Th 9/24	5-3 Developing Your Beat/Sources	Lecture/Discussion Beat Basics Working with Sources	
Week 6 M 9/28	6-1 Reporting Traps	Lecture/Discussion Common problems and how to recognize and avoid them	Writing Exercise 3

T 9/29	6-2 Translate the Technical	Lecture/Discussion Dealing with/translating difficult technical language in your beat.	Discuss writing exercise 3
Th 10/1	6-3 The Developing Story	Lecture/Discussion What counts Urgency and Accuracy	Writing Exercise 4
Week 7 M 10/5	7-1 Breaking News	Lecture/Discussion How to face the most challenging tests. Standards for reporting, writing	Discuss Writing Exercise 4
T 10/6	7-2 Enterprise/ Investigative reporting	Lecture/Discussion What does it take to report the big, investigative series?	
Th 10/8	7-3 Photography	Lecture/Discussion Photo Composition Captions	Guest Lecturer Leonardo Carrizo Writing Exercise 5
Week 8 M 10/12	8-1 Working with Data and Math	Lecture/Discussion How Excel works as a reporting tool.	Discuss Writing Exercise 5
T 10/13	8-2 Journalism Ethics	Lecture/Discussion Challenges to traditional journalism.	
Th 10/15	8-3 Bias and Truth in Daily Journalism	Lecture/Discussion Avoiding bias and the appearance of it.	Writing Exercise 6
Week 9 M 10/19	9-1 Online Records with the Dispatch	Lecture/Discussion Taking a look at the first half of stories through analytics.	Working with Guest Lecturer Holly Zachariah via Zoom

T 10/20	9-2 The Lantern, By the Numbers	Lecture/Discussion Taking a look at the first half of stories through analytics.	Discuss Writing Exercise 6
Th 10/22	9-3 Ending stories	Lecture/Discussion As important as you begin, how to end stories	Writing Exercise 7
Week 10 M 10/26	10-1 Digital Journalism Ethics	Lecture/Discussion How Digital adds new ethical concerns	Discuss Writing Exercise 7
T 10/27	10-2 Newswriting Challenges	Lecture/Discussion Writing the Long Story	
Th 10/29	10-3 Editing: what to do	Lecture/Discussion Editing checklists and how to self-edit.	Writing Exercise 8
Week 11 M 11/2	11-1 Editing complicated stories.	Lecture/Discussion Break down and reorganize an article	Discuss Writing Exercise 8
T 11/3	11-2 Social media in live reporting.	Lecture/Discussion Social media in reporting Tools you can use	
Th 11/5	11-3 Establishing brand identity in social media	Lecture/Discussion Brand identity	Writing Exercise 9

Week 12 M 11/9	12-1 Media Management	Lecture/Discussion How Digital is Disrupting the News	W.E. 9 feedback
T 11/10	12-2 Specialized reporting topics	Lecture/Discussion Sports GovernmentHealth	
Th 11/12	12-3 The Reporter/Editor Challenge	Lecture/Discussion Reporters face the editors in the final writing exercise	Final Writing Exercise!
Week 13 M 11/16	13-1 Special Reporting Issues	Lecture/Discussion Race and gender Crime and police	Discuss Writing Exercise 10
T 11/17	13-2 Your Future and the Lantern	Lecture/Discussion How the Lantern figures beyond this class	
Th 11/19	13-3 Rethinking Journalism	Lecture/Discussion Changing expectations Changes instorytelling	
Week 14 M 11/23	14-1 Alternate Storytelling	Lecture/Discussion The multimedia form of storytelling	
T 11/24	14-2 Brand Journalism	Lecture/Discussion An old business practice returns.	
Th 11/26	NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING	NO CLASS

Week 15 M 11/30	15-1 Internships and career goals	Lecture/Discussion Free vs Paid Internships pros and cons	
T 12/1	15-2 Lantern by the Numbers II	Lecture/Discussion Looking at the semester through analytics	
Th 12/3	15-3 Wrapping Up	Lecture/Discussion Making this class better	