# The Lantern Practicum

# **COMM2223**

M 2:15 - 4:05 pm (lab) W/F 12:45 - 2:05pm (class)

Spring 2020

Office: 275 Journalism Building Lantern office phone: 614.247.7030

Lantern office hours: Monday 9 am -12 pm (or by appointment) Professor: Spencer Hunt email: hunt.754@osu.edu Cell: 614.264.5000

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome to *The Lantern*!

You are now part of an Ohio State institution that got its start in 1881. And that means this class will not be like any other you've had. Why? You are a reporter for the Lantern. In this class, your work gets published, and that's an exciting thing.

In many ways, this class will function like a real newsroom. That's because *The Lantern*, is a digital news organization that has an international audience. You will operate and contribute to that, so we have to work in this class in a way that works in the world.

You will produce polished and professional Arts, Campus and Sports stories for *The Lantern*'s website, its social media channels and the newspaper it prints twice weekly. You will develop your reporting and writing skills through the only real way it can be taught - by doing it. And you will further your multimedia and video reporting skills.

You will have at least 14 published articles by the end of the semester. Many of you will have more.

You will build on the skills you acquired in COMM 2221 to cover the Ohio State campus. You will interview real people, develop expertise within your beats, write stories, take photos and video and meet deadlines.

That means writing clear, concise, original and accurate articles, producing strong photos and multimedia pieces, and acting professionally and ethically as a journalist.

### **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*.
- 2. Understand the rigors and logistics of media work and the work required to produce quality journalism.
- 3. Use multimedia and produce content beyond words on a page.

### **READINGS**

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 they are 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 scan *Google News*.

Refer, constantly, to the Associated Press and Lantern style books. This is important as these are the writing rules every working professional journalist must follow. AP represents the universal rules. The Lantern style governs situations specific to Ohio State, students, faculty and issues specific to this university.

This gets said in every journalism class: Read as much as you can from as many different sources as you can. It's helpful in this class, because as a reporter and writer, you get better when you read superior work on similar stories.

### **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.

### **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, but there is material that I will expect each of you to read through before class. Classes will include lectures and discussions designed to reinforce those points. The Monday labs will feature a field trip to *The Dispatch* for a session with working journalists, guest talks from subject matter experts and weekly news meetings with Lantern editors.

I will send emails as reminders for upcoming class topics, trips and deadlines. Please make sure you see and read these emails. If not, let me know ASAP.

My goal is to improve your reporting, your writing, and to help you achieve your academic and career goals. I am committed to this because I believe this is an important and valuable skill to develop, regardless of your post college plans. 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.

Where office hours are concerned, I have them listed at the top of the syllabus, but in general I am in the news room by 8 a.m, and, if I'm not in class, I'm generally there until at least 5 p.m. If the office door is open, walk in.

### **CLASS TOOLS**

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.

### WITHDRAWALPOLICY

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. 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 <code>hashtag #LanternClass</code> for all posts. Please make sure to follow me <code>(@spencerhuntosu)</code>. 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. 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.

### 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. Each writing exercise, 10 in all, 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)

The Lantern editors you work with will provide an evaluation of your performance (timeliness, willingness to rewrite, quality of story ideas, receptiveness to constructive comments, etc.) A part of this grade is also attendance at weekly editor meetings. At least five points of your editor grade will be deducted if you fail to attend at least one meeting with your editors as they go through your story.

### 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 *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. Students are expected to include video b-roll footage that can be used with stories at least twice this semester.

For those of you who have not shot video before, we will hold a hands-on class session that will offer basic and expectations for video suitable to submit to Lantern TV producers. These assignments always work best with your assigned beat. Lantern TV producers will attend each weekly news meeting and offer input on stories that they believe would be good for video. **You will not edit the video.** Completion of the assignment will be a submission of video and video b-roll to Lantern TV.

To make sure you get these points, include the photos and videos along with your story submission in your Carmen assignments along with the stories you submit. 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 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 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 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. <u>Students that don't</u> 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:

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□ 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)

#### **ARTICLES:**

You will be working a "beat" at <i>The Lantern</i> , 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.

П	<b>Opinion/Review articles</b> . 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.
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	tal amount of extra credit available in this class is 20 points. It can be earned
	se 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-hours hifts) and be graded on your efforts. You will then need to write 11 stories instead of 14 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: 5 points (out of 50)
Missing facts in lede or nut graph: 3-5 points
Unclear writing in lede or nut graph: 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 mistakes here, but the goal is to learn from them and not 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. 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 am 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. 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. We have no wiggle room here.
- 9. Ask questions when you don't understand something.
- 10. Don't just spell check...PROOFREAD and SELF EDIT!
- 11. 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 email. If you do not notify Prof. Hunt 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 Rule3335-31-02). 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 1/6	1 – 1 Welcome to the Lantern	Lecture/Discussion  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 1/8	1 – 2 Finding stories.	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> □ Tools for reporting □ Finding stories	Copy Editor Test
F 1/10	1–3The Challenge of Newswriting	Lecture/Discussion  □ Elements of a strong story □ First Five Graphs	Press IDs distributed
Week 2 M 1/13	2 – 1 Writing the Lede	Lecture/Discussion  Identifying the elements of a strong lede Different types of ledes	Weekly news meeting with Editors
W 1/15	2-2 Avoiding the Topic Lede	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> □ Writing a compelling lede	Writing lab with ledes
F 1/17	2-3 Writing the Nutgraph/ Anecdotal Ledes	Lecture/Discussion  ☐ defining the nutgraph ☐ How to identify context and impact	Writing exercise Practice – not graded

Week 3			
M 1/20	NO CLASS	MLK HOLIDAY	NO CLASS
W 1/22	3 – 1 Using the best quotes	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> ☐ Identifying quotes  When to paraphrase	Discussion practice writing exercise
F 1/24	3–2 The art of the interview	Lecture/Discussion There are no stupid questions	Writing Exercise
Week 4 M 1/29	4 – 1 Reporting Traps	Lecture/Discussion  How to recognize and avoid  reporting traps. Tips and  techniques	Discuss WE 1 Meet with editors
W 1/29	4 – 2 Working with the gatekeepers	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Working with comm. professionals	Panel discussion with OSU PIOs
F 1/31	4 – 3 Developing sources on your beat	Lecture/Discussion Beat Basics Working with Sources	Writing Exercise 2
Week 5 M 2/3	5 – 1 Translate the Technical	Lecture/Discussion  Dealing with/translating difficult technical language in your beat.	Discuss writing exercise 2/ Weekly news meeting with editors
W 2/5	5 – 2 Breaking News	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Online and Social Accuracy and Urgency	Discuss/examine Breaking news issues
F 2/7	5 – 3 The Developing Story	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Following the story to its end	Writing exercise 3

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Week 6 M 2/10	6 – 1 Enterprise/ Investigative Reporting	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> What does it take to report the big, investigative series?	Discuss writing Exercise 3 Meeting with editors
W 2/12	6 – 2 Working with Video	Lecture/Discussion  How to get the best video for b-roll and on camera interviews	Guest Lecturer Bethany Barker
F 2/14	6 – 3 Your Future with the Lantern	Lecture/Discussion The next steps toward a journalism career	Writing Exercise 4 Photo Practice Assignment
Week 7 M 2/17	7 – 1 Photography	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Photo Composition Captions	Guest Lecturer Leonardo Carrizo Photo Review Meet w Editors
W 2/19	7 – 2 Working with FOI	Lecture/Discussion Your rights to documents and records.	Writing an FOI letter W.E. 4 feedback
F 2/21	7 – 3 Journalism Ethics	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Challenges to traditional journalism.	Writing Exercise 5
Week 8 M 2/24	8-1 The Lantern by The Numbers	Lecture/Discussion Taking a look at the first half of stories through analytics	Discussion Writing Exercise 5 Meet w Editors
W 2/26	8-2 Bias and Truth in Daily Journalism	Lecture/Discussion Avoiding bias and the appearance of	
F 2/28	8-3 Digital Journalism Ethics	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Ethical challenges in a digital age.	Writing Exercise 6

Week 9 M 3/2	9 – 1 Access to public records	Field Trip to the Dispatch How to quicky get and interpret records for daily stories.	Traveling to the Dispatch for class
W 3/4	9 – 2 Ending stories	Lecture/Discussion As important as you begin How to end stories	W.E. 6 feedback Meet w Editors
F 3/6	9-3 Newswriting Challenges	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Writing the Long Story	Writing exercise 7
Week 10 M 3/9	NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS
W 3/11	NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS
F 3/13	NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS

Week 11 M 3/16	11 – 1 Self-Editing: What to Do	Lecture/Discussion Editing checklists and how to self edit. Understanding the editing process	W.E. 7 feedback News Meeting with Editors
W 3/18	11 – 2 Editing complicated stories.	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> How to break down and reorganize an article	
F 3/20	11 – 3 Social media in live reporting.	Lecture/Discussion Social media in reporting Tools you can use	Writing Exercise 8
Week 12 M 3/23	12 – 1 Working with Data	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Data Journalism: a primer	Writing Exercise 8 feedback / Meet w Editors
T 3/25	12 – 2 Establishing brand identity in social media	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Brand identity	
Th 3/27	12–3 Media Management	Lecture/Discussion How Digital is Disrupting the News	Writing Exercise 8
Week 13 M 3/30	13 – 1 Specialized reporting topics	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Sports GovernmentHealth	W.E. 8 feedback/ Meet w Editors
W 4/1	13 – 2 Specialized reporting topics 2	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Race and gender Crime and police	
F 4/3	13-3 Your Online Brand	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> Establish your digital self. Build your online resume	Writing Exercise 9

Week 14			Writing Evergine
M 4/6	14–1 Rethinking Journalism	Lecture/Discussion Changing expectations Changes in storytelling	Writing Exercise 9 Feedback/ Meet w Editors
W 4/8	14 – 2 Alternate Storytelling	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> The multimedia form of storytelling	
F 4/10	14–3 Brand Journalism	<b>Lecture/Discussion</b> An old business practice returns.	Reporter Editor W.E. Challenge!
Week 15 M 4/13	15 – 1 Internships and career goals	Lecture/Discussion Free vs Paid Internships pros and cons	Writing Exercise 10 Feedback/ Meet w Editors
W 4/15	15-2 Lantern by the Numbers II	Lecture/Discussion Looking at the semester through analytics	
F 4/17	15 – 3 Making this Class better		
Week 16 M 4/20F	16-1 Wrapping Up	In Class Session for final stories	Meet with Editors