

**Professor:** Ann Marie Brown  
**Phone:** 415.302.8207 (phone only – please do not text to this number)  
**E-mail:** abrown@sierranevada.edu  
**Office:** Prim Library 334  
**Office Hours:** Mon 1-4 pm (please make an appointment)  
**Class Meeting Time:** Monday 4 pm to 6:30 pm  
**Location:** Patterson 207  
**Prerequisites:** Eng. 101

**Course Description:** This course is a study of contemporary journalism with an emphasis on reporting and writing news for various media. It introduces you to the profession and craft of journalism and teaches the basic essentials of writing, research, and theory used by journalists in all media. You will practice interviewing and reporting skills, techniques for writing and organizing news and feature stories, and the conventions of proper English grammar. You will sharpen your writing and storytelling skills through weekly practice in reading, writing, and analyzing news and feature stories.

**Course Objectives/Student Outcomes:** After completion of this course, you will understand the role and responsibilities of the press in a free society. You will understand the principles of objectivity, balance, fairness, and accuracy in news reporting. You will have gained experience in the fundamentals of reporting and writing the news, including gathering information, interpreting data, and interviewing subjects. You will sharpen your knowledge of the English language, and you will be able to proofread and edit to produce clean copy.

**Required Texts and Materials:**

1. *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, by Carole Rich
2. Laptop computer (one that meets the published SNC Laptop Requirements). \*\*\***Please bring to class every day.**
3. You cannot expect to be a skilled writer of news and nonfiction journalism without being an avid consumer of these genres. You should read as many newspapers, news magazines, and online news websites as you can, and listen to or watch as many radio and television newscasts as possible.

**Expectations:** Students are expected to be active participants in class, showing respect to all members of our class community. Students will read and write daily. Students will do their best work, and will communicate with the instructor if having difficulties. ***I am always willing to help students outside of class. Do not hesitate to ask me for help!***

**Methods of Assessing Student Outcomes:** Tools for assessment include in-class writings, homework writings, readings, exams, quizzes, class discussions, attendance, participation, and a final project.

**Attendance:** Because this class meets only once a week, students are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. Two (2) tardies = 1 absence. ***Students who are absent 3 times or more (including accumulated tardies) will not pass this class.*** In every class period, points are awarded for in-class assignments and/or quizzes. There are NO make-ups for these in-class points and quiz grades. On any day that you are absent, you will miss out on points toward your final grade.

**If you are absent:** Students are responsible for all material covered during the course, whether it is handed out in class, discussed in class, read as an assignment, or disseminated in any other way. If you are absent, make sure you check with your assigned partner(s) to find out what information you missed.

Also, if you are absent, **work due on that day is still due.** It may be brought in by a classmate, but all work is due **when the class begins.** Some absences (cleared in advance) may be excused and will not adversely affect your grade. These include absences followed by a note from a medical facility identifying you were under medical care on that day and at that time, and absences resulting from attending school-related trips.

**Late assignments** will be graded down by 10% for EVERY CALENDAR DAY (not class period) that the assignment is late. I do not accept “my computer died” or “the printer is not working” or “you must not have gotten my email” as an excuse for late assignments.

**Electronics policy:** Turn off your cell phone and all other distracting devices in the classroom. If we are using laptops during class, you are expected to refrain from activities not related to the lesson (i.e. Web surfing, Facebook, YouTube, etc.) I will often request that you turn off your laptop completely.

**Grading Policy:** Grades are based on the accumulation of points during the semester (total possible points = 1,000), distributed in the following ways:

- **25% in-class assignments and participation points, including oral presentations (250 points)**
- **40% out-of-class writing assignments (400 points)**
- **20% exams/quizzes/reading assignments (200 points)**
- **15% final audio story project (150 points)**

### **Sanctions for Cheating and/or Plagiarism**

**The Honor Code:** The faculty of SNC believes students must be held to high standards of integrity in all aspects of college life in order to promote the educational mission of the College and to encourage respect for the rights of others. Each student brings to the SNC community unique skills, talents, values and experiences which, when expressed within the community, contribute to the quality of the educational environment and the growth and development of the individual. Students share with members of the faculty, administration and staff the responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning and personal development, where actions are guided by mutual respect, integrity, responsibility and trust. The faculty and students alike must make diligent efforts to ensure high standards are upheld by their colleagues and peers as well as themselves. Therefore faculty and students accept responsibility for maintaining these standards at Sierra Nevada College and are obligated to comply with its regulations and procedures, which they are expected to read and understand.

**Consequences of Violating the Student Honor Code:** SNC students and faculty share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic honesty. Thus, all are responsible for knowing and abiding by the SNC Faculty/Student Honor Code published in the current SNC Catalog. Faculty are responsible for presenting the Honor Code and the consequences of violating it to students at the start of their classes AND for reporting all incidences of academic dishonesty to the Provost. Students are responsible for knowing what constitutes CHEATING, PLAGIARISM and FABRICATION and for refraining from these and other forms of academic dishonesty. Violations of the Honor Code become part of a student’s academic record.

1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Student receives a zero for assignment/exam and counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Student fails course and receives counseling with faculty on the honor code, consequences for violating the honor code, and the value of academic honesty in learning.

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Student is expelled.

**ADA Accommodations**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, students with a documented disability are eligible for support services and accommodations. If a student wishes to request an accommodation, please contact the Director of Academic Support Services, Henry Conover, at (775) 831-1314 x7534, [hconover@sierranevada.edu](mailto:hconover@sierranevada.edu) or go to the OASIS offices on the third floor of Prim Library within the first week of the semester.

**The SNC Email System**

The SNC email system is the official communication vehicle among students, faculty members and administrative staff and is designed to protect the confidentiality of student information as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 Act (FERPA). Students should check their college email accounts daily during the school year. Students have a right to forward their SNC e-mail to another e-mail account (for example, @hotmail or @gmail). However, confidentiality of student information protected by FERPA cannot be guaranteed for SNC e-mail forwarded to an outside vendor. Having email redirected does not absolve a student from the responsibilities associated with official communication sent to his or her SNC email account.

*Note: This schedule provides a general plan for this course. If changes are necessary, I will alert you in class.*

| Date   |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Week 1</b><br><b>Jan. 25</b>                    | Intro to E240 Course<br>What is News?<br>Who Decides What is News?<br>Reporting 101: The Interview  | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br>***Story Deadline #1: Student Q&A – email to <a href="mailto:abrown@sierranevada.edu">abrown@sierranevada.edu</a> by 12 noon on Mon. Feb. 1<br>***Reading: Chap. 6: Interviewing Techniques  |
| <b>Week 2</b><br><b>Feb. 1</b>                     | Taking Notes, Asking Questions<br>Shaping Questions and Answers into a Story<br>Writing a Profile   | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br>***Reading: Chap. 17: Profiles (only pp. 341-356)<br>***Story Deadline #2: Faculty/Staff Profile - email to <a href="mailto:abrown@sierranevada.edu">abrown@sierranevada.edu</a> by 12 noon on Fri. Feb. 12<br>***quiz on Chapters 6 & 17 due on Feb. 8                          |
| <b>Week 3</b><br><b>Feb. 8</b>                     | Gathering Facts & Verifying Information<br>The Five Ws (and an H)<br>What's AP Style?<br>Green Eyeshades: From Editors Grow Writers<br>Handling Quotations & Attributions | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br>***Reading: Chapter 2: The Basic News Story<br>***quiz on Chapter 2 due Feb. 22 (no class on Feb. 15)<br>***SECOND REMINDER: Story Deadline #2: Faculty/Staff Profile - email to <a href="mailto:abrown@sierranevada.edu">abrown@sierranevada.edu</a> by 12 noon on Fri. Feb. 12 |
| <b>Week 4</b><br><b>Feb. 15</b><br><b>NO CLASS</b> | <b>NO CLASS – PRESIDENTS DAY</b><br><b>COLLEGE IS CLOSED</b>  | <b>HOLIDAY – COLLEGE CLOSED</b>  |
| <b>Week 5</b><br><b>Feb. 22</b>                    | Story Structure: The Craft of Storytelling<br>Writing A News Lead: The Inverted Pyramid<br>Finding a Focus with the Lede<br>More on the Nut Graf                          | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br>***Reading: Chapter 7: Leads and Nut Graphs<br>***Story Deadline #3: News Event Story due - email to <a href="mailto:abrown@sierranevada.edu">abrown@sierranevada.edu</a> by 12 noon on Mon. Feb. 29   |
| <b>Week 6</b><br><b>Feb. 29</b>                    | Varied Leads: Beyond the Inverted Pyramid<br>Clichéd Leads to Avoid<br>Gold Coins: Embedded Stories within Stories  | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br>***Reading: Chapter 8: Story Organization<br>***quiz on Chaps. 7 & 8 due Mar. 7  |
| <b>Week 7</b><br><b>Mar. 7</b><br><b>MIDTERMS</b>  | In-Class Midterm (news writing)   | <b>In-Class Midterm (news writing)</b>   |
| <b>Week 8</b><br><b>Mar. 14</b><br><b>NO CLASS</b> | <b>SPRING BREAK!!!!</b>   | <b>SPRING BREAK!!!!</b>  |
| <b>Week 9</b><br><b>Mar. 21</b>                    | Shaping the Story: the Narrative Arc<br>Newsriting Tips: Front-Load the Story   | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br>***Reading: Chapter 9: Story Forms<br>***Story Deadline #4: Story due next week (Mar. 28)  |

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| <b>Week 10</b><br><b>Mar. 28</b>         | Writing Feature Stories:<br>Feature Story Structures  | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br><b>***Reading: Chapter 10: Storytelling and Feature Techniques</b><br><b>***quiz on Chaps. 9 &amp;10 due Apr. 4!</b>   |
| <b>Week 11</b><br><b>Apr. 4</b>          | Writing for Broadcast: Radio News<br>National Public Radio<br>Podcast: 355: The Giant Pool of Money<br><a href="http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/355/the-giant-pool-of-money">www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/355/the-giant-pool-of-money</a> | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br><b>***Story Deadline #5: Story due next week (Apr. 11)</b><br><b>***Story Deadline #6: Audio Story due in final exam week (only 5 weeks away and you need to start working on this ASAP – it takes a long time!)</b> |
| <b>Week 12</b><br><b>Apr. 11</b>         | Online Reporting: Writing for the Internet<br>Blogging, “web style”<br>Writing an Arts Review for the Web   | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br><b>***Reading: Chapter 12: Online Journalism</b><br><b>***quiz on Chapter 12 due Apr. 18!</b>  |
| <b>Week 13</b><br><b>Apr. 18</b>         | Multicultural Journalism:<br>Minorities in the News<br>Guidelines for Writing about Special Groups  | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br><b>***choose topics for 2-3 page paper &amp; presentation</b><br><b>***Student presentations on famous names in journalism due May 2 (only 2 weeks away)</b>   |
| <b>Week 14</b><br><b>Apr. 25</b>         | Journalism, Law, & Ethics<br>libel, privacy invasion, copyright, decency<br>Film: “Shattered Glass”<br>Case Study: The Santa Barbara News Press & “Citizen McCaw”<br>Understanding “The Wall” between editorial and news: writing editorials (Op-Eds)                               | <b>HOMEWORK:</b><br><b>***Reading: Chapter 15: Media Ethics</b><br><b>***quiz on Chap. 15 due May 2!</b>   |
| <b>Week 15</b><br><b>May 2</b>           | In-class student presentations/<br>Famous Names in Journalism   | <b>In-Class Student Presentations on Famous Names in Journalism</b><br>“Raw” Interviews for Audio Stories Due  |
| <b>FINAL EXAM</b><br><b>TBD May 6-11</b> | <b>Final Project Presentations</b><br><b>Audio Stories</b>  | <b>In-Class Presentation: Play the Final Edit of Your Audio Story</b>  |
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*The Mission Statement: Sierra Nevada College graduates will be educated to be scholars of and contributors to a sustainable world. Sierra Nevada College combines the liberal arts and professional preparedness through an interdisciplinary curriculum that emphasizes entrepreneurial thinking and environmental, social, economic and educational sustainability.*

*The Core Themes:*

*Liberal Arts • Professional Preparedness • Entrepreneurial Thinking • Sustainability*