JOUR 54A Course Outline as of Fall 2025

CATALOG INFORMATION

Dept and Nbr: JOUR 54A Title: MAG WRITING/PRODUCTION 1
Full Title: Magazine Journalism: Writing and Production 1
Last Reviewed: 1/28/2019

Units		Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	2.50	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	43.75
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	2.50	6	Lab Scheduled	43.75
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	5.00		Contact Total	87.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 87.50 Total Student Learning Hours: 175.00

Title 5 Category:	AA Degree Applicable
Grading:	Grade or P/NP
Repeatability:	00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP
Also Listed As:	
Formerly:	JOUR 54

Catalog Description:
Introduction to the magazine industry and to writing and producing articles for publication. Students will learn to develop story ideas, submit query letters, conduct research and interviews, write and edit articles. Students can publish and market finished pieces in an online SRJC magazine or submit queries to outside publications.

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended Preparation:
Eligibility for ENGL C1000 or equivalent and Course Completion or Concurrent Enrollment in JOUR 1

Limits on Enrollment:

Schedule of Classes Information:
Description: Introduction to the magazine industry and to writing and producing articles for publication. Students will learn to develop story ideas, submit query letters, conduct research and interviews, write and edit articles. Students can publish and market finished pieces in an online SRJC magazine or submit queries to outside publications. (Grade or P/NP)

Prerequisites/Corequisites:
Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL C1000 or equivalent and Course Completion or Concurrent Enrollment in JOUR 1
Limits on Enrollment:
Transfer Credit:
Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:

AS Degree:	**Area**	Effective:	Inactive:
CSU GE:	**Transfer Area**	Effective:	Inactive:
IGETC:	**Transfer Area**	Effective:	Inactive:

CSU Transfer:	Effective:	Inactive:
UC Transfer:	Effective:	Inactive:

CID:

Certificate/Major Applicable:
Major Applicable Course

COURSE CONTENT

Student Learning Outcomes:
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Describe business and editorial functions of print and online magazine industries, strategies and methods for creating a print or online publication and methods for selling content to magazines.
2. Apply reporting, writing skills and/or multimedia skills to create text-based or multimedia content for at least three different types of magazine articles.
3. Formulate constructive critiques of professionally published magazine pieces, as well as the work of their peers.
4. Participate as a productive team member of an online or print magazine staff from magazine inception to publishing and marketing/distribution.

Objectives:
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Discuss the how-to's of magazine publication, including brainstorming, researching, reporting, planning visuals and layouts, fact-checking, editing, publishing and marketing.
2. Develop story ideas, find sources, research, report and create content for at least three types of magazine articles, with at least one short article (how-to, news, listicle, reader service) an in-depth, feature- length piece and a personal experience essay, using high standards of ethics and accuracy. Note: Content can include writing, photography, design or multimedia.
3. Participate in tasks associated with online magazine production, such as copyediting, headline and cutline writing, photo taking and editing, design, layout, website uploading and social media marketing.
4. Compare and contrast different styles of magazine writing, from features, news and profiles to shorter service and how-to pieces.
5. Edit both peer and professional articles for content, clarity, style and grammar, and learn to

give and receive constructive criticism.
6. Evaluate and critique options for visual storytelling and packaging.
7. Write an effective query letter to an editor.
8. Publish stories online and use social media to market them to targeted readers.
9. Identify areas of career interest and explore options in the industry.

Topics and Scope:

I. The Magazine Industry and Jobs
- A. National vs. regional, general interest vs. specialty, indie vs. mainstream, online vs. print
- B. Audience/readership studies
- C. Success/failures
- D. Evolving media culture/industry outlook
- E. Internships and career opportunities

II. Magazine Production Overview - Print and Online
- A. What goes where in a print magazine
  1. Whole-issue pacing
  2. Up-fronts, sections and feature well
- B. Editorial philosophy development
- C. Goals and standards
- D. Self-publishing online (SRJC magazine)
- E. Teamwork and roles
- F. Online presence management

III. Libel and Ethics in Magazine Journalism

IV. Content Development and Creation
- A. Brainstorming article ideas*
- B. Story pitch writing*
- C. Query letter writing and submission guidelines*
- D. Art, photography and design planning and production*
- E. Research and source development*
- F. Interviewing practice*
- G. Lead and nut graph writing*
- H. Story structure practice (news, features, profile, personal experience)*

V. Story Article Types and Storytelling
- A. Short articles, such as listicles, how-to, local travel or localized news
- B. Feature Stories
  1. Organizing material
  2. Story structures
  3. Leads and nut graphs
  4. Feature types (such as public interest, service journalism, investigative, lifestyle etc.)
- C. Profiles
  1. Interviewing for profiles
  2. Details and observation
  3. Profile structure
- D. Personal Experience Articles
  1. Columns and commentary
  2. Reviews and criticism
  3. Personal essays with reader focus
- E. Storytelling techniques
  1. Story arcs - Freytag's Pyramid
  2. Conflict, complication, resolution
  3. Story tropes

VI. The Editing Process
   A. Fact checking and content editing*
   B. Copy editing (grammar, punctuation and house style)*
   C. Developmental editing (clarity, conciseness, voice, tone)*
   D. Constructive critiquing
   E. Writing headlines, decks and captions*
VII. Visual Storytelling
   A. Story packaging: matching package to idea and packaging stories and art
   B. Sidebars, pull quotes, captions
   C. Photo taking, editing and selection*
   D. Finding or creating art and/or graphics*
   E. Storytelling through written, visual, audio, video or other multimedia formats
VIII. Social Media Marketing Techniques and Strategies
IX. The Business Side of the Publication
   A. Advertising and sales
   B. Distribution (online and print)

*Lab only

Assignment:

Lecture-Related Assignments:

1. Three or more articles (2000 to 5000 words total), which may include one or more of the following: issue-oriented feature stories, profiles, personal experience essays, reader service pieces.
2. Reading 15 to 40 pages per week from magazines, textbook and instructor-prepared material.
3. One to two midterm(s) and a final exam.

Lab-Related Assignments:

1. Participation in online magazine production

Lecture- and Lab-Related Assignments:

1. Five to fifteen short assignments to build reporting and writing skills that may include:
   A. Reader analysis
   B. Content analysis
   C. Developing story ideas
   D. Finding sources
   E. Writing queries
   F. Interviewing
   G. Writing leads and nut graphs
   H. Writing different story structures
   I. Editing exercises
   J. Critiquing articles

Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

Writing: Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Articles and short assignments	Writing 50 - 65%

Problem Solving: Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

None	Problem solving 0 - 0%

Skill Demonstrations: All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

None	Skill Demonstrations 0 - 0%

Exams: All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Midterm(s) and a final exam that can include multiple choice, short answer and essays	Exams 20 - 30%

Other: Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Attendance and classroom participation	Other Category 5 - 20%

Representative Textbooks and Materials:
Instructor-prepared materials.

The Best American Magazine Writing. Holt, Sid. Columbia University Press. current year

Magazine Writing. Benson, Christopher and Whitaker, Charles. Routledge. 2014 (classic)

Feature and Magazine Writing. 3rd ed. Sumner, David and Miller, Holly. Wiley-Blackwell. 2013 (classic)

The Art of Making Magazines: On Being an Editor and Other Views from the Industry. Navasky, Victor and Cornog, Evan. Columbia University Press. 2012 (classic)