Welcome to JOU 4181
Public Affairs Reporting

Agenda
• Who am I and Introductions?
• Class Web Site
• Syllabus Review
• Team Formation

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• Office Hours: 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.,
  Tuesday and Thursday
  10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.,
  Wednesday
  Other times available by appointment

Introductions
• Name
• A bit about your background
  – Career at UCF?
  – Career Goals?
  – What’s your background?
  – What’s unusual about you?
  – What do you hope/expect to get from Public Affairs Reporting?

Class Web Site
• [http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~dshaver](http://pegasus.cc.ucf.edu/~dshaver)
  – Syllabus
  – Class Announcements
  – Lecture Notes
• See syllabus for more detail
• Syllabus subject to change over course of the semester to reflect changes or opportunities

Purpose
• Strengthen understanding of how public issues (government, public institutions) work and the tools journalists use to cover them.
  – Public Records
  – Public Meetings
  – Political Campaigns
  – Other Issues of Public Importance
House Rules

- Sign-in Sheet
- Assignment Guidelines
  - Format
  - Source Requirements
  - Deadlines
    - Printing here vs. elsewhere

House Rules

- SPJ Code
  - Plagiarism
  - Fabrication
- Deadlines
- Missed Assignment
- Using Someone Else’s Notes

Structure

- Three- or Four-member Bureaus
  - Team Assignments
  - Individual Assignments
- Coverage of a specific Central Florida City
- Bureau Meetings

Team Projects (50%)

- Beat Notebook……………………. 10%
- Budget Story……………………10%
- Beat Reports (5)…………………10%
- Final Project…………………… 20%
  - Investigative Main Story
  - Sidebar
  - Infographic

Individual Elements (50%)

- City Council Preview Stories (2)….. 3% ea.
- City Council Coverage Stories (2)… 7% ea.
- Education Story …………………10%
- Court Story …………………… 10%
- Law Enforcement Story………… 5%
- Story Analysis…………………… 5%
- Class Participation ……………… 5%

Grading Scale

A = 4.0  C = 2.0
A- = 3.75 C- = 1.75
B+ = 3.25 D+ = 1.25
B = 3.0  D = 1.0
B- = 2.75 D- = 0.75
C+ = 2.25 F = 0
**A**

- Story is newsworthy and exceptionally well-written with NO style, grammar, or mechanical errors. It shows mastery of accuracy, news judgment, reporting, writing, spelling, grammar and AP Style. It is ready for publication without any additional work.

**B**

- Story is newsworthy and could be published after minimal editing. No more than one error of omission and/or has no more than two different style errors. The story has NO grammar or mechanical errors. Story must be edited prior to publication but there are no major problems with structure or theme.

**C**

- The story does not optimally reflect the news, has three or more style errors and/or would require extensive editing. The story may have several grammar and/or mechanical errors. Story may also have word usage errors. Some reporting or writing problems may be evident and rewriting and/or publishing is required before publication.

**D**

- The story is superficial, would require extensive rewriting and/or has more than five style, grammar or mechanical errors. It is a poor effort lacking basic reporting and/or writing skills. The story may lack balance.

**F**

- The story is confusing, incomplete or inaccurate or contains a misspelled proper noun or name or a statement that is libelous. A story will also receive an F if it contains an error of fact.

**Rewrites**

- All individual and group stories except the final package or city council reports after April 10.
- Must be submitted one week after original story is returned.
- Maximum improvement is A-
- No guarantee that rewrite grade will improve your grade
- If rewrite grade is lower than original grade, you may do a second rewrite.
**Required for Rewrite**

- Original edited/graded story along with the notes that I returned to you.
- Statement describing the lessons you learned in rewriting the story and the steps you took to improve the rewrite
- The rewritten story
  - Rewrites submitted without required elements will not be accepted and graded.

**Regarding Rewrites...**

- Substantive improvement in the story is expected
- Rewrites that simply correct style/grammar/punctuation/organizational issues identified in the comments can expect at best a half-letter grade improvement
- Thoughtfulness in the “Lessons Learned” document are important

**Extra Credit**

- “New Voices” column in The Orlando Sentinel
- A freelance story in The Sentinel or another professional, non-student newspaper
- Equivalent of 2 points on 100-point scale added to final average
- Tear sheet required
- Only once per semester

**Team Obligations**

- Rotating Bureau Chief
- Final Evaluation of Contribution
- “Firing” a Team Member

**NewsU**

- Managed by Poynter and funded by The Knight Foundation
- Modules will be started in class
- If not completed in class, you are expected to complete the module before the next class and to submit a
- I can check and it affects your class participation grade

**Any Questions?**
Team Signups

• Assignment Guidelines

Next Class…

• Review the Syllabus and Bring Any Questions
• Finalize City Assignments
• Team Building Exercise