Syllabus
Writing for the Media
(ENGL 408A)

General Information

Section Number: 001
Hours: 2:30 – 3:50 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays
Location: EV3 3408
Term: Spring 2019

Instructor

Bruce Daday
Office: Hagey Hall 257
Email: badady@uwaterloo.ca
Phone: x32416
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 4:00-5:00, or by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course examines the genres and strategies of both journalism and public relations. With a strong orientation towards rhetorical and linguistic theories, this course will cover audience concerns from both within and outside organizations. By the end of the course you will be able to produce a wide variety of texts for a range of media. You will be able to follow the conventions associated with various types of stories, articles, and PR documents, and to accommodate the different audiences that read them either in print or online. You will also understand how social, technological, and organizational contexts affect the production and reception of media texts and how the shifting landscape facing media organizations is leading to changes in how journalism is being made and consumed.

Texts

Koenig, Sarah. Serial. Season 1, Episodes 1-3, from WBEZ Chicago, October 2014,
https://serialpodcast.org/season-one
LEARN readings and links

Assignments

Participation 5%
Journals 10%
Breaking news stories 15%
Beat news stories 25%
PR Package 15%
Feature Article 30%

Details of the assignments will be distributed during the course.

Course Policies

Assignments and Class Procedures

• Journal assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate dropbox by 9:00 a.m. of the due date. All other assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate course dropbox by 11:55 p.m. of the due date.
• Assignments that are late without good reason will be penalized at a rate of two percentage points for every week day late (10% per week). Journal assignments will not be accepted if late.
• Class discussion is a prominent part of the course, so students are expected to attend all classes and to come with the readings completed. In my lectures and in my questions to the class and individuals I will assume the assigned readings have been done.
• We will often be using email to communicate with one another. All email communication will occur through your uWaterloo account, which you should check regularly.

Electronics

Please mute your phones and do not use them in class. If you have a genuine emergency for which your phone is needed during a particular class, contact me beforehand. Laptops and tablets are allowed for class-related purposes only. Use of devices for non-class-related purposes (surfing, email, chatting) or in a manner that is distracting to other students will lead to my requesting that you not bring your device to class. At some points in the class I may ask the class to shut their laptops.

Academic integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information.

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals.

Note for students with disabilities

AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.
## Tentative Schedule

IR = *Inside Reporting*  
L = LEARN readings.

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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L: [Breaking News Stories](#) |
| 2    | May 13      | Reporting Basics                        | IR 67-89, 128-29         |
|      | May 15      | Broadcast Journalism                    | IR 181-91                
L: [Broadcast Journalism](#)  
Pitch due: Breaking news Stories |
| 3    | May 20      |                                         |                          |
|      | May 22      | Basics Review, Roundups                  | 246-47, 298-303          
**Deadline: Journal 1** |
| 4    | May 27      | Law and Ethics Intro to Beats           | IR 142-43, 148-53, 94-95  
L: [Law and Ethics](#) |
|      | May 29      | Workshop                                | Draft Due: Breaking News Stories |
| 5    | June 3      | Beat 1: Disasters, accidents, and fires | [Beat 1 Readings](#) |
|      | June 5      | Beat 2: Crime, courts                   | [Beat 2 readings](#)    
**Deadline (Friday, June 7): Journal 2** |
| 6    | June 10     | Beat 3: Speeches and meetings           | IR 106-09                
L: [Beat 3 readings](#)  
**Deadline: Breaking News Stories** |
|      | June 12     | Beat 4: Politics, sports                | IR 110-13                
L: [Beat 4 readings](#)  
**Pitch Due: Beats Assignment** |
| 7    | June 17     | Beat 5: Obituaries, Profiles            | IR 96-97, 124-25         
L: [Beat 5 readings](#) |
|      | June 19     | Editorials, columns, reviews, short-form structures | IR 123, 132-37  
L: [Editorials, Columns, Reviews](#)  
**Deadline: Journal 3** |
| 8    | June 24     | Public Relations                        | IR 193-203               
L: [PR samples 1](#) |
|      | June 26     | Workshop                                | Draft Due: Beats Assignment |
| 9    | July 2      | Public Relations 2                      | L: [PR samples 2](#)    
**Pitch Due: PR Package** |
| Note: Tuesday Class | July 3 | Feature Stories, Enterprise projects | [Features 1](#)  
**Deadline: Beats Assignment** |
| 10   | July 8      | Feature Stories 2                       | L: [Features 2](#)    
**Pitch due: Feature story** |
|      | July 10     | Feature Stories 3                       | L: [Features 3](#)    
**Deadline: Journal 4** |
| 11   | July 15     | Workshop                                | Draft due: PR Package    |
|      | July 17     | Digital journalism 1                    | IR 157-80               
L: [Digital 1](#) |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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| July 22 | Digital journalism 2 | **Serial**, Episodes 1-3  
Deadline: PR Package |
| July 24 | Digital journalism 3 | L: **Digital 2**  
Deadline: Journal 5 |
| July 29 | Workshop       | Draft due: Feature Story                   |
| July 31 |                | No class (classes end July 30)              |

**Feature story due August 5**

**Territorial Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.