New Course Request

Indiana University
Indianapolis Campus

Check Appropriate Boxes: Undergraduate credit □ Graduate credit □ Professional credit □

1. School/Division School of Journalism 2. Academic Subject Code JOUR - J
3. Course Number 545 (must be cleared with University Enrollment Services) 4. Instructor Laucella
5. Course Title I Sports Writing
   Recommended Abbreviation (Optional) (Limited to 32 Characters including spaces)

6. First time this course is to be offered (Semester/Year): Spring 2011
7. Credit Hours: Fixed at _______ 3 _______ or Variable from _______ to _______
8. Is this course to be graded S-F (only)? Yes □ No □
9. Is variable title approval being requested? Yes □ No □

10. Course description (not to exceed 50 words) for Bulletin publication:
    This course will provide intensive field experience and training in sports reporting and
    writing. This class will give students the basic tools they need to report or write sports
    for print and online publications. Students will cover beats chronicling one of Indiana's
    sports teams or organizations. And, they will become proficient in generating story ideas,
    writing game stories, notebooks, features and enterprise pieces with substance and depth.
    The class will explore ethical decisions and news judgments also.

11. Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at _______ 3.0 _______ or Variable from _______ to _______
12. Non-Lecture Contact Hours: Fixed at _______ or Variable from _______ to _______
13. Estimated enrollment: _______ 10 _______ of which _______ 100 _______ percent are expected to be graduate students.
14. Frequency of scheduling: TBD Will this course be required for majors? Yes _______
15. Justification for new course: This course is vital for students to develop key reporting and writing skills for sport careers.
16. Are the necessary reading materials currently available in the appropriate library? Yes _______
17. Please append a complete outline of the proposed course, and indicate instructor (if known), textbooks, and other materials.
18. If this course overlaps with existing courses, please explain with which courses it overlaps and whether this overlap is
    necessary, desirable, or unimportant.
19. A copy of every new course proposal must be submitted to departments, schools, or divisions in which there may be
    overlap of the new course with existing courses or areas of strong concern, with instructions that they send comments
    directly to the originating Curriculum Committee. Please append a list of departments, schools, or divisions thus
    consulted.

Submitted by:

Date 5/25/11
Department Chairman/Division Director

Date
Dean of Graduate School (when required)

Approved by:

Date 5/25/11
Dean

Date
Chancellor/Vice-President

Date
University Enrollment Services

After School/Division approval, forward the last copy (without attachments) to University Enrollment Services for initial processing, and the remaining
four copies and attachments to the Campus Chancellor or Vice-President.

UP 724 University Enrollment Services Final—White; Chancellor/Vice-President—Blue; School/Division—Yellow;
Department/Division—Pink; University Enrollment Services Advance—White
J545: Sports Writing
3 Credit Hours
Master's in Sports Journalism Program
Spring 2011

Instructor: Ronnie Ramos
Office Hours: Wednesday, 6 p.m.
Phone: 317-278-5335 (IUPUI)
Email: rramos@ncaa.org
Rooms: IT 535 (IUPUI)

Prerequisite: J345, Sports Writing

Course Description:
This advanced course will provide intensive immersion in the range of reporting, research, analytical and writing skills necessary to succeed as a sports writer in today's fast-changing, multi-media environment. This class is designed for those who are serious about making sports reporting -- or the understanding of sports writing skills, techniques and practices -- their chosen career. This class will expose students to the real and strategic differences in successful storytelling across the spectrum of media platforms today, including print, web, broadcast and social media. Students will be responsible for covering beats chronicling one of the state's many professional or college sports teams or organizations. This means students will not just be stenographers, but interpreters of news events, making instantaneous news and ethical judgments about their import to society at large. They also will need to make quick assessments about story play and significance across a multitude of media platforms. And, they will be expected to thoughtfully and creatively generate story concepts and execute those ideas in a deadline environment. This course will explore the real-life ethical decisions and news judgments that are at the center of being a sports reporter for a print or online publication today. In the end, students also will become discerning consumers of sports reporting and writing.

Objectives:

- Produce superior reporting and writing in a fast-changing, multi-media world.
- Assess the strategic differences in communicating with news consumers in a variety of media platforms.
- Develop the analytical skills and judgment necessary to make smart and ethical news decisions in a 24/7 news and information environment.
- Further develop the key elements of sports beat reporting, including observing, analyzing and interpreting events and information on deadline for mass audiences in different mediums.
- Prepare and create successful profiles, a critical ability for any successful sports writer.
- Evaluate differences between column writing, blogging and news writing.
- Further develop the skills necessary to write sports game stories, notebooks, feature, blogs, tweets and in-depth enterprise for print and digital publications.
- Evaluate the meaning of sports in a larger societal context and write analytically about economic, legal, social and political issues in sports journalism.
- Develop the analytical skills necessary to critique and evaluate sports writing, tools necessary to be a successful editor or producer.

Readings and Material


AP Stylebook

Every student will be expected to read the following in print or online every day: USA Today Sports, New York Times Sports, Indianapolis Star Sports and ESPN.com. There is no excuse for not being informed about the top sports news stories of the day.

Every student will be required to read Sports Illustrated and ESPN The Magazine.

Assessment:

This course will include lectures by the instructor, guests from the professional sports media industry and field experiences at Indianapolis sports venues covering games or other events. Assessment will be based on class participation, attendance and a final story approved by the instructor.

News meetings: In an effort to provide you with a real-life experience, we'll begin each class with a news meeting – just like the ones in conference rooms of major sports news organizations across the country. Just like a sports editor at one of those publications, you will be asked to brief our group on the major events or news stories in your specialization, and you must submit a digest of your top story weekly. The digest item is a concise, one-paragraph description of the story and its significance. Your participation and performance in this area will constitute 10 percent of your grade.

Beat dossier: After your beat assignment is determined at the beginning of the semester, you will be required to quickly produce a working document that will form the basis of your work this semester. You will need to provide a background summary of recent news reports on your beat, expected top storylines for the upcoming months, a list of the top sources on your beat and the names of the leading journalists who cover that beat. This will constitute 10 percent of your grade.

Coverage of events: Students will be assigned to two game or event stories during the semester. This could include coverage of games involving the Indiana Pacers, IU men’s or women’s basketball, IUPUI or Butler. These game stories will be due the same night as the event and written under deadline pressure, just as if you were covering for a Website, newspaper or wire service. The quality and timeliness of these stories will make up 20 percent of your grade.

Mid-term profiles: To be an effective, and marketable, sports writer, you must be able to report and write different types of stories -- hard news, features, columns, blogs and enterprise. Good beat reporters can write in many different keys. One of the most important skills is profile writing. For the mid-term, you will file a 1,500-word profile of a key figure or just plain interesting person off your beat. This will constitute 25 percent of your grade.

Final project: The best sports reporters in America spot trends and issues off their beats before they become major national stories. For your final project, you will be expected to identify that trend or issue, and report it with depth and sophistication, and write it with clarity and precision. The final project will be 3,000 words, and your idea must be approved in advance by the instructor. This project will comprise 35 percent of your final grade.

Because this is an advanced, writing-focused class, there will be no final exam. The only tests will be the news quizzes.

So, in summary, here's how your grade will be assessed:

- 10 percent, news meeting summaries and quizzes.
- 10 percent, beat dossiers.
- 20 percent, coverage of events.
- 25 percent, mid-term profiles.
Grade scale (in percent of total possible score):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Journalistic standards:

Consistent with standards set forth by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications, this course assumes students already understand and practice the following core values and competencies:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
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- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications.
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Think critically, creatively and independently.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Attendance:

You are expected to attend all classes. If you miss one, discuss the circumstances with the instructor in advance. This allows you to work out how you will meet class objectives for that week without your presence in class. As a matter of firm policy, unexcused late work WILL NOT be accepted. If you miss deadline, you will get a zero. If you will be absent for any class where work is due, you MUST contact me IN ADVANCE. We start class on time. Late arrivals disrupt class, so do not be late.

Technology:
You must have access to a laptop computer for this class.

**Writing statement:**

Writing performance and language usage proficiency are essential to the satisfactory completion of journalism courses. Moreover, writing and speaking skills are essential to the successful practice of being a media practitioner. Therefore, I will monitor writing performance and language usage and you will be graded on your writing, including spelling, punctuation and sentence structure.

**Policy on diversity:**

The School of Journalism is committed to creating an awareness of diversity issues as they relate to society, to the workplace and to the classroom.

**Disabled student policy:**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of disability, or if you have any emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please discuss with me ASAP.

**Academic honesty:**

It is expected that all students will adhere to University standards of honesty. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Nor will cheating of any kind. All appropriate text citations must be appropriately annotated and properly credited with in-text citations, footnotes/endnotes and bibliographic references. Discovery of any instances of academic dishonesty will be immediate grounds for failure in the class.

**Communication and email:**

I will use Oncourse extensively. I will post assignments and supporting documents on Oncourse for your use, in addition to any additional reading assignment I may make outside of the assigned textbook. In addition, all e-mail communication will be by standard IU e-mail addresses. If you do not use yours, either start, or set up your address to automatically forward to the address you normally use.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change based on field assignment dates and availability of guest speakers)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week One</td>
<td>Introduction to class. Outline goals and objectives for the course. Introduction of class mid-term and final projects. Explanation of field assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Two</td>
<td>News meeting. Formalize beat assignments for the semester. Begin review of stories in “Best American Sports Writing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Three</td>
<td>News meeting. Review and discuss more chapters in “Best American Sports Writing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Four</td>
<td>News meeting. Beat dossiers are due! A prominent current sports writer is guest speaker.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Five</td>
<td>First field event deadline story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Six</td>
<td>News meeting. Review work on prior week’s field assignments. Critiques of work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Seven</td>
<td>News meeting. The art of profile writing. Review profiles in “Best American Sports Writing” and other sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Ten</td>
<td>Spring break.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Eleven</td>
<td>News meeting. Review and critique of mid-term profiles. Brainstorm and define final project ideas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Twelve</td>
<td>Second field event deadline story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Thirteen</td>
<td>News meeting. In-class critique of second field event stories.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week Fifteen</td>
<td>News meeting. Discuss final projects due next week. Each student will read aloud the top of his or her final story, so we can critique and troubleshoot before the stories are filed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Sixteen</td>
<td>FINAL PROJECTS DUE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>