



UNSW Course Outline

MDIA1004 News Fundamentals - 2024

Published on the 28 Jan 2024

General Course Information

Course Code : MDIA1004

Year : 2024

Term : Term 1

Teaching Period : T1

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture

Academic Unit : School of the Arts and Media

Delivery Mode : In Person

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Undergraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

Whether you are a journalist, media advisor or content producer, written and audio news skills are highly valued. News informs every area of media from breaking news, crime, sports, politics, business, science and health to fashion, entertainment, the arts, technology and social media

virality. In this introductory practice-based course taught by industry practitioners, you'll develop core skills in digital new media news production, including news styles and audio, interviewing, editing, social media research, and learn crucial media law. You'll produce an original digital news story for your portfolio, with selected news stories published in UNSW's award-winning digital student journalism publication, Newsworthy.

Relationship to Other Courses

Voices and Values

Features Journalism

Radio and Podcast Journalism

Professional Media Practices

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CLO1 : Understand and apply industry requirements for journalistic skills and attributes
CLO2 : Critically evaluate journalistic news reporting practices and the communicative functionality of news reporting texts
CLO3 : Enact the social relationships and interactions involved in the news gathering and filtering process
CLO4 : Apply skills in conceiving, researching and producing news reports across a range of different journalistic contexts

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CLO1 : Understand and apply industry requirements for journalistic skills and attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing and Research Task• Original News Story• Open Book Exam
CLO2 : Critically evaluate journalistic news reporting practices and the communicative functionality of news reporting texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing and Research Task• Original News Story• Open Book Exam
CLO3 : Enact the social relationships and interactions involved in the news gathering and filtering process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open Book Exam
CLO4 : Apply skills in conceiving, researching and producing news reports across a range of different journalistic contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing and Research Task• Original News Story• Open Book Exam

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System | Blackboard Collaborate | Echo 360

Learning and Teaching in this course

Refer to Moodle.

Additional Course Information

Refer to Moodle.

Lectures will be recorded and available via Moodle, however lecture attendance is strongly encouraged for more impactful learning.

Live speech to text or voice AI translators in class are not permitted in tutorials due to privacy and intellectual property issues. However, tutorial slides will be available on Moodle, and please talk to your tutor if you need extra assistance, or email the convenor (Kerrie) k.davies@unsw.edu.au .

Translators are permitted when working on your own writing, on your own device (so translating text only).

Your assessments require drafts, dated, including from translation apps to be submitted as directed in assessment outlines.

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Writing and Research Task Assessment Format: Individual	30%	Due Date: Week 5: 11 March - 17 March
Original News Story Assessment Format: Individual	30%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Week 8: 01 April - 07 April
Open Book Exam Assessment Format: Individual	40%	Start Date: Refer to Centralised Exam Timetable Due Date: Refer to Centralised Exam Timetable

Assessment Details

Writing and Research Task

Assessment Overview

1800 words, comprising 600 word news report in response to a brief given in class and 1200 word reflection drawn from research and writing practice and academic readings.

Feedback via LMS

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Understand and apply industry requirements for journalistic skills and attributes
- CLO2 : Critically evaluate journalistic news reporting practices and the communicative functionality of news reporting texts
- CLO4 : Apply skills in conceiving, researching and producing news reports across a range of different journalistic contexts

Detailed Assessment Description

NOTE: UPDATED - REFER TO MOODLE FOR UPDATED INSTRUCTIONS.

Assessment Length

AMENDED: IGNORE DESCRIPTION. See MOODLE ASSESSMENT OUTLINE

Submission notes

Refer to Moodle

Assessment information

Refer to Moodle for full assessment outline and class discussions.

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Original News Story

Assessment Overview

Length/duration: 700 words or three to four minutes. Students produce an original written or audio news story in response to a brief given in class.

Feedback via LMS

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Understand and apply industry requirements for journalistic skills and attributes
- CL02 : Critically evaluate journalistic news reporting practices and the communicative functionality of news reporting texts
- CL04 : Apply skills in conceiving, researching and producing news reports across a range of different journalistic contexts

Detailed Assessment Description

Refer to Moodle for assessment outline.

Assessment Length

Refer to Moodle

Assessment information

The assessment will be either a text based news story with original interviews and photo (original or creative commons); or optionally, an audio podcast production with original interview and photo related to the brief given in class, with script supplied.

All interviews must have audio files / zoom supplied with necessary translation. A separate submission box will be supplied.

All story ideas must be approved by your tutor and align with the course's news theme as discussed in class and lectures.

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Hurdle rules

The idea must be approved by your tutor.

Pitch in class (idea can be approved before pitch).

A pitch must be done in class for this assessment to be eligible for a pass grade (this does not guarantee a pass).

Interview video / audio and drafts submitted to a ONE drive folder.

Open Book Exam

Assessment Overview

A 2.5-hour open book practical / applied knowledge exam requiring written responses.

Feedback via LMS

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Understand and apply industry requirements for journalistic skills and attributes
- CL02 : Critically evaluate journalistic news reporting practices and the communicative functionality of news reporting texts
- CL03 : Enact the social relationships and interactions involved in the news gathering and filtering process
- CL04 : Apply skills in conceiving, researching and producing news reports across a range of different journalistic contexts

Detailed Assessment Description

Refer to Moodle and Centralised Exam timetable.

Assessment Length

Refer to Moodle and Exam

Submission notes

Refer to Exam instructions

Assessment information

Refer to Moodle and in class discussion.

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

General Assessment Information

No prior knowledge of journalism is needed for this course and assessments.

This course replaces 1002 as foundational news understanding for journalists and news sensitive communications. 1002 is now about voices and values (T2), so disregard any course outlines prior to 2023-2024.

Tutorials and lectures are compulsory.

Please refer to AI policy regarding the use of live translation apps in class.

Special consideration via myunsw.edu.au is required for any late assessments, otherwise it is 5 % per day with a maximum of five days to submit.

Plagiarism, including of non-academic sources, and use of AI, e.g Chat GPT beyond translation apps will be referred to the School's ethics officer.

Consulting hours will be available. Please refer to Moodle.

Lectures will sometimes have writing exercises. You'll be invited to share news links, ask questions & comment. Please bring your own device or paper.

Lectures will be recorded via Echo 360.

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

All assessments must be attempted.

Pitch attempt required to be eligible for a passing grade in the original story (this does not mean you will pass).

Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 12 February - 18 February	Lecture	LECTURE: Introduction to the course and what makes a story 'news'. READINGS: refer to Moodle. Note:1004 News Fundamentals does not require previous knowledge of news writing. 1002 (T2) is now a different subject and no longer introduces media writing. TUTORIALS START THIS WEEK
Week 2 : 19 February - 25 February	Lecture	LECTURE Digital News and the development of different news styles, from Inverted Pyramid to blogging live updates. READINGS: Refer to Moodle TUTORIALS: Refer to Moodle
Week 3 : 26 February - 3 March	Lecture	LECTURE: Interviewing and Vox Popping READINGS: Refer to Moodle TUTORIALS: Refer to Moodle
Week 4 : 4 March - 10 March	Lecture	LECTURE: Researching Original Story Ideas and, what do I do with it? READINGS: Refer to Moodle TUTORIALS: Refer to Moodle.
Week 5 : 11 March - 17 March	Lecture	LECTURE Audio news writing, an introduction. Readings : Refer to Moodle Tutorials: Refer to Moodle.
Week 6 : 18 March - 24 March	Reading	Break Week.
Week 7 : 25 March - 31 March	Lecture	LECTURE: Journalism Ethics, and intro to media law . READINGS: Refer to Moodle. TUTORIALS: Refer to Moodle.
	Assessment	Writing and Research Task
Week 8 : 1 April - 7 April	Lecture	LECTURE: Legal Issues for news media communicators and social media managers: Contempt Readings: Refer to Moodle. Tutorial: Refer to Moodle
Week 9 : 8 April - 14 April	Lecture	LECTURE: The role of social media and citizen journalism as a news resource. READINGS Refer to Moodle. TUTORIALS Refer to Moodle.
	Assessment	Original News Story
Week 10 : 15 April - 21 April	Lecture	LECTURE: Revision and Exam preparation TUTORIALS: Refer to Moodle.

Attendance Requirements

Students are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes for the School of the Arts & Media (SAM) courses in which they are enrolled.

Lectures are recorded, and if you are enrolled in the 'online', this means that the in-person lecture is full, but you have the online recording available after the lecture, unless advised the

lecture is hybrid.

Students who do not meet attendance expectations run the risk of failing a course. No additional or special consideration will be provided if a student misses out on essential course information and materials, or misses an assessment task/deadline, due to unexplained absences or an unapproved lack of attendance.

A student may be advised by the Course Convenor to withdraw from the course if significant learning activities are missed. Alternatively, a student may be required to undertake supplementary class(es) or task(s) as prescribed by the Course Convenor.

If assessment tasks have been missed, the student should apply for [Special Consideration](#), accompanied by appropriate documentation.

General Schedule Information

Refer to Moodle for further details on tutorials and readings.

Easter Monday may affect course schedule, please watch out for announcements how we will manage public holiday interruptions.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

TEXTBOOK:

The New News (Tassel, Murphy & Schmitz 2020) available in digital form (buy for 180 days or lifetime) via the [UNSW bookshop / Vital Source Link](#) or at the UNSW bookshop.

High demand available at the library.

If you are producing audio, AUDACITY is a free online audio editing software or the more advanced AUDITION is accessible via ADOBE Creative Cloud on the University lab computers.

The TECHNICAL RESOURCE CENTRE (TRC) is a tech aladdin's cave of audio visual equipment. Borrowing of audio and mobile journalism kits will be available after being shown how to use them in class. The TRC houses experts in audio visual production who work with academics and students.

Recommended Resources

It is recommended students read widely across Australian and international news and current affairs platforms, and this informs weekly news quizzes and assessments.

Suggested free news sites:

SBS News: sbs.com.au/news . SBS also offers news in other languages than English.

ABC: abc.net.au (Note: this is the Australian national news service).

ABCivew news channel: 7.30 report and evening news abc.net.au for online news.

ABC Radio National / Triple J / ABC Sydney Radio

The Guardian

BBC

CNN

Other news sites are subscription based. Check with UNSW library.

Additional Costs

For equity reasons, there are no additional costs in this course.

If you are unsure how to access a resource, please check with your tutor or convenor
k.davies@unsw.edu.au

Course Evaluation and Development

Feedback throughout the course is welcome as well as in 'my experience' surveys. We encourage you to let us know you are struggling or experiencing difficulties at the time, rather than waiting until the end of the course.

1004 is now the introductory news fundamentals course that introduces news sensitive media writing skills. No prior experience is assumed.

The course has evolved from traditional news reporting to include the new media expectations of blogging, social media reporting, mobile journalism and has a greater focus on radio writing. It welcomes advertising and Pr students, who need knowledge of news and news writing skills for

news sensitive communication production.

Narrative news is now covered in features journalism MDIA 2003.

Whilst 1004 covers legal and ethics via contempt, it is strongly advised to continue legal and ethical studies with the 1002 course, now T2, Voices and Values. The previous 1002 course content that introduced foundational media writing skills has been retired.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	Kerrie Davies		Room 311C Robert Webster		Consulting hours will be set, or via appointment.	Yes	Yes

Other Useful Information

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided).

Please see: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines> for essential student information relating to:

- UNSW and Faculty policies and procedures;
- Student Support Services;
- Dean's List;
- review of results;
- credit transfer;
- cross-institutional study and exchange;
- examination information;
- enrolment information;
- Special Consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;

And other essential academic information.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.
- Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.
- Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.
- Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

The UNSW Academic Skills support offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items. UNSW Library has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW, but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your

needs

- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Use of AI for assessments

As AI applications continue to develop, and technology rapidly progresses around us, we remain committed to our values around academic integrity at UNSW. Where the use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, has been permitted by your course convener, they must be properly credited and your submissions must be substantially your own work.

In cases where the use of AI has been prohibited, please respect this and be aware that where unauthorised use is detected, penalties will apply.

[Use of AI for assessments | UNSW Current Students](#)

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au

Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin, you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support, you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone, you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, alternative submission details will be stated on your course's Moodle site. For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Late Submission Penalty

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per calendar day,
- for all assessments where a penalty applies,
- capped at five calendar days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines and to request [Special Consideration](#) as early as possible before the deadline. Support with [Time Management is available here](#).

School Contact Information

School of the Arts and Media

Location: Room 312, Level 3 Robert Webster Building

Opening Hours: Monday -Friday, 9am - 5 pm

Email: sam@unsw.edu.au

Phone: +612 9385 4856

web: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/our-schools/arts-media>