

Las Positas College  
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**Course Outline for MSCM 16A**  
**EXPRESS COLLEGE NEWSPAPER A**  
**Effective: Fall 2013**

**I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

MSCM 16A — EXPRESS COLLEGE NEWSPAPER A — 3.00 units

An applied course in which students practice and refine beginning journalism skills, including recognizing, acquiring, producing, and distributing content for the print and online editions of the student newspaper, the Express. The focus of study is on basic news, feature, and opinion stories. Students are introduced to concepts related to photojournalism, business management, graphic arts, design, social media, and leadership and editing skills. The course includes ethical, practical, and legal issues in journalism.

1.00 Units Lecture 2.00 Units Lab

**Strongly Recommended**

- Eligibility for ENG 1A -

**Grading Methods:**

Letter or P/NP

**Discipline:**

|                       | <b>MIN</b> |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <b>Lecture Hours:</b> | 18.00      |
| <b>Lab Hours:</b>     | 108.00     |
| <b>Total Hours:</b>   | 126.00     |

**II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1**

**III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:**

**Before entering this course, it is strongly recommended that the student should be able to:**

- A. -Eligibility for ENG 1A

**IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:**

**Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:**

- A. explain and demonstrate skills related to producing different types of stories;
- B. explain the roles of writers, editors, the online and print production staff, and the business staff as outlined in course materials, take part in issue planning and in meeting all deadlines, and explain and demonstrate specific skills pertaining to role assumed;
- C. take active part in overall story development, beat coverage, application of newspaper policies, print and online production, and collaborative decision making;
- D. develop and apply skills in writing, editing, critical thinking, page design, photo planning, and online content development;
- E. explain, practice, and demonstrate journalistic style;
- F. explain the roles of photojournalism, social media, and multimedia in journalism;
- G. work to improve the print and online newspaper continuously to better meet the needs of the readership of the Las Positas College community;
- H. practice journalistic standards of ethics and explain press law regarding matters of libel and privacy.

**V. CONTENT:**

- A. Preparing for, researching, and writing stories (news stories, feature stories, opinion stories, entertainment stories, sports stories, and column writing)
  1. Defining news worthiness and applying news judgment
  2. Finding and recognizing stories
  3. Conducting research and interviews
  4. Organizing your thinking
  5. Writing the story
  6. Revising the story
  7. Working with an editor on the story
  8. Reporting on meetings, speeches, special events, and specific beats
- B. Overview of newspaper staff and the production process
  1. The roles of writers, editors, business staff, and the online and print production staff
  2. The elements of production, including issue planning, story assignments, deadlines, editing, revisions, online and print

- production, and post-production
- C. Preparing for print and online issues of the newspaper
  - 1. Story development
  - 2. Beat coverage
  - 3. Newspaper policies
  - 4. Functioning as a member of a team.
  - 5. Page design
  - 6. Web content management
- D. Writing, layout, design, and online and print production
  - 1. Introduction to print and online writing, including headline and outline writing
  - 2. Practice writing in print and online, including headline and outline writing
  - 3. Introduction to layout and graphic design
  - 4. Practice using layout and graphic design
  - 5. Introduction to online production
  - 6. Practice using online production methods
- E. Journalistic style, standards, and traditional news values
  - 1. The Associated Press Style Guide
    - a. Overview
    - b. Use
  - 2. The inverted pyramid and other styles
  - 3. The importance of the lead and nutgraph
  - 4. Accuracy as the foundation of journalism
- F. Beginning photojournalism and multimedia techniques
  - 1. Shooting and selecting photographs for print and online publication
  - 2. Planning for multimedia, including videos and slideshows
  - 3. Using social media to enhance newspaper coverage and outreach
- G. The newspaper's evolving audience
  - 1. Outreach
  - 2. Advertising
  - 3. Online presence
    - a. Website
    - b. Social media
  - 4. Distribution
- H. Ethical and legal issues in journalism and photojournalism
  - 1. Ethical issues
  - 2. Legal issues

#### VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Individualized Instruction** - coached supervision in necessary activities such as copyediting, online and print production, and proofreading
- B. **Critique** - Weekly "Hell Sheets" in which the class critiques issues for strengths and weaknesses
- C. **Field Trips** - to relevant locations such as newspapers or television stations
- D. **Guest Lecturers** - in media or related fields
- E. **Individualized Instruction** - individual conferences about work produced
- F. brainstorming/planning/discussing at staff meetings and in editorial board meetings
- G. group decision-making in which students plan, delegate and assign jobs, choose editorial topics, govern issues regarding ethics, taste, and legal considerations, with advisers providing appropriate advice and counsel
- H. **Projects** - assignments in writing, style, and standards
- I. **Lecture** - covering all phases of newsgathering, writing, online and print production, and distribution

#### VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading: Read Chapter 5, "Newswriting" in *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide 2nd Edition* and complete a Reading Check in which the student demonstrates understanding of the elements of a news story and corrects some practice sentences for appropriate journalistic style.
- B. Writing: Prepare for, research, and write a story about recycling on campus.

#### VIII. EVALUATION:

##### A. **Methods**

- 1. Quizzes
- 2. Research Projects
- 3. Portfolios
- 4. Projects
- 5. Group Projects
- 6. Class Participation
- 7. Class Work

##### B. **Frequency**

- 1. Weekly
  - a. Quizzes: Reading Checks related to how student newspapers function and appropriate use of journalistic style.
  - b. Research Projects: Research, interview, and develop a story for publication.
  - c. Group Projects: Recognizing stories, acquiring stories, producing an online and print edition, and distributing the newspaper are weekly group projects.
  - d. Class Participation: Students participate in staff meetings and critiques of the newspaper.
  - e. Class Work: Students work on stories and production of the newspaper during lab time.
- 2. Final Project: Students review a year's worth of newspapers and select entries for at least one journalism contest.
- 3. Semester-long Project: Students create a portfolio of work.

#### IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. Kanigel, Rachele (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide* (2nd ed.). West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- 2. Associated Press (2011). *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law* (46th ed.). New York, New York : Basic Books.
- 3. Harrower, Tim and Julie Elman (2008). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook* (7th ed.). New York, New York : McGraw Hill.

#### X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: