

## SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

### Course Code, Number, and Title:

JOUR 1100: Introduction to the News Media

### Course Format:

[Course format may vary by instructor. The typical course format would be:]

Lecture 3 h + Seminar 1 h + Lab 0 h

**Credits:** 3

**Transfer credit:** For information, visit [bctransferguide.ca](http://bctransferguide.ca)

### Course Description, Prerequisites, Corequisites:

This course introduces students to the role and function of the news media in a modern society, its important effects on people's lives, and its current challenges. It explores the role of the news media in enabling citizens to make informed decisions in a democratic society, and how well the media is fulfilling that role. It also examines basic journalism values such as accuracy, impartiality, and ethics. This course would be useful to students considering becoming journalists, planning studies related to mass media, or to those pursuing a career in business, law, public service, entertainment or other professions in the public eye. This course does not teach journalism skills.

Prerequisites: LET level 3; LPI with a minimum 26 on the essay and one of 5 in English usage, 5 in sentence structure, or 10 in reading comprehension; BC English 12 or equivalent with a minimum 80%; BC English Literature 12 with a minimum 80%; BC English First Peoples 12 with a minimum 80%; a university-level English course for which Langara College awards transfer credit, with a minimum "C" grade; or a minimum "C" in ENGL 1120; or an "S" in one of ENGL 1107, 1108, or 1110.

### Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- describe news media: what it is, what it does, and how it significantly influences their daily lives and their society
- identify news-gathering and presentation processes, good and bad journalism based on traditional journalism values, and the challenges facing the news media today
- apply critical-thinking skills, especially pertaining to media process and product
- critically assess information disseminated by both traditional and new media in terms of content, context, and relevance in a democratic society

**Instructor(s):** TBA

**Office:** TBA      **Phone:** 604 323 XXXX      **Email:** TBA

**Office Hours:** TBA

snəwəyət leləm Langara College acknowledges that we are located on the unceded territory of the Musqueam people.

## **Textbook and Course Materials:**

[Textbook selection may vary by instructor. An example of texts and course materials for this course might be:]

For textbook information, visit: [https://mycampusstore.langara.bc.ca/buy\\_courselisting.asp?selTerm=3|8](https://mycampusstore.langara.bc.ca/buy_courselisting.asp?selTerm=3|8)

Note: *This course may use an electronic (online) instructional resource that is located outside of Canada for mandatory graded class work. You may be required to enter personal information, such as your name and email address, to log in to this resource. This means that your personal information could be stored on servers located outside of Canada and may be accessed by U.S. authorities, subject to federal laws. Where possible, you may log in with an email pseudonym as long as you provide the pseudonym to me so I can identify you when reviewing your class work.*

## **Assessments and Weighting:**

**Final Exam %**

**Other Assessments %**

(An example of other assessments might be:) %

Midterm Exam: 25%

Quizzes/Tests: 10%

Critique: 25%

Participation: 10%

Final Essay: 30%

Number of assignments: Two major assignments, approx five news quizzes

Participation format: Seminar participation

Number and type of writing assignments: All are written assignments

Proportion of individual and group work:

Individual: 100%

**Grading System:** Letter grade

Specific grading schemes will be detailed in each course section outline.

Passing grade: D

No final exam

*This generic outline is for planning purposes only.*

## Topics Covered:

[Topics covered may vary by instructor. An example of topics covered might be:]

Introduction: What is journalism? A response to the innate need to know, a mirror of society, a search for truth, a watchdog, the people's voice? A survey of key concepts emphasizing socially responsible enabling of well-informed citizen decision-making.

2. A short history of free speech and journalism from the Roman-posted bulletins to the Middle Ages authoritarian control of news, from the libertarian concepts of Milton's free marketplace of ideas and Locke's media as guardian of individual rights to press barons' Yellow Journalism and Hutchins' social responsibility as antidote, to modern concentrated converged media.

3. Technology as a great driver of evolved journalism: Town crier to printing press to the telegraph and print's inverted pyramid style, to radio's post-literacy immediacy and television's graphic stimulation of impressions, and the Web's ubiquitous unmediated individualism.

4. A cross-Canada survey of the media. Outlets, markets, ownership and jobs. Consumers, audiences and other demographics. Plus the effect of media, including advertising, on public awareness, understanding, and behaviour.

5. The media elsewhere: Global practices, alternative media. A quick contrast of Western models with other media models, plus consideration of the alternative press models.

6. Examining basic journalism skills: a survey of accuracy and impartiality as professionals' standards; of truth-seeking, setting context and filtering out spin as core objectives and challenges.

7. Ethics: Survey of the conventional rules and judgments of responsible journalism such as good taste, intrusion (privacy) and conflict of interest.

8. Regulation and political control. A survey of media law and regulatory processes in Canada; brief examination of key cases of political interference (for example, Alberta Press Act, Quebec Padlock law).

9. Industry convergence and corporate concentration and profit imperatives. A brief examination of the conflict between corporate media's priorities and journalism's social responsibility. Also, the perils of sensationalism.

10. Free speech, hate speech and fatwahs. An examination of significant contemporary dilemmas, for example, Doug Collins' columns vs. Human Rights; the Zundel case; the Danish cartoons as free speech or market-driven incitement; Islamic vs. Western media portrayals. Also, a look at corporate pressures and advertiser influence.

11. Blindness and manipulation: An examination of consistent flaws in journalism such as myopia, stereotyping and self-censorship/bias; their roots and responses.

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12. Some remedies. Examples of courageous commitment to conventional values: Breaking great stories, resisting personal or political intimidation or corporate pressure; new techniques including civic journalism, citizen reporting and engaged journalism.

13. Much more media: The spectrum expanded by the web, multiple platforms, instantaneity and RSSs. A survey of converged sources in operation. The stratification of sources: Print ponders, television excites and the web offers unmediated everything.

14. Now and soon: A survey of the technology-driven issues. Blogs make everybody a journalist? Are web sources and the citizen-driven sites journalism? Disinhibition, ethics and converged superficiality. The impact of technologies and multi-platform networks.

As a student at Langara, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself and complying with the following policies:

**College Policies:**

[E1003 - Student Code of Conduct](#)

[F1004 - Code of Academic Conduct](#)

[E2008 - Academic Standing - Academic Probation and Academic Suspension](#)

[E2006 - Appeal of Final Grade](#)

[F1002 - Concerns about Instruction](#)

[E2011 - Withdrawal from Courses](#)

**Departmental/Course Policies:**

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