

Journalism / Newspaper I / Newspaper II Syllabus 2025-2026

Ms. Williams, room 23

Williamsc@hooksisd.net

Conference: 3rd period (A-Days)

Course Objectives: By the end of this course, you will:

1. Understand the core principles and ethics of journalism.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in news writing, feature writing, and opinion pieces.
3. Develop effective interviewing and research skills.
4. Edit and revise articles for clarity, accuracy, and style.
5. Utilize digital tools for multimedia journalism, including photography, video, and social media.
6. Recognize the importance of diversity and inclusivity in journalistic reporting.
7. Practice responsible and unbiased reporting to inform and engage the audience.
8. Develop a personal portfolio showcasing your best journalistic work.

Special note about our class: Our class is comprised of 3 sections. This means that we have advanced students as well as beginner students. Therefore, the class will have a unique structure. We will all remain on the same unit; however, assignments, level of rigor, expectations, and materials used will be differentiated between the sections.

Required Materials:

- Small 3 ring notebook for interviewing
- Pens and pencils
- Notebook paper
- Flash-drive
- A professional portfolio binder with 3 rings (example will be shown in class)

Specific Requirements:

Students will be required to attend a **minimum of 1** journalism UIL practice meet (times and dates to be determined).



Students will be given a journalism shirt to wear to journalism events. Students are prohibited from wearing their shirt unless they are at a journalism competition, working a game for The Buzz, or unless specified by the teacher. In the event of damage to or loss of the shirt, students will be charged a \$15 replacement fee.

Students will have the opportunity to conduct interviews during class. All interviews must be by **appointment only** (*new administrative rule*) and students must always behave properly. Any student found breaking the school conduct code while interviewing will be removed from journalism.

Any student representing Hooks High School (this includes the newspaper) is prohibited from having hair that is not of a **natural** color (*administrative rule*).

Technology:

Cell phones or any personal devices will **NOT** be allowed in journalism class (per Texas state law).

We will utilize Google Classroom regularly. You must "join" my class by going to classroom.google.com and entering your class code: **6f3hzqx2**

Students will also be required to join the class "remind" through the remind app. Code: **39ee979**

ALL students must bring their school issued Chromebooks every class period.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated under any circumstances. Cheating, copying, or plagiarism of any form will result in the following consequences:

- failure of the assignment
- disciplinary referral
- parent contact

JUST DON'T DO IT!!

General Course Outline (Subject to Change)

Module 1: Introduction to Journalism

- The role and significance of journalism in society
- History and evolution of journalism
- Ethical considerations and responsibilities of journalists

Module 2: News Reporting and Writing

- The structure of a news story: The inverted pyramid
- Identifying newsworthy topics and angles
- Conducting interviews and gathering information
- Writing headlines, leads, and body paragraphs for news articles

Module 3: Feature Writing

- Characteristics of feature stories: Human interest, profiles, etc.
- In-depth research and interviewing for features
- Writing engaging and compelling feature articles

Module 4: Opinion and Editorial Writing

- Understanding editorials and op-ed pieces
- Art of persuasive writing and argumentation
- Crafting informed and balanced opinions

Module 5: Journalism Photography and Graphics

- Principles of photojournalism and storytelling through images
- Capturing powerful photographs and using photo editing tools
- Creating infographics and visual elements for news stories

Module 6: Digital Journalism and Multimedia

- Transition to digital journalism
- Blogging and online reporting
- Introduction to audio and video journalism
- Leveraging social media for news distribution

Module 7: Investigative Journalism

- The art of investigative reporting
- Research techniques and sources for investigative stories

- Presenting findings responsibly and ethically

Module 8: Editing and Revising

- The role of the editor in journalism
- Editing for clarity, accuracy, and style
- Fact-checking and verification processes

Module 9: Ethics and Diversity in Journalism

- Balancing the public's right to know with ethical considerations
- Representing diverse voices and perspectives
- Reporting sensitively on sensitive and tragic topics

Module 10: Final Portfolio and Reflection

- Assembling your best work in a professional portfolio
- Course reflection and self-assessment

Assessment Methods:

- In-class writing exercises and workshops
- Quizzes and assessments on journalism principles and techniques
- Interviewing and reporting assignments
- Multimedia journalism projects (photography, audio, video)
- Peer editing and feedback sessions

Both my student and I have read the class syllabus and agree to comply (please sign below and return):

Parent _____

Date_____

Student_____

Date_____