JOUR 3716 - Feature Writing

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 01, CRN 43777,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Richard Logan

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Mr.
Instructor Professional Qualifications:

BS, Journalism News, Kent State University, 1978
BA, French, Kent State University, 1978
MA, Communications and International Studies, The American University, Washington, D.C., 1983

Instructor Office Location:
Meshel Hall laboratory 116 or 115 Meshel Hall before or after class and by appointment.

Instructor Office Phone:
No office phone. But you can reach me for call or text at **330-501-3012**.

Course Description

3716. Feature Writing. Focus on writing stories that use facts, detail, structure and style to tell compelling non-fiction narratives. Students will pitch, report and write content including personality profiles, human interest stories and interviews. Prereq.: ENGL 1551 or ENGL 1551H. 3 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Art and Craft of Feature Writing	Blundell, William E.	978-0-452-26158-7

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Feature Writing Tentative Schedule of Topics, Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	Syllabus and Blackboard documents on broad overview of feature writing.	Course overview. Introductions of instructor, students. Feature Writing Fundamentals and differences from news writing.	Prepare any questions on syllabus and course content. HW assignment on quick analysis of feature story due for Sept. 1.
8/31	Blackboard documents on basics of strong writing in any mode. Blackboard docs on fundamental of AP style (still used in feature writing) for review.	Review and discuss Horrors of Writing in any genre. Review and discuss AP style fundamentals to avoid any problems down the road.	Feature HW due start of class 9/1. Horrors/AP HW assigned for 9/8 due date.
9/7	Review lengthy Blackboard post titled "Feature Writing Today."	Discuss idea generation for feature writing and steps toward producing a viable feature.	Horrors/AP HW due in class 9/8. Short content quiz from first three weeks at end of class 9/10.

9/14	Read Chapter 1 of "The Art and Craft of Feature Writing."	How and where to get feature ideas. Seeking out productive sources. Master skills of synthesis and extrapolation. Differentiate between juvenile vs. mature feature stories.	Feature planning HW assignment in the form of a scavenger hunt. Due 9/23 in class.
9/21	Read Chapter 2 of "The Art and Craft of Feature Writing."	Review detailed guidance from Wall Street Journal on types of profile stories, emphases in them and how to build them effectively.	Assign MF1: Profile feature. You will develop plans, central theme, research/interview, draft, write revise a feature profile story. You may choose either the general feature or the microcosm (roundup) feature that will be discussed in class. This will be due Oct. 9.
9/28	Chapter 2, Continued. Review profile, interviewing skill sheets on our Blackboard site.	More presentations and discussion on profile writing. Strategies for landing and conducting successful interview.	Work aggressively on completing draft for MF1. Raise any questions you have in class or to me individually. Work to have rough draft done for in-class one-on-one workshops next week.
10/5	Workshop week.	One on one discussions with each student on rough drafts. Each should last about 10 minutes.	Bring your completed draft for review. Also bring any questions you have about the project. Final submission of MF1 through Blackboard no later than 11:59 p.m. Oct. 9.
10/12	Read Chapter Three in Blundell Textbook.	Review importance of time, scope, variety and movement in feature stories. Discuss dimensions of feature stories per Blundell.	HW assignment on feature story critique due 10/20. Quiz on textbook material, Chs. 1-3 on 10/15.
10/19	Read Chapters 4, 5 of Blundell	Focus on planning and organizing feature story content well following the detailed principles and protocols of the Wall Street Journal formula.	Assign MF2: Campus or Community News Feature. Due Nov. 6.
10/26	Blundell Chapter 6.	Analyzing in-depth the key story elements of a feature with an emphasis on leads, transitions, numbers, people, quotes/ paraphrases, effective conclusions.	Intensive work on your MF2 project.
11/2	Blundell, Chapter 7.	Importance of specificity and meanness in use of language in feature stories. Recognize and AVOID nothingburger empty nouns and verbs in feature writing. Be creative.	THursday's class will be Workshop on MF2 but shorter five-minute sessions per student. Be prepared. MF2 final draft must be submitted to BB no later than 11:59 p.m. Nov. 6.
11/9	Blundell, Chapter 7	More on wordcraft strategies. Review fundamentals of WSJ format. Discuss ideas for MF3.	Assign MF3: Major investigative news feature. Due no later than 11:59 p.m. Dec. 7.
11/16	MF3 work days.	Assistance with any and all troubles organizing and drafting MF3.	Quiz on Blundell Chapter 4 to 7 in class 11/17. Available for Workshop Review for anyone ready.
11/23	MF3 WORKSHOP.	One-on-one conferences on MF3. (Some may have to take place outside of class time) No class Thursday for Thanksgiving.	Aggressively complete draft for review by instructor.
11/30	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS	Each student will present a visual presentation to the class on the highlights of his or her MF3. Also discuss problems along the way and how you tackled them.	Be prepared to present by 12-1 though presentations will continue through 12/3 class.

12/7	FINAL EXAMINATION	Exam completion.	Exam will be posted to BlackBoard and will be due no later than 11:59 p.m. Dec. 10.

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.