

## JOUR 3716 - Feature Writing

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 01, CRN 43777,

Credit hours: 3

### Instructor

Richard Logan

Email: rplogan@ysu.edu

### 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.<br>Introductions of instructor, students.<br>Feature Writing Fundamentals and differences from news writing.        | Prepare any questions on syllabus and course content.<br>HW assignment on quick analysis of feature story due for Sept. 1. |
| 8/31    | Blackboard documents on basics of strong writing in any mode.<br>Blackboard docs on fundamental of AP style (still used in feature writing) for review. | Review and discuss Horrors of Writing in any genre.<br>Review and discuss AP style fundamentals to avoid any problems down the road. | Feature HW due start of class 9/1.<br>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.<br>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.<br>Seeking out productive sources.<br>Master skills of synthesis and extrapolation.<br>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.<br>Review profile, interviewing skill sheets on our Blackboard site. | More presentations and discussion on profile writing.<br>Strategies for landing and conducting successful interview.                                                                  | Work aggressively on completing draft for MF1.<br>Raise any questions you have in class or to me individually.<br>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.<br>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.<br>Discuss dimensions of feature stories per Blundell.                                                     | HW assignment on feature story critique due 10/20.<br>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.<br>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.<br>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.<br>Review fundamentals of WSJ format.<br>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.<br>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)<br>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.