



Grady High School  
2019-2020 COURSE SYLLABUS  
**Journalism 1, Introductory Journalism**

Teacher: Ellerton  
Room Number: E106  
Semester: **Fall 2019**

Phone Number: 404-802-3001  
Email: **@atlanta.k12.ga.us**  
Tutorial Days: **Fridays**

Textbook:

Supplementary texts as needed, including Melvin Mencher's News Reporting and Writing, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, Glencoe Matters Online PDFs

Students are required to read all Google Classroom posted journalism curriculum materials, including article links, presentations and videos and supplementary handouts

Tutorial Hours: 3:30-4:30

Website: [www.ellertonjournalism.weebly.com](http://www.ellertonjournalism.weebly.com)

Tutorial Location: E106

**Course Description:**

Explores journalistic writing through analysis of newspapers, magazines and other consumer publications in print and online; concentrates on purpose, influence, structure, and language use through reading, writing, and critical thinking. Covers news gathering, ethics, copy writing, photography, editing and revising.

Prerequisite:

The ability to express your thoughts effectively in writing. The ability to speak with others and gather information. An inquisitive nature.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This is a writing and communications class based on the traditional principles of American journalism. At the completion of this course, it is expected that the student will have an appreciation and a sound understanding of the basic tenets of the practice of journalism. Students will understand the First Amendment protections afforded the press and the student press; they will understand the importance of accuracy and fairness in the presentation of news. Students will leave the class with basic skills to move on to additional courses in journalism with an understanding of what is expected of a journalist in both scholastic and professional settings. Students enrolled in this class will have current training in current trends in journalism, including design, online and multimedia journalistic techniques.

Students will use this class as a training ground for Grady's publications both in print and online. Students will engage not only in the study of journalism, but in the practice of the craft as the primary means of learning and appreciating the valuable role that journalism and journalists play in the American democracy.

Students will understand the processes of news gathering, identifying instances of news manipulation as well as techniques for writing in various journalistic forms, including hard news and narrative journalism and features, editorials and sports. Students are expected to read news for story ideas as well as for writing points on how to structure different types of articles.

**Note: This class requires dedication and work outside the class/school day. It's also expected that each student will be fully engaged and productive during class time.**

For many students, this course is one of the more challenging, yet rewarding they will encounter in high school because you are expected to produce quality writing that is free of errors in fact and grammar and usage that will be read by a real audience and just not a teacher. With that exposure comes a level of expectation.

Do your best to grow as a reporter and writer. If you apply yourself and work to learn how to do what is required of you in the right way and to the best of your ability and practice those skills everyday, you will see a major difference in the quality of your writing and in your ability to analyze and present information. This skill will serve you well across your high school experience in other classes that require you to think and analyze and will serve you well beyond high school as a college student or in the work world. So, take it seriously and work to get the most out of your experience

**Course Content Standard - ([www.georgiastandards.org](http://www.georgiastandards.org)):**

<https://www.georgiastandards.org/Georgia-Standards/Documents/ELA-9-12-Journalism-Georgia-Standards.pdf>

**CLASS OUTLINE/CALENDAR:**

This calendar serves as a general guideline of the skills and topics to be covered. The order of this syllabus may change and you will be notified at least a week ahead if weekly topics are changed or switched, particularly if news events warrant a particular topic being covered because its relevant at the time. Also, do not be intimidated by the amount of topics we will cover, the class will be adjusted as needed to allow for mastery of skills.

Week 1:	<p><b>Ethics and Keeping a Distance With Sources</b></p> <p>Overview of Ethical Responsibilities/Ethical dilemmas, reporting the truth, correcting mistakes</p> <p>Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics</p> <p>Off-limits sources and influences: friends, family, someone with close personal ties, someone who promises you something of value for coverage. Money in the envelope example.</p> <p>Characteristics of a reporter</p>
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	<p>Introduction to Journalistic Expectations: Press Conference, Intro to Interviewing</p>
Week 2:	<p><b>What's News? Do's and Don'ts For Reporters</b> Journalism History, Terminology</p> <p>First Amendment Issues, Hazelwood, Tinker Cases, Censorship, Freedom of Expression</p> <p>Libel, slander, the law and potential for legal issues Times Vs Sullivan</p> <p>Bias, objectivity, personal feelings and attitudes.</p> <p>What is news? Where does News Come From? Developing News Judgment.</p> <p>Components of a news story Accuracy, Attribution, Verification, Fairness, Objectivity, Human Interest, Brevity, News Filters, Direct Observation vs Second-hand accounts</p> <p>Journalistic Writing, short sentences/paragraphs, extensive use of relevant and interesting quotes, background and explanation, style and active voice, subject-verb-object.</p> <p>AP Style, AP stylebook</p>
Week 3:	<p><b>Introduction to News Writing</b> Structure: the lead, types of leads, inverted pyramid and lead-quote,-transition-quote structures for news stories</p> <p>Where do stories come from? Pitching stories and selling editors on stories:</p> <p>Writing budget lines, including slug, story description, art and graphics components, estimate length and completion date.</p> <p>Reporting is key to writing effective and complete stories. Common reasons why beginning journalists struggle-lack of reporting, relying too much on writing.</p>
	<p><b>Finding and Cultivating Sources</b> Effectively finding sources and gathering information.</p> <p>What are the different types of sources available to reporters? What steps do you take to determine the credibility of sources? In a school environment which sources are most credible? What are short-comings of relying only on official sources? In what situations are official sources absolutely necessary?</p>

	<p>There's always a motive. Determine what's the primary motive for your source, particularly in controversial matters: an axe to grind, revenge, personal gain, just providing information?</p> <p>Anonymous sources and off and on-the-record reporting.</p> <p>How to interview and record notes to gather enough information to write a story. Developing effective open-ended questions and intuitive follow-ups based off source's response-listening and thinking on feet.</p> <p>Interviewing strangers and stepping outside comfort zone.</p>
<p>Week 5:</p>	<p><b>Interviewing With An Ear For Quotes</b>  Interviewing for different purposes: news vs features and profile interviews.</p> <p>Interviewing for effective quotes: having an ear for quotes, recognizing quotable material from interview notes vs material that should be paraphrased, yet attributed to a source.</p> <p>Effectively using quotes of various types: direct quote, indirect quote, partial quote. Where not to use quotes. What quote to identify as potential end of article quotes/story kickers.</p> <p>The difficult interview: interviewing reluctant and non-cooperative sources, interviewing sources or administrators on controversial issues, interviewing sources in times of tragedy, interviewing athletes and coaches in the heat of the moment after a big loss or disappointment.</p> <p>Opportunity for fair comment, in cases of no comment, seek story balance elsewhere. There are always multiple sides to any story and somewhere among each lies a degree of truth.</p>
<p>Week 6:</p>	<p><b>Details Make Stories Interesting</b>  Eye ball details and other immersive reporting techniques to add detail, texture to put the reader on the scene to experience the story with all five senses whenever possible.</p> <p>Making sound reporting observations, relevant and accurate observations, limitations of a story, a slice of life, reporter as intruder, not becoming part of the coverage.</p>

	<p>No story can comprehensively cover a topic, determine focus/angle and find details to tell the most interesting, informative, accurate, balanced and unbiased story.</p> <p>Building background, finding and cultivating sources, types of sources, how to use sources, how to check sources for credibility, bias</p> <p>Weekly articles due</p>
Week 7:	<p><b>Layers of Reporting-Looking for Depth</b> Reporting and writing for substance, moving beyond just the surface of basic reporting to meaningful enterprise stories.</p> <p>Layers of reporting. Level 1-Source Originated, Level 2-Spontaneous Events, Enterprise Reporting, Level 3-Interpretation and Explanation</p> <p>Public relations vs journalism, what's the difference? Substance vs fluff and media manipulation</p> <p>Freedom of Information Act</p>
Week 8:	<p><b>Covering Events</b> Event coverage, covering a speech, a meeting, a news conference, panel discussions and determining a news peg and the most important information to focus a story</p> <p>Finding the interesting in the mundane, focusing and supplementing prepared remarks with insightful reporting.</p>
Week 9:	<p><b>Intro to Beat Reporting-School News</b> Introduction to beat reporting, covering a topical area, a geographical area, an organization or office, a sports team, politics and arts and entertainment.</p> <p>Hard news school beat coverage</p>
Week 10:	<p><b>Intro to Beat Reporting-Local News and Politics</b> Introduction to beat reporting, covering a topical area, a geographical area, an organization or office, a sports team, politics and arts and entertainment.</p> <p>Hard news local news beat coverage</p>
Week 11:	<p><b>Political and editorial writing-The Editorial</b></p> <p>Commentary and reporting for facts as a basis for editorials and commentary</p>
Week 12:	<p><b>Political and editorial writing-The Op-Ed Column</b></p> <p>Commentary and reporting for facts as a basis for editorials and commentary</p>

Week 13:	<b>Sports Game Coverage</b> Sports Reporting and Writing Sports Game Coverage, terminology, sports stylistic expectations
Week 14:	<b>Sports Trends and Issues</b> Sports Reporting and Writing Sports News, Sports Trends and Issues
Week 15:	<b>Sports Features</b> Sports Reporting and Writing Sports Features, Human Interest
Week 16:	<b>Features-The Review</b> The movie, book, music, concert, theatrical and food, restaurant and leisure review
Week 17:	<b>Features-The Personal Column</b> Let personality and perspective shine through, the how to story, the personal experience story, quirky-off beat creative stories
Week 18:	<b>Features-People</b> Covering People, The personality profile,

**Evaluation and Grading:**

**Activities and Assessments:**

Assessments will consist of teacher-designed exams. However, the most frequent assessment will consist of evaluation of written news articles including elements such as graphics, photography, layout and design. Assigned articles are to be submitted by email by the end of class on due date to be considered on time. Late articles will be penalized.

Course Components	Weights	Grading Scale	
News article and weekly assignments	50%	100-90	A
Classwork, editing and rewriting	15%	89-80	B
Quizzes	10%	79-70	C
Exams	10%	69-0	F
End of semester feature/project grade	15%	Not Evaluated	NE
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>		

**Campus Portal for Parents and Guardians:** Visit - <https://ic.apsk12.org/portal> to view class schedules, attendance records and grades. To activate your account, visit the school to receive your login (activation key).

**Required Materials:**

USB flash drive

Reporters notebook/Pocket sized note pad  
Ink pens, black or blue and red  
Digital camera/mobile phone camera  
Computer access outside school hours

Supplemental Texts:

Daily Newspaper-Atlanta Journal Constitution  
Community newspapers  
Monthly Magazines  
Online News Sites  
Local Television and Radio News  
Cable News Outlets  
Teacher handouts

Useful Websites:

<http://www.grady.uga.edu/gspa/> Georgia Scholastic Press Association-State Newspaper Awards  
<http://www.studentpress.org/> National Scholastic Press Association- National Newspaper Awards  
<http://www.splc.org/> Student Press Law Center  
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/cspa/> Columbia Scholastic Press Association  
<http://quillandscroll.org> Quill and Scroll Journalism Honor Society  
**AJC.com Atlanta Journal Constitution**  
**CNN.com-Cable News Network**  
**SPJ.org-Society of Professional Journalists-Code of Ethics**

**School-wide Behavioral Expectations:** be present; be respectful; be responsible; be on task; be peaceful, productive problem solvers.

**Classroom Expectations:**

Plagiarism in any form or misrepresentation of facts, fabricated information is not allowed.  
Students are to report to class on time.  
All assignments must be completed by established deadlines.  
Please do not complete or work on any other work during this class.  
Students are expected to be polite and respectful toward others during discussions and interactions.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS:** It is important that students are responsible and meet established due dates for assignments. A late assignment is defined as work submitted after the teacher collected the assignment. **All missing/not turned in assignments will be recorded in Infinite Campus with an "M-Missing" designation.**

**MISSING ASSIGNMENTS (late assignments or unexcused absences):** Students with late assignments or unexcused absences will be expected to submit missed work within two weeks of the end of the grading periods. The deadlines for missing assignments are as follows:

- Midterm is October 11<sup>th</sup>. Deadline September 30<sup>th</sup> (for assignments from August 12<sup>th</sup>-Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>)
- End of Semester is December 20<sup>th</sup>. Deadline is December 9<sup>th</sup> (for assignments from September 30<sup>th</sup>-December 6<sup>th</sup>)
- Midterm is March 13<sup>th</sup>. Deadline is March 2<sup>nd</sup> (for assignments from January 6<sup>th</sup>-through February 28<sup>th</sup>)
- End of Semester is May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Deadline is May 11<sup>th</sup> (for assignments from March 2<sup>nd</sup> through May 8<sup>th</sup>)

*As noted above, all missing/not turned in assignments will be recorded in Infinite Campus with an "M-Missing" designation.*

***Late assignments will be assessed a 20% penalty or more for assignments turned in late and incomplete.***

**MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS (Excused Absences):** Students with an excused absence will be expected to submit missed work on or before the third class meeting after the absence. Pre-announced assignments are due upon return to school.

**REASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY:** Reassessment opportunities are available for all students on assessments only. The reassessment will be a newly generated teacher assessment and the reassessment score will replace the original score. The reassessment can occur during the class period, tutorial, and/or a lunch-and-learn session (at the teacher's discretion).

### **School-wide Expectations:**

**MASTERY LEARNING:** With mastery learning, a unit of material is taught, and student understanding is evaluated before students are able to move on to the next unit. Students who have not shown mastery for a particular unit will receive feedback and support in reaching mastery. They may be given practice exercises, study guides, group work or complementary resources to help them improve and achieve mastery. Students who demonstrate mastery of the content for a particular unit are given enrichment exercises like special projects, tasks or academic games to further or broaden their knowledge of the material.

**PROGRESS REPORTS:** Parents and guardians are informed when students are making unsatisfactory progress in classes. Poor performance will be reported to parents and guardians as soon as problems are evident. Progress reports with plans for remediation will be provided for all students making unsatisfactory progress, and parent-guardians conferences must be scheduled. Unsatisfactory grades should never come as a surprise to parents, guardians, or students. Also, see Board Policy Administrative Regulation IHA-R(1) under "Students in danger of not meeting academic expectations" for further information. Teachers will:



- Contact parents/guardians early in the semester if academic, attendance, or behavioral difficulties are apparent.
- Notify the counselor, Student Support Team (SST)/Response to Intervention (RTI) Chair, and/or an Assistant Principal of serious problems that are affecting classroom performance.
- Set up parent conferences as necessary.

**ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY:** Students wanting to participate in athletic programs governed by the GHSA and extracurricular activities must meet eligibility requirements to participate. The Athletic Director (and the Extracurricular Activities sponsors) will collaborate with teachers to monitor and to identify students in danger of failing courses. A master list of students participating in extracurricular activities and athletics under the auspices of the GHSA will be available to all staff.

**Our Vision:** A high-performing school where educators inspire, families engage and students love to learn.

**Our Mission:** Every student will graduate college and career ready with a dedication to community involvement and service.

**Our Motto:** Individually we are different; together we are Grady.

**Grady Graduate Profile (5 Cs):** creative, collaborative, critical thinker, communicative, and a good citizen.




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### Receipt of Syllabus

**Course Name:** Journalism 1, Introductory Journalism

**Teacher Name:** Ellerton

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*Student Signature*

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*Parent/Guardian Signature*

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*Date*

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*Date*