

COURSE GUIDE

2025/26

Faculty323 - Faculty of Social and Communication Sciences

Cycle.

DegreeGPERIO31 - Bachelor's Degree in Journalism

YearFirst year

COURSE

27090 - Informative Writing

Credits, ECTS:6

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is geared to students majoring in Journalism, Advertising & Public Relations and Broadcasting as a gateway to learning the techniques of Newswriting for the Media. On the one hand, lab assignments are intended to teach students the basic elements to write a news story (headline, lead, nut graph, body¿). On the other hand, theory classes introduce students to journalistic genres, news routines, and journalistic ethics involving news sources, selection of stories, and the different legal and economic contexts in which media professionals develop their work. Lastly, this course is guided by democratic principles and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) established by the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU).

COMPETENCIES/LEARNING RESULTS FOR THE SUBJECT

COMPETENCIES FOR THE TEACHING GUIDES:

The design of the course and the competencies that are taught are framed within the following competencies of the degree:

GENERAL COURSE COMPETENCIES:

- G002- Search, select, prioritize and analyze different sources, adapting journalistic contents to various narrative forms and strategies.
- G003- Develop skills and apply technologies, techniques and resources to develop communication and information processes.
- G004- Correctly design the formal and aesthetic aspects of the contents according to the characteristics of the different media.
- G006- Apply the main journalistic genres and news formats to journalistic work using the own language of each of the media.

CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES:

- CT1. Autonomy and self-regulation.
- CT5. Information management and digital citizenship.
- CT7. Critical thinking.
- CT8. Teamwork.

SPECIFIC COURSE COMPETENCIES:

- C1CC01 ¿ Think, comprehend and identify the main theories, ideas and concepts of the linguistic, economic and historical currents of thought, and apply it to the knowledge of the communication processes.
- C1CC02 ¿ Apply concepts, techniques and methodological procedures to identify documentary sources, cases of analysis, and information and communication issues.
- C2CC03- Analyze, interpret and value in a critical way the production of texts, news genres, formats and developments related to the creation of audiovisual and written communication.
- C2CC05- Develop strategies of oral, written and audiovisual communication appropriate to the genres and formats of different mass media.
- C1CC06 ¿Develop skills and abilities for the active participatoin, colaboration and co-responsibility of team work.

Students are expected to:

- 1- Distinguish the textual features of news stories.
- 2- Write news stories using the inverted pyramid structure.
- 3- Express the value of the main elements of a news event.
- 4- Describe the rights, legal boundaries and media management context involving the practice of journalism.

Theoretical and Practical Contents

- 1. The concept of news and news values. The newsroom
- 2. The language of news

- 3.      Newswriting basics. The five W&S. The inverted pyramid
- 4.      News leads. The basic news lead. Other types of leads. The nut graf. Story structure
- 5.      News sources. Quotations. Attributions
- 6.      Covering a beat
- 7.      Journalistic genres
- 8.      The legal context in the practice of journalism. Ethical codes. Freedom of information laws

NEWS ASSIGNMENTS (14 weeks):

- 1.      The language of news: English grammar in news stories
- 2.      News leads: informative and anecdotal leads. Headline
- 3.      Writing the nut graf and second paragraphs
- 4.      Basic brief hard news stories: traffic accidents and other crimes
- 5.      Brief crime stories with quotations and attributions
- 6.      Brief crime stories with quotations, attributions, and headlines
- 7.      Basic brief feature stories
- 8.      Basic brief feature stories with quotations, attributions, and headlines
- 9.      News rewriting

TEACHING METHODS

The subject is divided into four-hour weekly sessions: two hours for master lessons and two hours for lab assignments. Master lessons will be given in the lecture room assigned to the group. The teaching of these lessons will be reinforced with multimedia resources. The students will be divided into subgroups for the lab assignments, which will be done in the lab and outside the classroom. Students will have to write and rewrite news stories, and use quotations and attributions properly.

TYPES OF TEACHING

| Types of teaching                             | M  | S | GA | GL | GO | GCL | TA | TI | GCA |
|-----------------------------------------------|----|---|----|----|----|-----|----|----|-----|
| Hours of face-to-face teaching                | 32 |   |    |    | 28 |     |    |    |     |
| Horas de Actividad No Presencial del Alumno/a | 48 |   |    |    | 42 |     |    |    |     |

**Legend:**

M: Lecture-based

GL: Applied laboratory-based groups

TA: Workshop

S: Seminar

GO: Applied computer-based groups

TI: Industrial workshop

GA: Applied classroom-based groups

GCL: Applied clinical-based groups

GCA: Applied fieldwork groups

Evaluation methods

- Continuous evaluation
- End-of-course evaluation

Evaluation tools and percentages of final mark

- Written test, open questions 40%
- Exercises, cases or problem sets 60%

ORDINARY EXAMINATION PERIOD: GUIDELINES AND OPTING OUT

ORDINARY CALL FOR EXAMINATION

Students will have the choice to take either a final exam or an ongoing evaluation, but not both. That said, it's therefore clear that students who take ongoing evaluation will not be allowed to take the final exam in January. They will have to take the recall exam in June.

a) Ongoing evaluation

Practice. The student will take two exams (practical exercises) during the semester.

Theory. The student will take one exam during the semester.

In order to have the right to take the ongoing evaluation, the student will have to prove a class attendance of at least 80%.

b) Final exam:

In January, students will have to pass an exam that covers both theory and practice, including the lessons and the news assignments taught in class. The exam will last around 3 hours.  
The theory exam will consist of a set of questions about the topics discussed in class. Students will have to answer these



questions concisely. The weight of the theory exam in the final grade will be 40%.

The practical exam will consist of a practical case: students will have to write a news story about an event using the information given in the exam. This practice exam will include similar story types to those done in class. The weight of the practical exam in the final grade will be 60%.

A requisite for passing the subject is to take both parts (theory and practice) and pass each one of them.

Students will have to obtain at least 2 points out of 4 in the theory exam and 3 points out of 6 in the practical exam. Once both parts (theory and practice) are passed, the grades will be added in order to obtain the final grade.

In case students pass one part of the course in the ordinary exam, the mark of the exam will be saved for the extraordinary call in June.

#### RESIGNATION:

The last day to resign the continuous evaluation is November 7th. The student who decides to resign, will send the refusal to the lecturer.

#### EXTRAORDINARY EXAMINATION PERIOD: GUIDELINES AND OPTING OUT

Students who have failed the final exam in January ¿either the theory, the practice or both¿ will have to take the recall exam in June. The recall exam replicates the structure of the first call exam in January both in the theory and in the practical part.

In case students pass one part of the course in the ordinary exam, the mark of the exam will be saved for the extraordinary call in June.

#### MANDATORY MATERIALS

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

##### Basic bibliography

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOK:

HARROWER, T. (2013). Inside Reporting. A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism. New York: McGraw-Hill.

KEY BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Rich, C. (2015). Writing and reporting news: A coaching method. Cengage Learning.

Gillan, C., & Evans, H. (2010). Essential English for journalists, editors and writers. Random House

Spencer, L. (2004). A Step-by-step Guide to Informative Writing. The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc.

##### Detailed bibliography

IN DEPTH BIBLIOGRAPHY

Froke, P., Bratton, A. J., McMillan, J., Sarkar, P., Schwartz, J., & Vadarevu, R. (2020). The Associated Press Stylebook 2020-2022 and briefing on media law. The Associated Press.

Puckett, T. (2010). The National Geographic Style Manual. National Geographic Society.

Wroe, A. (2018). The Economist Style Guide. Profile Books

Reah, D. (2002). The language of newspapers. Psychology Press.

Graham, S., MacArthur, C. A., & Fitzgerald, J. (Eds.). (2013). Best practices in writing instruction. Guilford Press.

Barton, D., & Papen, U. (Eds.). (2010). The anthropology of writing: Understanding textually mediated worlds. A&C Black.

Conboy, M. (2013). Journalism studies. Routledge

Journals

AdComunica

Ámbitos

Estudios sobre Mensaje Periodístico.

Comunicación y Sociedad.

Comunicar

Doxa.

Jakin

Palabra Clave.

Revista Latina de Comunicación.

Telos

Textual and Visual Media

Trípodos

Uztaro

Zer. Revista de Estudios de Comunicación.

Web sites of interest

NEWS AGENCIES

Associated Press. <https://apnews.com/>

EFE (English edition). <https://www.efe.com/efe/english/4>

Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/>

United Press International. <https://www.upi.com/>

OBSERVATIONS

Students will fail the course if they commit any type of plagiarism in the practical assignments during the semester or in the final theory and/or practical exam according to the Protocol about academic ethics and prevention of dishonest or fraudulent practices in the evaluation exams and academic works at the UPV/EHU, adopted by the University of the Basque Country on May 22nd, 2019.