



MECO210

Narrative Journalism

S1 Day 2016

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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Disclaimer

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor/Lecturer/Tutor
Willa McDonald
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Y3A 150
Monday 12-1; Wednesday 10-11

Credit points
3

Prerequisites
12cp

Corequisites
MAS203

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit introduces students to the practice of narrative journalism. Students discuss key readings in the field, at the same time learning the principles of this type of non-fiction writing: word usage, writing style, research skills including interviewing, narrative structure, ethical approaches (including issues in defamation), analysis and reflection.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

General Assessment Information

MECO 210 – Assignment Submission

A high level of critical engagement with the set texts and active participation in the lectures and workshops is essential for passing this unit.

All Assignments must be submitted online via gradebook in iLearn. These will be assessed according to the student's overall ability to stimulate and engage the reader while adhering to professional standards.

Correct use of grammar, accurate spelling, demonstrated depth of research where appropriate and evidence that you have thought deeply about your subject matter are other important factors in assessing your work. Meeting the set deadline and presenting the work according to specifications will improve your mark. Group and individual feedback will be provided wherever possible.

While you are encouraged to show your work to your student colleagues for feedback, please be aware that the piece you submit must be your own work. Substantial editing by other people - family, friends, colleagues or professionals - is not permitted.

Assessment tasks are aligned to the unit Learning Outcomes. Timely submission of assessment tasks is a unit requirement or penalties apply. 10% per day (including weekends) will be deducted for all late

submissions unless Disruptions to Studies (including a request for an extension) is approved.'

You are required to attend all tutorials. As participation in the process of learning is linked to and underpins the unit Learning Outcomes, you will need to either apply for Disruptions to Studies to cover any missed tutorial (if the disruption is greater than three consecutive days) or supply appropriate documentation to your unit convenor for any missed tutorial (if less than three consecutive days).

Presenting work for assessment

In the Writing strand we work on the assumption that you are preparing all coursework as if you were presenting material to real editors in the real world. Editors are people who read for a living. They read a lot. They read thousands of words a day and make decisions about it. If your work is poorly presented, what they will decide is that you are wasting their time. Consequently, marks will be deducted for failing to present work in an appropriate manner that would not offend the eyes of a professional editor.

Use the following checklist before handing in any work:

1. typed, double spaced, with wide margins.
2. pages numbered, name and contact details included on first page
3. spelling checked, including proper names
4. word count done (where required) and printed at the end of the piece.
5. grammar correct

Re-Mark Requests:

Use this link to download the application form to request a re-mark of your assignment. Note you

must meet the criteria stated on the form. <http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of other peoples' work or ideas. It is a serious academic offence and attracts severe penalties. It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is, and how to avoid it.

Permission Slips and Publication Wavier Forms

When a student interviews a real person face-to-face, over the telephone, via email or through any other means, they must provide that person with information about the interview and how the resulting information gathered will be used. Students must also obtain written or emailed confirmation that their interview subject has understood and agreed to such uses. Standard forms for this purpose are attached at the end of this study guide (Form One - Permission Slip). The relevant form must be completed and attached to all assignments that involve interviews.

When students submit their work to a newspaper, magazine, website or other publication, whether seeking payment or not, they must obtain written agreement that the publisher will assume total responsibility for the publication of the story and indemnify the writer against any action arising from such publication. A standard form for this purpose is also attached (Form Two - Publication Waiver).

Note: Your assignments will not be marked unless the required Permission Slip and, where relevant, Publication Waiver, is completed and attached to the work. Students should keep copies of all completed forms.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Class Participation</u>	10%	Throughout the semester
<u>Writing Exercises</u>	15%	Week 5, Wed 30 March, 5pm
<u>Article - Part 1 - Research</u>	15%	Week 7, Friday 29 April, 5pm
<u>Article - Part 2 - Writing</u>	25%	Week 9, Friday, 13 May, 5pm
<u>SWF Article - 500 words</u>	25%	Week 12, Friday 3 June, 5pm
<u>Pop Quiz x 2</u>	10%	Week 6; Week 13.

Class Participation

Due: **Throughout the semester**

Weighting: **10%**

Students will receive a participation mark for the unit. This will be based on:

- Contribution to class discussion, including editing of other students' work.
- Completion and bringing to the appropriate class of four (4) copies of:
 - writing exercises in Weeks 3, 4 and 5 for editing by and discussion with peers. Students are encouraged to build on any or all of these exercises for Writing Assignment 1.
 - 3 x 200-word sections of the Narrative Journalism Assignment in Weeks 7, 8 and 9 for editing by and discussion with peers.
 - the lead (approx first 200 words) and then the whole draft of the Sydney Writer's Festival article in Weeks 11 and 12 respectively for workshopping with peers.

Note: students will not be marked on the above work they bring to class; rather, failure to submit this work will result in significant loss of participation marks and students may find the writing they submit for formal assessment is not competitive with their classmates' work.

Assessment Criteria:

Students will be assessed on their attendance and participation in class discussions, as well as on their role in the workshops as readers and editors of their own and their fellow students' work.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Writing Exercises

Due: **Week 5, Wed 30 March, 5pm**

Weighting: **15%**

Writing Exercises

Due Date: Week 5, Wednesday 30 March, 5pm.

Weight: 15%

Task: To workshop 3 writing exercises in class. These should then be submitted online together as ONE assignment on Friday 28 March, 5pm.

The 3 Writing Exercises have been designed to:

- sharpen students' writing skills appropriate to the aims of the unit
- provide students with feedback early in the unit on their progress
- identify early in the unit areas where students may need extra help or encouragement with their creative work

Writing Exercise 1: (Bring to tutorial in Week 2) Pick 10 people you know and write a one-sentence description of each of them, focussing on what makes each person unique and noteworthy.

Writing Exercise 2: (Bring to tutorial in Week 3) Pick a smell or aroma - eg, the smell of garlic or rose petals or a wet dog... - and recreate in 200 interesting words a memory associated with that smell. Do NOT use any adverbs or adjectives. Instead, use strong verbs.

Writing Exercise 3: (Due Tutorial Week 4) Visualise a place. Be there, see the details. Now write about it as if you love this place, but without telling the reader directly that you really like being there (150 words). It could be a corner of your bedroom, an old tree you sit under on Saturday afternoons, a table at McDonalds, a place near the ocean. What colours are there? Sounds? Smells? When someone else reads it, she should know what it is like to be there and understand how you feel about it. Now, do the same thing but write about the SAME place as if you really hate it. Again, don't tell the reader directly how you feel but use your description of the place, and the tone of your writing, to convey your feelings (150 words).

(Exercises 1 and 3 adapted from <http://poewar.com/fifteen-craft-exercises-for-writers/>)

Assessment Criteria: Please also see appropriate rubric. Students will be assessed on their "storytelling" skills; their ability to "write for the senses"; their ability to convey meaning through their choice of words, syntax and structure; and the clarity and accuracy of their grammar and spelling.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.

Article - Part 1 - Research

Due: **Week 7, Friday 29 April, 5pm**

Weighting: **15%**

Narrative Journalism Article- Part 1 - Research. Due Date: Week 7, Friday 29 April, 5pm
Weight: 15% Students will submit a research portfolio (8 pages) and report (500 words) based on original research they have conducted towards their narrative journalism article. Research will take the form of fieldwork, interviews and archival research (including published articles; reference works; web-based and library-based archives; government records, etc.) The report will include: i) A separate one-sentence statement that sums up the point (angle) of the article; ii) explanatory information about the choice of research approaches; what each has revealed that is of use to the proposed article; how they will be used in the final article. Any ethical issues and/or other difficulties encountered in the research should also be mentioned.

Assessment Criteria: Please also see the appropriate rubric. Students will be assessed on the thoroughness of their research; their ability to draw out an angle or point around which the story can be based, and the clarity of writing contained in the report.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Article - Part 2 - Writing

Due: **Week 9, Friday, 13 May, 5pm**

Weighting: **25%**

Narrative Journalism Article - Writing. Due Date: Week 9, Friday 13 May, 5pm Weight: 25%

Task: Submit a 1200-word original article based on research conducted in part 1 of this assignment (as well as subsequent research). Note that 2 x 300-word sections of your article will already have been workshopped in class.

The topic is of your choice (under the guidance of your tutor).

When writing your article, make sure you tell an interesting story that has a point. Your piece should include facts and information, anecdote, observation, and description and possibly quotes and/or dialogue. Remember to "show, not tell". Use concrete details. Write for the senses. Feel free to write passionately and to take risks with your content and expression. You may build on any of the exercises done in class to write your story. Work into the story any relevant insights gained from writing the reflection (see below).

While you are encouraged to show your work to your student colleagues for feedback, please be aware that the piece you submit must be your own work. Substantial editing by other people - family, friends, colleagues or professionals - is not permitted.

Append to the story a 300-word reflection on the process of writing the story. Consider:

- Why you chose this particular story/topic. Why is it important to you?
- What issues you faced in researching the story and in converting the research into a narrative.
- Whether you found it confronting to write - and if so, how you moved through that stage to complete the piece;
- Whether you faced ethical issues in the writing (what were these? how did they affect

your approach? how did you ultimately resolve them?).

- Whether the types of literary techniques you used were well chosen and worked the way you wanted them to (e.g. dialogue, a seductive
- opening/lead; observation and description, anecdotes, structure, etc).
- What you learned from using those techniques.
- What you learned from writing this piece. Why do you think it helped you to learn this/these thing/s?
- Other comments you would like to make.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

SWF Article - 500 words

Due: **Week 12, Friday 3 June, 5pm**

Weighting: **25%**

SWF Article Due Date: Week 12, Friday 3 June, 5pm Weight: 25%

Note that this article will have been workshopped in two stages in class before you hand it in.

The purpose of this assignment is two-fold - to encourage participation in the Sydney Writer's Festival and to give students practice in getting to the nub of a factual story quickly and in few words.

Students are required to attend the Sydney Writers' Festival and write a 500-word article about **one** seminar that they attended.

Assessment Criteria: Please also see appropriate rubric. The article should give the reader enough information to get a solid impression of the content of the seminar. It should be written with an interesting lead. The article should answer all the reader's questions regarding the who, what, when, where and why of the seminar. It should contain quotes and/or dialogue. It should be written with flair, using some of the literary techniques discussed in the course. The clarity of the writing is important, including correct syntax, grammar and spelling. While you are encouraged to show your work to your student colleagues for feedback, please be aware that the piece you submit must be your own work. Substantial editing by other people - family, friends, colleagues or professionals - is not permitted.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Pop Quiz x 2

Due: **Week 6; Week 13.**

Weighting: **10%**

Students will be asked to complete a short quiz in their lectures in Week 6 and Week 13. Each quiz will be worth 5%. Students will be required to answer a number of multiple choice questions relating to the lecture content and readings. The purpose of the quizzes is to ensure students understand the principles of narrative journalism discussed in the lectures and demonstrated in the readings.

Assessment Criteria: Correct answers chosen from the multiple choices in the quiz.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Delivery and Resources

Delivery: Day

This unit will use iLecture.

For current updates, lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetables website: <http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au>.

Resources:

Each week during the course students will be asked to read articles relevant to the topic at hand. These will be listed each week in iLearn. The articles can either be sourced online or via the library. If students require a reader, one can be made available as "print on demand".

Technology:

Lectures will be available on iLearn, where announcements, assignment tasks and other materials to be used in tutorials will be posted as needed.

Changes to the Unit since 2015.

Some of the lecture content has changed to improve the learning experience for the students. The assessments have also been altered slightly and paced more evenly throughout the semester.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html. For more information visit http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Additional information

MMCCS website https://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/departments_of_media_music_communication_and_cultural_studies/

MMCCS Session Re-mark Application <http://www.mq.edu.au/pubstatic/public/download/?id=167914>

Information is correct at the time of publication

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Writing Exercises

- Article - Part 1 - Research
- Article - Part 2 - Writing
- SWF Article - 500 words

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Writing Exercises
- Article - Part 1 - Research
- Article - Part 2 - Writing
- SWF Article - 500 words
- Pop Quiz x 2

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Writing Exercises
- Article - Part 1 - Research
- Article - Part 2 - Writing
- SWF Article - 500 words
- Pop Quiz x 2

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Article - Part 1 - Research
- Article - Part 2 - Writing

- SWF Article - 500 words
- Pop Quiz x 2

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Article - Part 1 - Research
- Article - Part 2 - Writing
- SWF Article - 500 words
- Pop Quiz x 2

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Writing Exercises
- Article - Part 1 - Research
- Article - Part 2 - Writing
- SWF Article - 500 words

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Article - Part 1 - Research
- Article - Part 2 - Writing
- SWF Article - 500 words
- Pop Quiz x 2

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Identify and critique key issues raised in the production of narrative journalism, while gaining an overview of the history of the genre.
- Research, synthesise and apply information in the context of a creative writing project.
- Utilise and apply writing techniques of a high standard.
- Critically analyse and synthesise a variety of theoretical readings about the nature of writing and use these to reflect on their own writing.
- Understand the complexity of ethical issues in the field.

Assessment tasks

- Class Participation
- Article - Part 1 - Research
- Article - Part 2 - Writing
- SWF Article - 500 words
- Pop Quiz x 2

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
29/02/2016	The weightings of two assignments were incorrectly recorded in the assessment section. These have now been corrected.