



MECO804

Media Writing and Research

S1 Day 2017

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Senior Lecturer

Margie Borschke

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Y3A 159

By appointment either before class (11-12) or 4pm-6pm on Mondays.

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MCreIndMFJ or MFJ or MIntComm or MIntCommMIntRel or MIntBusMIntComm

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit focuses on the core skills that underpin journalism as a media practice including, reporting and research techniques and approaches to storytelling and representation across media. It also covers critical material on journalism and the contemporary media landscape, including ideals of objectivity, advocacy, and the use and function of news media.

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:

Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media

Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.

Critically appraise and analyze the research material on journalism and media.

Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.

Critically examine the history of journalism and identify opportunities and challenges for the future of journalism.

General Assessment Information

Deadlines are firm and late submissions will be penalised by 10% each day unless you have grounds for a disruption to studies.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Portfolio 1	40%	Yes	March 31, 2017
News Article	25%	Yes	Monday May 1, 2016; 11am
Portfolio 2	35%	No	Week 13

Portfolio 1

Due: **March 31, 2017**

Weighting: **40%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

What will be assessed:

An Online Portfolio that is made up of three practice tasks, a reflection and a personal statement. This will include:

- Your 500 word news story pitch
- Your selection of the best of your weekly news round ups
- 1 practice tasks of your choice from the weekly assigned practice tasks (Weeks 1-6)
- a 750 word reflection that details how these practices and competencies illustrate your understanding of key debates in journalism.
- a personal statement about your media practice and goals. (250 words)

Format: You should submit a copy of your portfolio as a word doc to the Turnitin box on the iLearn site. Important: be sure to include a link to your online portfolio.

Detailed descriptions of the weekly practice tasks will be issued each week in class and via iLearn.

You will be expected to present and discuss your practice tasks in class each week.

Assessment Criteria:

Engagement: Demonstrate understanding of key questions, debates and concepts in the unit.

Application: The quality of your practice tasks as pieces of reporting, research, news writing or critical analysis.

Analyse: Your ability to critically analyse current news and news practices and the role of the fourth estate.

Evaluate: Show that you can discriminate between, and analyze, the various news genres, reporting and storytelling techniques for various journalistic mediums.

Expression: The clarity of your expression and your attention to detail.

Overall: The quality of your portfolio as a record of your process of learning

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media
- Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.

News Article

Due: **Monday May 1, 2016; 11am**

Weighting: **25%**

This is a hurdle assessment task (see [assessment policy](#) for more information on hurdle assessment tasks)

What you will submit:

- 600-700 word news article including a suggested headline
- A tweet that summarises your story and engages your audience
- 500 word reflection on the reporting and writing process (Alternately, you may submit a 3 minute video/audio reflection)
- Research report backup detailing sources for all facts and quotes
- A transcript of one key interview with quotes used in bold. (You should conduct at least two interviews for your story.)

Assessment Criteria:

- The quality and accuracy of the reporting and attention to detail in each article
- Your approach to the story including its structure, content and style
- Choice of sources and appropriate attribution
- Selection and use of facts and statistics and other factual evidence
- Selection and use of quotes
- The success of your interview for this story
- The story's success as a news article
- Your ability to analyse reporting as a cultural form and social practice

- Your understanding of debates in journalism re: objectivity, impartiality and the fourth estate

Please submit this as a single Word Document via turnitin.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media
- Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.

Portfolio 2

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **35%**

Each student will be assessed on an online Portfolio that is made up of:

- three completed practice tasks of your choosing (as assigned and completed in weeks 6-12).
- a 750-1000 word scholarly reflection that details how these practices and competencies illustrate your understanding of key debates in journalism.
- a revised personal statement about your media practice and goals based on your. (250 words) + evidence that you are developing a professional online presence as a media professional (i.e. links to your profiles)

Format: You should submit a copy of your portfolio as a word doc to the Turnitin box on the iLearn site. Important: be sure to include a link to your online portfolio.

Detailed descriptions of the practice tasks and how to build your portfolio will be issued in class and via iLearn

You will be expected to be able to present and discuss your practice tasks in class each week.

Assessment Criteria:

Engagement: Demonstrate understanding of key questions, debates and concepts in the unit.

Application: The quality of your practice tasks as pieces of reporting, research, news writing or critical analysis.

Analyse: Your ability to critically analyse current news and news practices and the role of the fourth estate.

Evaluate: Show that you can discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.

Expression: The clarity of your expression and your attention to detail.

Overall: The quality of your portfolio as a record of your process of learning

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.
- Critically appraise and analyze the research material on journalism and media.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.
- Critically examine the history of journalism and identify opportunities and challenges for the future of journalism.

Delivery and Resources

Required Reading

1. **Assigned readings:** Please check the iLearn site for details about assigned readings and required texts.

2. **News Reading:** Students are expected to be reading key international and national news sites daily. See iLearn regarding titles, access and educational subscriptions.

Seminar Preparation

Each week students will be required to complete "practice tasks" before attending class. These are short assignments and exercises that will help you build your portfolios. Instructions will be announced in class and posted to iLearn. If you miss a class please check the iLearn site BEFORE attending the seminar to ensure you are prepared.

Unit Schedule

Please check iLearn for the schedule.

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

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.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 (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

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.

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.

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

[partment 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

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media
- Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.
- Critically appraise and analyze the research material on journalism and media.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.
- Critically examine the history of journalism and identify opportunities and challenges for the future of journalism.

Assessment tasks

- Portfolio 1
- News Article
- Portfolio 2

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media
- Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.
- Critically appraise and analyze the research material on journalism and media.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.
- Critically examine the history of journalism and identify opportunities and challenges for the future of journalism.

Assessment tasks

- Portfolio 1
- News Article
- Portfolio 2

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media
- Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.
- Critically appraise and analyze the research material on journalism and media.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.
- Critically examine the history of journalism and identify opportunities and challenges for the future of journalism.

Assessment tasks

- Portfolio 1
- News Article
- Portfolio 2

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media
- Critically appraise and analyze the research material on journalism and media.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.
- Critically examine the history of journalism and identify opportunities and challenges for the future of journalism.

Assessment tasks

- Portfolio 1
- News Article
- Portfolio 2

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media
- Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.
- Critically appraise and analyze the research material on journalism and media.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.
- Critically examine the history of journalism and identify opportunities and challenges for the future of journalism.

Assessment tasks

- Portfolio 1
- News Article
- Portfolio 2

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Apply advanced reporting, research and writing techniques to produce articles for print and online media
- Discriminate between, and analyze, the various writing styles and reporting techniques for various journalistic mediums.
- Critically appraise and analyze the research material on journalism and media.
- Identify and evaluate the key concepts underpinning the role of the fourth estate.
- Critically examine the history of journalism and identify opportunities and challenges for the future of journalism.

Assessment tasks

- Portfolio 1
- News Article
- Portfolio 2

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
14/02/2017	Reduction of number of items assessed in portfolio: After consultation with L&T I have altered Portfolio 1: reduced additional practice task submissions from 2 to 1. In Portfolio 2 expanded the number of weeks students could choose from when choosing what to include in their portfolio/