MMCC2110

Journalism Research: From Data to Story

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2025

School of Communication, Society and Culture

Contents

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
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Credit points
10

Prerequisites
40cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit equips students with the essential skills to transform raw data into impactful journalistic narratives. Through a hands-on approach, students will learn to research and analyze information to create visually engaging and informative stories. By developing strong story arcs and identifying key themes, students will craft compelling narratives that resonate with audiences while adhering to the principles of journalistic ethics. By the end of this course, students will be well-prepared to produce research- and data-driven journalism that is informative, verified, and engaging, contributing to a well-informed public.

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:

ULO1: understand different research methods used in journalism, including interviews, archival research, and fieldwork.

ULO2: gain proficiency in cleaning, organizing, and managing data.

ULO3: learn how to develop story ideas based on current events, trends, and social issues.

ULO4: explore techniques for conducting effective interviews and building relationships with sources.

ULO5: understand the ethical implications in journalism.

ULO6: apply critical thinking to interpret data and extract meaningful insights.

ULO7: craft compelling narratives based on data-driven insights.

ULO8: verify stories to the best of their abilities to ensure they are legitimate.

ULO9: present news stories using multimedia elements to visually engage readers.

General Assessment Information

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day an assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of, 0 (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to all assessments (e.g., essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, quizzes, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new task. These are serious penalties that will substantially alter your final grade and even determine whether you pass or fail this unit. Please make every effort to submit your assignment by the due date.

If you find you cannot submit your assignment on time, please apply for Special Consideration through AskMQ. Make sure you read Macquarie University's policy regarding Special Consideration requests before you apply: https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Pitch and Interview	40%	No	2/May/25, 11:55 PM
Fact-checking quiz	20%	No	23/May/25, 11:55 PM
Writing analysis	40%	No	30/May/25, 11:55 PM

Pitch and Interview

Assessment Type [1]: Practice-based task
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 40 hours
Due: **2/May/25, 11:55 PM**
Weighting: **40%**

Submit one story idea (200-300 words) based on current events or trends to be developed as a final news article. Create and conduct an interview with a relevant individual or community member for the news story. Students should submit their interview guide and respondent's

answers (500-700 words).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- understand different research methods used in journalism, including interviews, archival research, and fieldwork.
- gain proficiency in cleaning, organizing, and managing data.
- learn how to develop story ideas based on current events, trends, and social issues.
- explore techniques for conducting effective interviews and building relationships with sources.

Fact-checking quiz

Assessment Type [1]: Quiz/Test
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 10 hours
Due: **23/May/25, 11:55 PM**
Weighting: **20%**

A quiz covering basic fact-checking concepts, tools, and real-world scenarios. This quiz will assess students' understanding of how to verify information accurately.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- understand the ethical implications in journalism.
- verify stories to the best of their abilities to ensure they are legitimate.

Writing analysis

Assessment Type [1]: Professional writing
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 30 hours
Due: **30/May/25, 11:55 PM**
Weighting: **40%**

Develop a multimedia, research-driven news story or feature article (500-700 words) based on a selected topic. Include a brief explanation of research methods used.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- understand different research methods used in journalism, including interviews, archival

research, and fieldwork.

- gain proficiency in cleaning, organizing, and managing data.

- apply critical thinking to interpret data and extract meaningful insights.

- craft compelling narratives based on data-driven insights.

- present news stories using multimedia elements to visually engage readers.

[1] If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment

- the Writing Centre for academic skills support.

[2] Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

The Journalism Research unit (MMCC2110) begins in Week 1. The unit comprises a weekly one-hour lecture and a one-hour tutorial, which will include hands-on practical exercises. Some interactive sessions will require computer resources and access to online tools, such as spreadsheets.

In addition to these sessions, students will have access to a range of online resources via iLearn, including lecture slides, supplementary readings, videos, and links to relevant materials. An iLearn discussion forum will also be available for students to ask questions and engage in peer-to-peer learning outside of class time.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- Academic Appeals Policy

- Academic Integrity Policy

- Academic Progression Policy

- Assessment Policy

- Fitness to Practice Procedure

- Assessment Procedure

- Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public

- Special Consideration Policy

Students seeking more policy resources can visit Student Policies (https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about

throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct

Results

Results published on platform other than eStudent, (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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 connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free online writing and maths support, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

Student Support

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

Academic Success

Academic Success provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- Workshops
- Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader
- Access StudyWISE
- Upload an assignment to Studiosity
- Complete the Academic Integrity Module

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- Subject and Research Guides
- Ask a Librarian

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support

- Accessibility and disability support with study

- Mental health support

- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault

- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues

- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the Service Connect Portal, or contact Service Connect.

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.

Unit information based on version 2025.05 of the Handbook