

## **COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

**NOTE:** ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

**Academic School/Department:** Communications, Arts and Social Sciences

**Programme:** International Journalism and Media

**FHEQ Level:** 5

**Course Title:** Reporting and Investigative Journalism

**Course Code:** JRN 5205

**Course Leader:** Ms Louise Byrne

**Student Engagement Hours:** **120**

Lectures: 22.5

Seminar / Tutorials: 22.5

Independent / Guided Learning : 75

**Semester:** FALL

**Credits:** 12 UK CATS credits  
6 ECTS credits  
3 US credits

### **Course Description:**

This course concentrates in consolidating and developing journalistic reporting skills. Particular attention will be given to the teaching of specialized reporting skills (such as how to cover major incidents, political events, etc) and of investigative journalism techniques. Students will learn from case studies of complex and high profile investigations and acquire techniques of investigative reporting, so that they can plan, research and write an investigative feature of public concern or in the public interest. The emphasis of the course is on developing independent reporting skills.

**Pre-requisites and/or Co-requisites:** JRN 4200 and JRN 5200

### **Aims and Objectives:**

This course will help students to develop reporting and investigative journalism, and to appreciate the role and ethical challenges of the communications professional. At the end of the course successful students should be able to:

- Have a detailed understanding of different reporting techniques and of when to apply them to specific situations.

- A detailed understanding of advanced research skills including computer-assisted research, the effective use of public records and databases, the Freedom of Information Act, and other complex information.
- The ability to use different reporting techniques
- The ability to apply ethical and legal standards to their writing and reporting
- The ability to conduct their own researching with minimum supervision

**Programme Outcomes:**

5Ai  
5Bi  
5Cii  
5Ciii  
5Dii  
5Diii

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the Departmental/Schools page of the portal.

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a detailed understanding of news gathering techniques and processes, e.g., interviewing, reporting and news writing
- Students should be able to write news stories in a variety of genres and should be able to comply with the requirements of each genre.
- Students should be able to undertake independent journalistic research using a variety of sources and methods.
- Students should be able to research primary source material for assignments.
- Students should master the practical skills necessary for professional practice.
- Students should be able to work to deadline as part of a team.

**Indicative Content:**

- The news tree and the Hourglass
- Handling press releases
- Angles
- Computer-Assisted Research
- Political Journalism
- Investigative Journalism
- The investigative process
- Data Journalism
- Undercover Reporting
- Freedom of Information Act

### Assessment

The course is assessed following the University Assessment Rules for IJM/COM Writing Intensive Courses outlined in the Programme Specification.

FHEQ level	Richmond/UK Level	Normal Number of Items (including final exam)*	Normal length per item	Total assessment
LEVEL 4	R200/UK Year 1	5-6	300 - 500	2000-2500 words and /or multimedia assignments
LEVEL 5	R300/UK Year 2	3-5	600-800	2500-3500 words and/or multimedia assignments
LEVEL 6	R400/UK Year 3	3 -5	600-800	2500-4000 words And/or multimedia assignments

### Teaching Methodology:

The course is based on lectures, in-class work (writing assignments, research techniques assignment), and at least two sessions of one-on-one tutorials

### Bibliography:

#### Indicative Text(s):

Melvin Mencher, *Melvin Mencher's News Reporting and Writing*, McGraw-Hill 2010

William Gaines, *Investigative Journalism: Proven Strategies for Reporting the Story*, CQ Press, 2007.

### Journals

Journalism Studies

Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism

British Journalism Review

Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media

### Web Sites

<http://www.tcij.org/training-material>

<http://www.propublica.org>

<http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/>

[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/programme\\_doc\\_story\\_based\\_inquiry\\_en.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/CI/pdf/programme_doc_story_based_inquiry_en.pdf)

[www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

[www.bbc.co.uk/news](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news)

[www.bbc.co.uk/journalism](http://www.bbc.co.uk/journalism)

