Journalism

Course Overview: Journalism

This semester course provides the opportunity for students to learn the fundamentals of journalism through planning, writing, editing, and photography. We will also explore the First Amendment and the media's role in relation to this freedom. A primary emphasis will be placed on journalistic writing in a variety of different styles including: news stories, features, reviews, and editorials. Grammar, usage, and mechanics' skills will be taught and reinforced in the editing process. All students will write articles for the school newspaper, The Buzz and may have the opportunity to join a partnership with other schools around the state and VTdigger to be published in that statewide online newspaper.

Units and Activities: What will we be learning about and doing in this course?

Course Outline:

Students will write one-two publishable articles each checkpoint in addition to editing the articles of others, and practicing with photography, layout, and design.

1. Media Literacy
   1. The First Amendment and application to student journalism
   2. Ethical guidelines
   3. What is news?
   4. Guidelines for The Buzz
   5. Story Development

2. News/Sports Reporting:
   1. The five Ws and H
   2. The inverted pyramid of news stories - structure
   3. Headline writing
   4. Interviewing Techniques
   5. Fact research and checking.
   6. Story searches – how to find the story.
   7. Journalistic Terms- AP Styleguide
   8. Knowing and focusing on your audience.

3. Magazine/Features Articles:
   1. Conducting in-depth interviews
   2. Writing in sub-headings
   3. Finding and connecting to your subject.
   4. Personal style of longer written pieces

4. Editorial Writing:
   1. Identifying hot-button issues
   2. Forming an opinion.
3. Researching editorial issues
4. Writing in an editorial style

5. Journalistic Editing:
   1. Twenty-seven word summary leads
   2. Attention-grabbing, yet brief, headlines.
   3. Inverted pyramid editing.
   4. G.U.M. review and *AP Stylebook*.
   5. Using quotes/paraphrases & naming your source

6. Publication:
   1. Photography – capturing the right picture digitally.
   2. Layout- overview and practice of In-Design program.
   3. Final decision making and fillers – what is needed prior to printing.
   4. Printing process options.

Standards: What knowledge and skills will I gain by the end of this course?

This course will assess the knowledge and skills students build in key Anchor Standards and Content Standards.

**Anchor Standards:** This course will focus on interviewing and journalistic writing and editing skills using the Common Core Writing and Language Standards.

**Writing:** Students will produce clear and coherent writing (arguments, narratives or informative pieces) for a range of tasks, purposes and audiences. They will also conduct short and sustained research projects.

**Language:** Students will demonstrate understanding of appropriate grammar and usage when considering their audience and journalistic conventions.

Assessment of Learning

**Assessment Types:**
Three types of assessments will be used to determine if you have gained the necessary knowledge and skills of this course: Formative assessments, Summative assessments, and Habits of Work for Learning. Each is briefly described below:

*Formative Assessments:* *Formative = Forming my knowledge and skills.* Formative Assessments receive a weight of .1 in the overall grade. Formative assessments are information for teachers, students, and
parents on the progress students are making as they practice gaining knowledge and skills found in Anchor Standards. Teachers use the results of these assessments as data to understand individual student learning needs, adjust instructional pathways, and modify lessons to help students better meet course standards. Students use the results of these assessments to determine how they are progressing and to plan steps to ensure their success.

**Summative Assessments:** Summative = Summation of my knowledge and skills. Summative Assessments can receive three different weights: 1, 1.5, or 2 depending on the size of the assessment, and therefore have the greatest impact on the Overall Course Mastery Grade. Summative assessments are used as a measure of independent student achievement in Anchor Standards. Throughout this course, summative assessments provide benchmark student achievement data. A summative assessment will always have clear scoring criteria (4-point scale) for students to understand how they are performing.

**Habits of Work for Learning:** Habits of Work for Learning (HOWLs) are skills and dispositions that are essential to the learning process but do not provide evidence of what a student knows or can do in relation to content. WUHSMS teachers work to foster Habits of Work for Learning in three categories: preparation, participation, and perseverance.

**Assessment Scoring:**
Teachers will provide framing for summative assessment scores using proficiency level scoring criteria for grading similar to the example below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchor Standard: Computational Modeling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Standards:</strong> NGSS HS-L2-1 Use mathematical and/or computational representations to support explanations of factors that affect the carrying capacity of ecosystems at different scales. NGSS HS-LS2-4 Use mathematical representations to support claims for the cycling of matter and flow of energy among organisms in an ecosystem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can identify the components of a system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computational Modeling &amp; Analysis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can use a given computational model to explore relationships between components of a system.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*scores in the “Beginning range” are well below proficient and thus they are below passing.

**HOWL Scoring:**
HOWLs will be scored at least once per checkpoint, and will be based on the frequency with which students demonstrate each of the habits: preparation, participation, and perseverance.

**How is my Overall Course Grade Determined?**

Overall course grades will be reported as letter grades and will be comprised of:

- Formative & Summative Scores: 95%
- HOWLs: 5%

For more information, please see the WUHSMS student handbook.

**Communication:**

**How Do I Know My Grades?**

- On Summative Assessments, a teacher will provide both a 4-point grade and a letter grade.
- You can monitor your progress in the following ways:
  - By reading feedback and scoring returned to students on summative assessments
  - By monitoring the scores and Overall Course Mastery Grade in the Parent/Student portal on JumpRope
  - By monitoring the grades sent home quarterly through report cards

**Where Can I Find This Syllabus during the School Year?**

- This syllabus will be available on the school website in each subject’s department tab once the school year is up and running.

**How Do I See What’s Due?**

- Summative assessment due dates and handouts are posted to the blue “Upcoming Assessment” section of the JumpRope Parent/Student Portal on or before the day they are assigned to students.

**How Do I See What’s Past Due?**

- If a student is missing an assessment, it will be listed in the red “Missing Assessment” section of the JumpRope Parent/Student Portal along with any attachments.

**Best Way to Contact Me:**

Email me at mfountain@wcsu.net

**Materials:**

- Student Journals
- *Journalism Today*

**Schoolwide Procedures:**

Please see the Student Handbook for Procedures and Policies related to: Due dates and deadlines, extra credit, retaking assessments, and turnaround time for grade entry.
Personal Mobile Devices: This class will follow the procedures outlined in the student handbook

Classroom Expectations:

* Be respectful. * Be responsible. * Be on time. * Be on task. * Have fun

Each person has a voice in this class so listen respectfully and be open to the opinions of others even when they differ from your own. Be ethical in your reporting, telling the truth and giving a voice to all sides of a story. Be responsible for your work and behavior contributing positively to the class. Be on time so you can be a full class participant. Be on task so you are contributing to your own learning and that of your classmates. Enjoy the learning journey!

**Plagiarism** will not be tolerated. All work must be original or the sources cited with full quotations noted. Any work found to be plagiarized will result in a 0, an after-school detention, and contact with parents or guardians.