

STATE OF THE MEDIA

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Welcome to **JOURNALISM 61**

WRITING FOR PRINT, ELECTRONIC
& ONLINE MEDIA

(3 UNITS)

Introduction to writing for media--newspaper, magazines, electronic and the Internet--as well as producing content for multi-media distribution in a converged media environment. Emphasis on how different media require different writing styles and content.

Pre-requisites which must be successfully completed before enrolling in this class: **ENGLISH 1A & 1B**



Course Instructor: **Professor Bob Rucker**

Radio & TV Journalism Coordinator & Former CNN Correspondent

CLASS MEETING: Mondays & Wednesday, 1:30pm to 2:45pm, Dwight Bentel Hall, Room 222

OFFICE HOURS: Monday through Thursdays, 4:30pm – 5pm, and by appointment in advance.
Dwight Bentel Hall, Room 218.

CLASS E-MAIL: j61b@pacbell.net * No homework e-mails unless explicitly authorized in advance.*

#1 Class Assignment

Always keep up with reliable Current Events!
Check website daily: [www.profbob.com/Current Events](http://www.profbob.com/Current%20Events)

Latest News

Daily check on Headlines & Top Stories
Be prepare to volunteer info and discuss issues in class.

News writers, online, broadcast or print, **MUST** know what they are talking about. Sounding limited or uninformed is noticeable, unimpressive and very embarrassing for a college media student or graduate.

All J61 students must be able to consistently contribute factual information verbally and offer accurate perspectives & context in class discussions and in writing assignments. Inconsistent contributions or reluctance to speak up each class lowers your participation grade.

Journalism 61: Student Learning Objectives

To successfully complete this course, students must be able to:

- Demonstrate that they can write a hard news story in multimedia formats for radio, TV, newspapers, magazines and online.

Demonstrate that they can write and/or produce content for convergent media.
- Demonstrate the ability to transcribe quotations exactly and attribute all information or action to a source if they don't observe it.
- Demonstrate the ability to verify all assertions of fact when gathering information and when interviewing sources for a story.
- Write and/or produce stories that demonstrate good journalistic writing that is factually accurate, fair, clear, concise and has good sourcing and attribution as well as the correct use of quotes, grammar, spelling and Associated Press style.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for good journalistic writing, including factual accuracy, fairness, clarity, conciseness, good sourcing and attribution as well as the correct use of quotes, grammar, spelling and Associated Press style.
- Explain how different approaches to news consumers shape the conception, reporting and writing of stories in various media.

J61 Course Requirements:

Professor Rucker will utilize a variety of reading materials which help provide a basic understanding of the various news and information writing styles. He will try and post most handout material on his website: www.profbob.com. Student must stay current with the readings assigned. You will be quizzed in class, usually through writing assignments.

Current Events appreciation and understanding is crucial. Students must daily go online, read newspapers, watch TV news or listen to [KCBS Newsradio 740am](#). There is an old saying ... "Before you shoot off your mouth, make sure your brains are loaded."

Media professions usually prioritize completing assignments on or before deadlines. Students should never expect to receive extra time to meet expectations. Today's emphasis on convergence includes being able to work with others, **work quickly** to meet basic requirements, and **take direction well** from people with specialty skills and abilities.

Take notes in all classes. Don't rely on your memory or the memories of others.

Ask questions each class to make sure you understand the thinking and writing needs of each assignment.

Grading: **Professor Rucker's J61 students will be evaluated as follows:**

25% Grade – **Current Events.** Regular oral and written interactions/questions/critical thinking assignments.
25% Grade – **Class Participation.** Asking lecture clarifying questions and actively engaging guest speakers.
50% Grade – **Writing Assignments.** Semester, midterm and final evaluations of basic style writing.

Late Papers and Missed Assignments – NEVER ACCEPTABLE.

It is absolutely essential that journalists meet deadlines. No credit will be given if an assignment is late without excused permission. SJSU academic policy enables students to submit a written medical excuse or documentation of a family emergency or death in the family for excused permission.

Students should not expect extra credit assignments. Do all assignments to the best of your ability always.

WARNING * J61 students may NOT leave early for holidays, spring break, sporting events, or be absent for non-emergency personal or family matters. Remember higher education is a great privilege which should never be devalued or wasted. Re-adjust your priorities. In J132B a grade penalty will be imposed for unexcused absences.*****

Students must stay attentive in class lectures and discussions. No distractions or disruptions.

NO cell phone or unauthorized use of computers in class. Violators are subject to forfeiting their overall course participation grade evaluation.

J61 students who do not actively engage or fail to offer pertinent questions for guest speakers, or who conduct themselves in the classroom in a rude, disrespectful or noticeably disinterested manner could be asked to leave the class temporarily or permanently, and/or forfeit their class participation grade.



Long Time Rucker Classroom Policies: Based on Professional Standards

All students are asked always to be open-minded, listen and learn about other cultures represented in the classroom. Candor is encouraged in class discussions. It's OK to ask for clarifications and to respectfully challenge viewpoints.

Personal attacks and inappropriate language are NOT allowed.

Laptops must stay focused on class related materials and discussions. Surfing is not allowed during class time. You may be asked to leave the classroom and receive an unexcused absence.

NO e-mailing "I'm Sick" ... Call in sick to Prof. Rucker's office phone above before missing class. Pick up the phone, dial 408-924-3272, and call in sick like professionals.

The 10 Minute Class Arrival Rule:

No student may enter the classroom 10 minutes after class starts. Such disruptions will result in the late student being asked to leave. Late students should get notes from other classmates after class.

NO E-mailing Homework without prior authorization. Each class is assigned a separate e-mail address. Prof. Rucker must give permission, in advance, before any class correspondence or homework may be sent to the class assigned e-mail. Otherwise such submissions receive no credit.

Deadlines are always absolute. **Expect NO extensions.**

Never expect late assignments to be accepted.

Extra credit may be offered, but never expect it. Prioritize doing your best on all class assignments. Don't get into the habit of expecting to be bailed out later. No professional thinking.

False reporting of information is unprofessional and unacceptable conduct. So is persistent unexcused absenteeism. All of these infractions may result in an overall course failing grade.

Students are responsible for dropping courses they no longer wish to take. Do not expect faculty to do this.

Students should take full advantage of office hours for assignment clarifications and career advising.

University Policies

A. Academic Integrity Statement

"Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's Integrity Policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs." The policy on academic integrity can be found at:

http://sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html

To plagiarize is to "steal and use (the ideas or writings of another) as one's own." (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. 1975). You are committing plagiarism if you:

- Copy phrases, sentences, or passages from electronic or print sources (journal articles, the web, etc.) into your own papers and reports without giving credit by citing the original source
- Quote someone else's exact words without giving credit to the original author
- Use someone else's specific ideas even if you restate them in your own words.

Citing your sources properly helps to avoid plagiarism. (See http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct)

SJSU regards plagiarism as academic dishonesty. Consequences include academic and other sanctions such as "grade modification."

Make clear which ideas are yours and which are someone else's...don't use words or images in a way that violates the creator's rights to them.

(Plagiarism and fabrication are violations of the ethical standards of the journalism profession. In addition to plagiarizing sources, outright fabrication is equally dangerous territory for journalists. This includes making up sources and attributing information to non-existent people or printed matter.)

B. Campus policy in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

"If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with the DRC to establish a record of their disability."

C. You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, withdrawals, incompletes, classroom behavior, and other policies found at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct. Also, please read the SJSU catalog thoroughly.

University Policy S01-13, San José State University's *Policy of Commitment to a Campus Climate That Values Diversity and Equal Opportunity*, replaces University Policy S91-1 and affirms that San José State University (SJSU) is committed to maintaining an environment free from discrimination and harassment in compliance with all laws on non-discrimination, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. Furthermore, the university community has a responsibility to advocate inclusion, respect, and understanding at a level above that which is minimally required by law.

For a full description, view [SJSU Campus Climate Policy](#).

Executive Order 883, *Systemwide Guidelines for Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Programs in Employment*, supersedes Executive Order 774. The California State University is committed to maintaining and implementing employment policies and procedures that comply with applicable state and federal nondiscrimination and affirmative action laws and regulations. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, age, disability, medical condition, and covered veteran status is prohibited. Additionally, Executive Order 883 prohibits retaliation for filing a discrimination complaint, opposing a discriminatory act, or participating in a discrimination investigation or proceeding.

For a full description, view [Executive Order 883](#).

[NCAA Gender Equity Report](#) details information concerning SJSU's intercollegiate athletics programs under the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act of 1994.

Presidential Directive 97-03 describes the University's policies and guidelines for securing accommodations for students with disabilities, as well as the procedures for resolving disputes. It is the purpose of this directive to assure that SJSU continues to comply with federal and state legislation and California State University policies regarding the provision of services to students with disabilities.

For a full description, view [Presidential Directive 97-03](#).

Executive Order 926, The California State University Policy on Disability Support and Accommodations, presents policies, procedures, and monitoring for making all CSU programs, services, and activities accessible to students, faculty, staff, and the general public with disabilities.

For a full description, view [Executive Order 926](#).

In order to **observe days of religious significance**, students may occasionally be absent from class. Therefore, to address this issue, the San José State University Academic Council voted to adopt University Policy F68-8. This university policy, in conjunction with [California Education Code 89320](#), addresses campus policy on religious holidays.

For a full description, view [Policy F68-8](#).

Presidential Directive 91-08, *Sexual Harassment and Special Responsibilities of Supervisory and Management Personnel Having Knowledge of Potential Sexual Harassment Situation*, asserts San José State University's commitment to providing all its students and employees with a comfortable and safe environment for learning and working. The President of San José State University issued this memo to clarify for all SJSU supervisory personnel the kind of conduct that is defined as sexual harassment and the responsibilities of all supervisory personnel when they have any knowledge that sexual harassment may be taking place within the campus community.

For a full description, view [Presidential Directive 91-08](#).



Policies of the School of Journalism and Mass Communications

To avoid disruptions in the classroom and to foster an atmosphere for learning, the School has established the following classroom policies.

- All cell phones must be turned off (or set to "vibrate") in the classroom. Please be forewarned that, if a cell phone goes off in class, you will be asked to leave the classroom for that particular class period.
- Latecomers may be denied entrance to the classroom. Similarly, do not disrupt the class by leaving early. Do not schedule work, personal appointments (doctor's visits), etc. so that there will be a conflict with the time the class meets.
- When in the classroom, laptops must be used for classroom-related activities only.
- Remove your personal belongings and trash from the classroom after each class.
- No food or drinks allowed in classrooms or labs.
- Overloads in class enrollments are not encouraged. Courses where prerequisites exist must be completed successful by students before enrollment in those classes. School faculty have the authority to drop students who do not properly and successfully meet JMC School course prerequisite requirements.