

JOUR 21B – Feature Writing and Reporting
Spring 2025
De Anza College

COURSE INTRODUCTION: Welcome to JOUR 21B! In this course, we'll learn how to report and write feature news stories. You'll gain an understanding of interviewing, quoting sources and crafting leads that create interest in your feature story. You will write a variety of articles, as well as give presentations to the class.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Format: HYBRID class -- meets IN PERSON Thursdays 1:30-2:45 p.m. and online (No Zoom)

Instructor: Betsy Gebhart

Email: gebhartbetsy@fhda.edu

Classroom: L 42 (in the L4 building)

Office hours: Tuesdays 12:30-1:30 p.m. at Language and Communication Village, L 47,
or on Zoom by appointment <https://fhda-edu.zoom.us/j/2873062341>

COURSE INFORMATION:

Units: 3

Course Discipline and Number: Jour 21B CRN: 46279

Course title: Feature Writing and Reporting

Weekly Lecture Hours: 1.15 Thursdays 1:30-2:45 p.m.

Credit: Credit- Degree Applicable

Grading Method: Letter Grading

Prerequisites: English Writing 1A or 1AH or English as a Second Language 5

Advisory: Journalism 21A— Jour 21A and 21B cannot be taken concurrently

Quarter and Year: Spring 2025

In-class hours: Thursdays 1:30-2:45 p.m.

Start date: Thursday, April 10, 2025

Last day to drop without a W: Sunday, April 20, 2025

Last day to withdraw: Friday, May 30, 2025

End date: Thursday, June 26, 2025

Please refer to De Anza's Academic Calendar for more information. <https://www.deanza.edu/calendar/>

Course Description

Journalism 21B, Feature Writing and Reporting, gives students the fundamentals in feature writing for newspapers, magazines, and other media with instruction and practice in profile, human interest, enterprise news, and opinion features. Practical experience in interviewing, writing special story types and revising.

<https://www.deanza.edu/journalism/courses.html>

Course Format: Hybrid class with lectures delivered on the dates of class in person and additional assigned activities completed by students outside of class time.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Appraise and critique feature stories for originality, sourcing and writing style.

Report and write original multi-source feature stories including incorporating ethical and legal principles and defending the use of sources.

Produce opinion and critique stories using students' own observations and sourcing

Demonstrate how to present feature stories in non-print formats

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Access to a computer, the internet and an individual email address
- Access to Canvas course management system
- Smartphone or digital audio recorder that can record interviews

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

The Associated Press Stylebook
57th edition, ISBN: 978-1541605114
Publisher: The Associated Press, 2024-2026

Available on Amazon \$16.32 Also available in La Voz newsroom library for reference only

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS:

Inside Reporting, a Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism, By Tim Harrower

Writing and Reporting for the Media. By Bender, Davenport, Drager, Fedler

Feature Writing for Newspapers and Magazines, The Pursuit of Excellence, By Edward Jay Friedlander and John Lee

Dynamics of News Reporting and Writing: Foundational Skills for a Digital Age, By Vincent F. Filak

The Elements of News Writing, By James W. Kershner

OTHER READINGS:

New York Times subscription ONLINE: Sign up for free access to the New York Times using your De Anza email address. <https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing>

Here is the library link: <https://libguides.fhda.edu/newyorktimesaccess>

COURSE AT A GLANCE (Note: Schedule may change as needed)

DATE	TOPIC	Articles/Presentations
Week 1 – April 7-15	Introduction/ World of Features	AP & Feature article presentations weekly throughout quarter
Week 2 – April 14-22	Quotes and quotations	Article #1- Reaction story
Week 3 – April 22-29	Interviewing techniques	
Week 4 – April 30-May 6	Feature Leads	Article #2–Color/Event story
Week 5 – May 5-13	Feature writing-Trends	
Week 6 – May 12-20	Feature writing- Profiles	Article #3-Trend story
Week 7 – May 19-27	Short-form alternatives	
Week 8 – May 26-June 3	Feature writing- Reviews, How-To, Opinions	Article #4-Profile story
Week 9 – June 2-10	Feature writing- Narratives	
Week 10 – June 9-17	Writing fabulous leads	Article #5-Review or How-to Story
Week 11 – June 16-22	Wrap up/Final exam review	AP & Feature article presentations weekly throughout quarter
Week 12- June 21-26	Final Exam	

Please note: Your instructor reserves the right to modify the course schedule according to the needs of the class. Any schedule changes will be communicated to students via email and in the course announcements.

MORE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

La Voz campus newspaper

Read the De Anza College student-run newspaper! <https://lavozeanza.com/>

Follow **La Voz** on social media, including Instagram: **@lavozeanza**

The New York Times — Through De Anza email. Address: Try to read at least the front page and the “U.S. News” section of the paper daily. To be a good reporter, it’s imperative to know what’s happening in your community and throughout California, the country and the world. Reading and analyzing news stories is also one of the best ways to learn the fundamentals of writing and reporting. If you don’t already, you should get into the habit of reading at least a couple of news sources every day.

Most Bay Area libraries also offer free digital access to the San Francisco Chronicle and the Mercury News with a library card or e-card. Learn more and sign up:

- Santa Clara County Library District <https://scclld.org/card-application/>
- Santa Cruz Public Library <https://www.santacruzpl.org/services/detail/32/>
- San Jose Public Libraries <https://www.sjpl.org/membership/#apply>
- San Mateo County Libraries <https://smcl.org/card-services/get-a-card/>

Local TV news channels:

KTVU-TV Oakland (FOX) Channel 2

KRON-TV San Francisco (Independent) Ch. 4

KPIX-TV SF (CBS) Ch. 5

KGO-TV SF (ABC) Ch. 7

KNTV-TV San Jose (NBC) Ch. 11

Check your local listings for time of morning, evening and midday newscasts!

Local radio news channels:

KCBS All-News Radio (CBS) 740 AM/106.9 FM Download Audacy app or <https://www.audacy.com/kcbsradio>

KQED Radio 88.5 FM (NPR) <https://www.kqed.org/radio>

Feel free to share any of your favorite news sources of any medium!

Provided Materials and Resources

• All additional resources for each week, including articles, course activities and assignments, will be available on our course's Canvas page, available via De Anza's Canvas website. Please check our Canvas page regularly for course info and updates. Additional instructions and assistance in accessing Canvas can be found via the Online Education Center. <https://www.deanza.edu/online-ed/>

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (subject to change)

Assignment and Description	Points Possible
In-class participation Every week, students will participate and contribute to in-class discussion and activities. At times this may be in a whole group, small group or individual settings.	200 points (20 for first meeting, 18 each subsequent meeting)
Five articles/Proposals/ Peer reviews: 1-Reaction story 2-Color/Event story 3-Trend story 4-Profile story 5-Review or How-to or Opinion piece	400 points -Three in-person interviews per story; sometimes documentary sources also -No interviews with family and friends
Quizzes Throughout the course, there will be seven short quizzes, designed to sharpen key skills or reinforce topics covered in class.	200 points
Discussions/Exercises/Short Videos	100 points
AP presentation video	30 points
Feature article presentation/analysis	30 points
Final Exam	40 points
TOTAL	1000 points

FEATURE ARTICLES- Due dates & Points

Story	Proposal due	Grade	Story due	Grade	Rewrite due	Grade	Peer review	Total Grade
Article 1 - Reaction			Wk 2, April 22	30			10	40
Article 2 - Color/event	Week 3, April 22	15	Wk 4, April 29	25	Wk 4, May 6	40	10	90
Article 3 - Trend	Week 5, May 6	15	Wk 6, May 13	25	Wk 6, May 20	40	10	90
Article 4 - Profile	Week 7, May 20	15	Wk 8, May 27	25	Wk 8, June 3	40	10	90
Article 5 - Review or How-to or Opinion	Week 9, June 3	15	Wk 10, June 10	25	Wk 11, June 17	40	10	90
TOTAL								400

(Information subject to change)

A Note About Deadlines: All assignments are due before 11:59 p.m. PST on the due date indicated on Canvas. In news organizations, deadlines are crucial, and reporters must learn to manage their time and work under pressure to finish an assignment on time. Those are important skills to practice, and there's no better place to start than in this class.

A Note About Assignments: All assignments should be typed using 12-point Times New Roman font, unless otherwise stated, and should be proofread for accuracy, grammar, punctuation, AP style and spelling. Errors of spelling, punctuation, grammar and/or AP style will result in loss of points and a lower grade. Typos are considered spelling errors.

WARNING: A factual error, such as misspelling someone's name, will result in a loss of points and a lower grade. A gross error, such as a potentially libelous statement, plagiarism, use of AI, fabrication, etc., could result in an F for a story. Reporters must get the facts right.

A Note About the Class: Active participation is a must. Please know that our class sessions will be spent mainly on covering main topics, your presentations and answering questions. You must take responsibility for your own learning by reading chapters and suggested materials, practicing writing, participating and asking questions.

Grading Procedures

Grading is based on a 1000-point scale. Students must adhere to professional standards, meet deadlines and follow rules of punctuation, grammar, spelling and style. To earn an A in the course, in addition to 900 or more points, a student must turn in all assignments, complete all live reporting assignments and not miss more than one class. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** A student who earns 700 points or more but has not completed all major projects will NOT pass.

A A-	950-1000 pts 900-949	95-100 % 90-94%
B+ B B-	870-899 pts 840-869 800-839	87-89% 84-86 80-83
C+ C	760-799 700-759	76-79% 70-75%
D	600-699	60-69% (No pass)
F	Below 600	Below 60% (No pass)

Extra Credit: There will be extra credit opportunities. Stay tuned!

Here's everything else you need to know:

To be a successful student in this course, you must:

- Check the course regularly for announcements and messages;
- Communicate regularly with your instructor and peers, including providing constructive feedback on others' assignments as requested;
- Create a personalized study and/or assignment schedule, allowing for adequate time to complete coursework;
- Complete all assignments by the due dates specified; and
- Keep copies and backups of all work in process and work submitted

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend every class on time and stay until the end, participate in class discussions and exercises and complete weekly reading assignments.

You must attend every class for the first two weeks of the quarter, or you may be dropped.

If you miss more than one class before the "Last day to drop with a W," the instructor may de-enroll you. More than one absence during the entire quarter may result in a lower quarter grade, by at least one letter grade. Starting with the second absence, you will also lose DOUBLE the allotted class attendance/participation points.

Please note: Arriving late to class and/or leaving early is a distraction. Therefore, if you are late three times or leave the class early three times, it will be considered as one absence. (Subsequent tardies will be treated as absences also.) If you cannot be in class, please communicate ahead of time.

***** If you have perfect attendance and do not miss a single deadline during the quarter, you will receive 10 EXTRA points toward your final grade. *****

Courtesy/Equity

In discussions, students are expected to be professional and courteous, listen to one another and show tolerance and respect for varying viewpoints. Students who exhibit inappropriate behavior will be docked points and/or excused from the class. Administrative follow-up may result. All persons, regardless of gender, age, class, race, religion, physical disability, sexual orientation, etc., shall have equal opportunity without harassment in this course. Issues can be discussed confidentially with the instructor.

Collaborative Work

The student must independently complete all assignments, tests, activities, etc., unless specifically stated otherwise. In situations where collaboration is part of the assignment, the expectations will be clearly stated in the assignment overview. In all collaborative efforts, you must work only within your assigned group, and you must include the names of all individuals who worked on the submitted assignment. These two minimum requirements for collaborative assignments must be met or the work will not be accepted.

PROGRAM AND COURSE POLICIES

Technology Requirements and Skills

This course requires access to a computer or device with:

- Internet access, preferably with a high-speed connection.
- A web browser.
- Access to your De Anza email account via MyPortal.
- Access to our course's Canvas page, available via De Anza's Canvas website.

Technology Backup

It is the student's responsibility to have a backup procedure for course assignments.

Academic Dishonesty

Original work is required for this class. Papers from other classes are not accepted. Credibility is a fundamental professional value for journalists. Making things up —quotes, people in stories, facts — and stealing the words of another writer or failing to give proper attribution to information obtained from other sources are deadly sins in journalism. The instructor may cross-check story submissions via Turnitin, and other software.

FYI: Turnitin on Canvas now has an Artificial Intelligence (AI) component checker.

There is a zero-tolerance policy in this class for plagiarism, fabrication, AI use and cheating.

Plagiarism

This is a class for humans, not for robots. You are here to learn how to write. To plagiarize is to “steal and use (the ideas and writings of another) as one's own.” Plagiarism (copying work or cheating) is grounds for probation and/or suspension from the college. Using AI tools to create text and then turning it in as your own original work is considered plagiarism. Any student who cheats on an exam, plagiarizes from somebody's work or lifts information from sources without citing those sources will receive a 0 for that assignment and a grade no higher than a C for the course. If you are uncertain about the college's policy on academic misconduct, please refer to the Academic Integrity section. An online site about plagiarism with suggestions on how to avoid it is available at the Purdue University Online Writing Lab. <https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/>

Medical/Family/Legal/other Excuses are NOT ACCEPTED. No makeups!

In the print and broadcast news industry, if you miss a deadline ... or “miss your hit” in TV news ... your audience misses the story!

Standards of Student Conduct

The college is committed to offering a safe and positive learning environment. Click here for more information: <https://go.boarddocs.com/ca/fhda/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9U2UC77B2DA5>

Dropping the Class

Make sure to check the Academic Calendar for deadlines.

Students may be dropped who have not attended class or logged into the course Canvas site for seven or more consecutive days. You are responsible for dropping if you decide not to attend the class. Please see “How to Drop Classes” for regulations, dates and procedures.

https://www.deanza.edu/apply-and-register/register/add_drop.html

Students with excessive absences and/or are not keeping up with assignments are subject to de-enrollment. Students who disappear and do not drop by the final “Drop with W” deadline will receive an “F.”

Support Services

Visit De Anza’s Online Resource Hub for more information.

<https://www.deanza.edu/online-ed/students/studentresourcehub.html>

Students With Disabilities

Students who have been found to be eligible for accommodations by Disability Support Programs and Services, should follow up to ensure that their accommodations have been authorized for the current quarter. If you are not registered with DSPS and need accommodations, please go to the DSPS office in the Registration & Student Services Building – Room 141 for information on eligibility and how to receive support services. You can also visit online at: <https://www.deanza.edu/dsps/> for additional information.

Student Success Center

Need help with this course? Want more personal connections this quarter? Student Success Center tutors and workshops are ready for you! Watch the SSC Welcome Video to learn more. <https://www.deanza.edu/studentssuccess/>

- **Tutoring:** Drop in or sign up for weekly sessions. Come with assignments or stop by check it out.
- **Workshops:** Attend a skills workshop, a content-specific math/science workshop, or a listening and speaking workshop.

After-hours or weekend tutoring: See the Online Tutoring page for information about NetTutor (via Canvas).

Studies show that students who participate in tutoring, group study or workshops for three or more hours succeed at much higher rates than those who do not.

Career Services

The Career Services office offers workshops and resources to assist students in choosing a major, finding a job or planning a career. You can use the online scheduler to arrange an online meeting with a Career Services counselor. <https://www.deanza.edu/counseling/career/>

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor and/or college. Every effort will be made to avoid changes to the syllabus or course schedule, but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make modifications necessary. If so, changes will be communicated via De Anza email and/or the course site.

Continued enrollment in this course assumes that you have read and understand the information outlined in the syllabus.