

SAMPLE SYLLABUS



Methods and Practice: Reporting Accra - An incomparable African Metropolis

Course Number
JOUR-UA 9202

Instruction Mode: In-person

Fall 2023

If you are enrolled in this course 100% remotely and are not a Go Local/Study Away student for NYU Accra, please make sure that you've completed the online academic orientation via Brightspace so you are aware of site-specific support structure, policies and procedures. Please contact Dr. Nicholas Okai (nno211@nyu.edu) and Ms. Sharon Agbemenya (sa158@nyu.edu) if you have trouble accessing the Brightspace site.

Syllabus last updated on: 4-October-2022

Lecturer Contact Information
Timothy Quashigah

Office Hours: By Appointment

Units earned
4 Credits

Course Details

- Thursdays 1:10 pm - 4:10 pm
- All times are GMT

- Location: Room 1

- Remote Participants: Your instructor will provide you with the Zoom link via NYU Classes.
- COVID-related details: In the interest of protecting the NYU [SITE] community, we are closely following CDC guidance around COVID-19 and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being is our top priority.
 - If you are attending in person, you will be assigned a seat on the first day and are expected to use that seat for the entire semester due to NYU COVID-19 safety protocol. Please note that you are expected to attend every class meeting in-person; however, this may change during the drop/add period if in-person student registration increases significantly or at any point during the semester if local COVID-19 regulations require additional physical distancing.
 - Additionally, in-person students will be split into cohorts who will attend sessions.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Course Description

- Is journalism on the brink of extinction? Or, is it simply evolving? Indeed, the frontiers of journalism are being extended with the emergence of digital technology. Particularly in Africa, this is a huge challenge. Given these developments, this course intends to examine the changes in the content and context of journalism from an Afrocentric lens. Not only that, the course considers the impact of these changes on the practice, genre, and approaches to journalism in Africa. Set within an African environment, this course focuses on reporting, and employing strong journalistic principles. Thus, students carry out experiments with forms, styles, and subject matters with a view to understanding journalism in an African environment in a multipolar world. In doing so, the course hones the skills, knowledge, and competencies of students in relation to the ethics of an exciting and demanding career. Specifically, this course examines journalism as an art, a craft, and an occupation in contemporary times. Thus, journalistic styles, procedures, techniques of news, information gathering, presentation of news information, and opinion in print and electronic media form the foci of this course

Course Objective

- Professional competency and professional identity
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills

Assessment Components

You are expected to attend class in person or remote synchronously. Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Class Participation	10%
Assignments	30%
Field Trips	10%
Class Presentation	10%
Term Paper	40%
Total	100%

Teaching & Learning Philosophy

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Complete publishable-quality writing assignments for a variety of media, including newspapers, broadcast, and the Internet
- Adapt messages to specific audiences, situations, and contexts
- Demonstrate advanced competence in grammar and structure, as well as an awareness of style
- Create longer, more in-depth pieces of writing
- Demonstrate credibility
- Find, evaluate, and apply information.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Required Text(s)

Electronic Resources (via Brightspace / NYU Library Course Reserves)

Aamidor, A. (1999). Real Feature Writing. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, London.

Ahuja, B. N. & Chhabra, S. S. (2008). Principles and Techniques of Journalism. Surjeet Publications, Delhi.

Ahuja, B.N. (2005). The Theory and practice of Journalism. Surjeet Publications

Allen, S. (2004). News Culture. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Itule, D. B. and Anderson, D. A. (2008). News Writing and Reporting for Today's Media. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Kovach, B. & Rosentiel, T. (2001). The Elements of Journalism: What News-people Should Know and the Public Should Expect. New York: Three Rivers Press.

McNair, Brian (1998). The Sociology of Journalism. London: Arnold.

Moyes, N. B. (1986). Journalism. Massachusetts: Ginn and Company.

Mwaura, Peter (1991). "Feature Writing", in Bofo, S.T.K. (ed.) Module on Advanced Writing. Nairobi: Space Sellers Ltd., pp 1-16.

Sparks, G. (2000). Media Effects Research. Australia: Wardsworth.

Tumasi, P.A. (2001). Social Research in Rural Communities. Accra: UG Publishing.

Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](https://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](https://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](https://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](https://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Assignment Due
Class 1 September 1, 2022	Introduction to the course. Discussion of basic principles of journalism (Definitional issues - defining "news" and the basics of journalistic writing) Viewing of various news reports.	First impressions of Accra (due Sep 8)
Class 2 September 8, 2022	The art and practise of good reporting: What makes a good story? Students select and discuss a piece of journalism which they think is interesting, as part of class discussions on different styles of writing.	N/A

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Week/Date	Topic	Assignment Due
Class 3 September 15, 2022	News writing workshop: Introduction to newswriting and its different styles and standards + exercise designed to practice news-writing skills.	Construct intros of no more than 25 words for hypothetical news stories based on supplied information. (due Sep 22)
Class 4 September 22, 2022	Documentary Filmmaking in Ghana: Screening of extracts from selected documentary films + Q&A with documentary film maker.	N/A
Class 5 September 29, 2022	Descriptive writing: Discussion of descriptive writing techniques, with reference to examples from class reader Possible class trip.	Descriptive writing exercise – describe a scene in Accra (due Oct 6)
Class 6 October 6, 2022	Feature-writing and interview techniques: Introduction to basic styles and techniques, with examples and interviewing exercise. Individual feedback sessions on assignments 1 and 2	Individual feedback sessions on assignments 1 and 2
Class 7 October 13, 2022	Feature-writing trip: The class will visit a location in Accra or the countryside (details tbc) to conduct interviews and gather material as preparation for writing a feature story.	Assignment: Short feature story (due Oct 20)
Class 8 October 20, 2022	TV Reporting in Accra: Discussion of the skills required for reporting television news from Accra, with viewing of TV clips + meeting with TV journalist guest speaker	N/A
Class 9 October 27, 2022	TV Writing Workshop: Workshop in which students will write and record their own TV news story, with the help of a professional guest editor	A finished TV news story (due Nov 3)
Class 10 November 3, 2022	Radio Reporting in Accra: Discussion of radio reporting, and further general issues relating to foreign journalists in Accra, with radio journalist guest speaker	Essay: Reporting Ghana – the issues and challenges for foreign journalists (with reference to books and articles) (due Nov 10)
Class 11 November 10, 2022	Introduction to the Ghanaian media Discussion of the development of Ghana’s domestic media and its relevance to foreign reporting of Ghana – with Ghanaian media guest speaker (and/or visit to media organization)	N/A
Class 12 November 17, 2022	Profile Writing + Introduction to profile writing and discussion of final assignment	A 2000-word profile of a Ghanaian military officer and writer
Class 13 November 24, 2022	Book Reviews: Students will give individual class presentations on a book about Ghana by a foreign journalist which they have read (book to be assigned earlier in the semester)	Individual feedback sessions on assignments 4 & 5

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Week/Date	Topic	Assignment Due
Class 14 December 1, 2022	Final Class – Summary of course / Individual discussions of progress on final assignment.	N/A
Class 15 December 8, 2022	No Class; Final assignment – profile (in lieu of exam), due at 5:00 pm today in hard copy to the Academic Affairs Office.	

Tests and Quizzes

- Term paper (1500 words)

Your final examination will be a term paper on an emerging issue/current issue of socio-cultural significance of your choice. Your paper must be predicated on at least a month's worth of reading, watching or listening to how various news media are covering the issue in one selected Western country and in Ghana. Your analysis must draw concrete examples from the media you have analyzed to underpin the points you make and reflect the readings on the subject. Your paper should be properly referenced with citations of literature and sources of information properly attributed.

Classroom Etiquette

To optimize the experience in a blended learning environment, please consider the following:

- Please be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. Ambient noise and some visual images may disrupt class time for you and your peers.
- Please do not eat during class and minimize any other distracting noises (e.g. rustling of papers and leaving the classroom before the break, unless absolutely necessary).
- If you are not using your cell phone to follow the lesson, cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class time.
- Make sure to let your classmates finish speaking before you do.
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (ie COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.
- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class.

Your Lecturer

- Timothy Quashigah, PhD. is a senior lecturer at the Ghana Institute of Journalism, teaching Journalism, Feature Writing, Radio & Television News Presentation and Advanced Reporting. He obtained his PhD from the University of Ghana in sociology and, with particular interest in the study of sociology of the media and communication. He has had considerable exposure in broadcasting and was the Head of Training at the GBC. He has written extensively on social issues of interest. His current publications include *Ghana: the double-bind of media freedom* in *The Global Handbook of Media Accountability* (July 2022), *Broaching Agenda for Climate Change in Africa: A Perspective on Media Engagement with Climate Issues in Ghana* in *Climate Change, Media & Culture: Critical Issues in Global Environmental Communication* (2019), and book reviews on *Investigative Reporting: A study in Technique* (Journal of Communications, Media and Society, volume 13, Number 1, October, 2016.), *Investigative Journalism: Proven Strategies for Reporting the Story* (Ghana Social

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Science Journal, volume 13, Number 1, June, 2016.), African Cultural Values: An Introduction (Ghana Social Science Journal, volume 12, Number 2, December, 2015.) and Kofi Chokosi Speaks: From Archaeology to Zoology (Daily Graphic, Saturday, December 9, 2017.).

Academic Policies

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

	% of Final Grade	Due
Class presentation, field trips, etc.	5%	
Class anthology	10%	
Critical reflection papers	30%	
Book review	15%	
Final Exam	40%	

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class

Grade Conversion

Your lecturer may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

**A = 94-100 or
4.0**
**A- = 90-93 or
3.7**
**B+ = 87-89 or
3.3**
**B = 84-86 or
3.0**
**B- = 80-83 or
2.7**
**C+ = 77-79 or
2.3**
**C = 74-76 or
2.0**
**C- = 70-73 or
1.7**
**D+ = 67-69 or
1.3**
**D = 65-66 or
1.0**
**F = below 65 or
0**

Attendance Policy

Studying at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers, or online through NYU Brightspaces if the course is remote synchronous/blended, is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. If you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to write to nno211@nyu.edu to see if you can take your remote class at the Academic Center.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academics team by e-mail immediately (i.e., before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance, or emergencies. Your professor or site staff may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from an NYU Staff member as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances that you wish to be treated confidentially must be presented to staff. Doctor's notes must be submitted in person or by e-mail to the Academics team, who will inform your professors.

Unexcused absences may be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade for every week's worth of classes missed, and may negatively affect your class participation grade. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequently joining the class late.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to site staff; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

Final exams

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Late Submission of Work

- (1) Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (including weekends and public holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU SITE Staff), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.
- (2) Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (including weekends and public holidays) following the submission date receives an F.
- (3) Assignments due during finals week that are submitted more than 3 days late (including weekends and public holidays) without previously arranged extensions will not be accepted and will receive a zero. Any exceptions or extensions for work during finals week must be discussed with the **Site Director**.
- (4) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.
- (5) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

As the University's policy on "[Academic Integrity for Students at NYU](#)" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offences against academic integrity.

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you **MUST** inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

[NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines](#)

[NYU Library Guides](#)

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU SITE's Academics Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)

Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, NYU Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website](#).

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

Moses Accommodations Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU [SITE].

Bias Response

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University's existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the [Web Form \(link\)](#)
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
- Phone: 212-998-2277
- 030 276 1528

Note: Aspects of this course syllabus might change during the semester