

# Welcome to The Standard-Times version of Journalism 101

Classes begin **March 31** at 6:30 p.m.

Classes will run at The S-T  
every **Tuesday**  
through **May 19**

Each class will run **90 minutes**  
with a brief break at the halfway point

Your instructor is:

**David Humphrey**, special projects editor of The Standard-Times

## Lesson 1:

Welcome, opening remarks, overview etc.

A. What's community journalism anyway? A discussion of why we're offering this program and why you're taking this program.

1. Voices, voices, voices
2. Economics 101

B. The Gospel....Spreading the News, talking across the fence, telling stories at the dinner table...the origins of news. How much a part of our daily lives the news has always been. Uncle Harry died. Cousin Sue graduated. Shirley got a promotion. Jimmy scraped his knee.

C. So family news becomes neighborhood news becomes community news becomes newspapers becomes the First Amendment.

D. Why are you taking this class? What do you hope to gain?

As a brief assignment for you to do between now and next week's class, we want you all to be reporters at home for the week. Sometime in the course of the week, some news will happen in your circle of family and friends. Someone will get married, or someone will have a baby, or someone will get an A on her report card, or someone will celebrate a birthday or an anniversary. Your assignment is to write a brief news story...3-5 paragraphs covering that news event. Bring your stories to class next time and we will discuss them.

## I. Introduction to reporting and news writing

A. What makes something newsworthy? Why do we decide to cover an event, write about it?

B. Five essentials of journalism

C. Tools of the trade

1. You were born with one box of tools
2. You are provided with another box of tools (References, pens, pencils, computers, etc.)
3. As a writer, you use these kinds of tools (quote, fact, statistic etc.)

D. The job of a journalist

## II. Writing exercise... beesting

## Lesson 2:

### I. Intro to news stories and reporting.

A. Discussion of the kinds of stories to be found in SouthCoast that can be covered by community journalists, and the outlets for them within The S-T. From Little League games to senior concerts to neighborhood association issues to brief profiles of community members.

B. Hard/Direct News

C. Soft/Indirect News

D. Reporting. Three basic layers of reporting (single-source, enterprise and analysis/commentary)

E. Writing techniques: The Inverted Pyramid and other Egyptian oddities

F. Attribution and Verification: Who Sez So?

### II. Writing exercise...clendenning

### **Lesson 3:**

Writing the story

A. The LEAD.

1. Writing exercise....barnstorm the lead on barn storm,

### **Lesson 4:**

I. Back to the tool chest: Conducting interviews.

- A. Two kinds of interviews
- B. News Interviews.
- C. Personality Interviews.
- D. Ground rules for interviews
- E. Preparing for the interview
- F. Asking the questions
- G. The tough questions
- H. Handling no comment
- I. Listening

II. Exercise...Pair off students (use instructor if there is an odd number). From the following list, each student should pick one topic and then conduct an interview of his/her partner on that subject. TAKE GOOD NOTES. When the interview is concluded, change roles.

When both interviews are concluded, each student should write a brief story based on the interview.

#### **SUGGESTED TOPICS**

1. A favorite pet
2. A favorite place to visit
3. A favorite relative
4. Your proudest moment
5. Your scariest moment

### **Lesson 5:**

Applying the tools, using quotations, anecdotes, paraphrases etc.

Exercise...Introduce guest speaker who will offer opening statement as in news conference and then will accept questions. After press conference reporters will compare notes with partners, write news story based on notes

### **Lesson 6:**

Making writing better

- A What is good writing. What goes into it? How do you take all the facts of a story and assemble them with the precision of a writer?
- B. Learn to write better by constantly thinking of the process that produces good, effective writing.
- C. Clarity comes during the revision stage of writing.
- D. Solving problems of meaning
- E. Solving problems of form
- F. Solving problems of voice
- G. Sprinkle your writing with life to give it some zest.
  1. Read, read, read. Books, newspapers, magazines, labels, signs...just keep reading
  2. Look and listen. Then write what you heard and saw.

### **Lesson 7:**

Covering your town or neighborhood....what does it take?

- A. Some advice from the some of our veteran community reporters.
- B. More discussion of community journalism.
- C. A conversation with editors at S-T about continuing relationships etc.

### **Graduation**

A surprise or two and graduation ceremonies