

JOURNALIST'S RESOURCE

Knowledge-based reporting

Covering the news: A syllabus

"Journalism provides something unique to a culture — independent, reliable, accurate and comprehensive information that citizens require to be free."

— *The Elements of Journalism*

Course description

This course, which was written for [Journalist's Resource](#), introduces tomorrow's journalists to the fundamentals of covering and writing news. Mastering these skills is no simple task. In an Internet age of instantaneous access, demand for high-quality accounts of fast-breaking news has never been greater. To resist the temptation to cut corners, reporters must acquire skills to identify a story and its essential elements, gather information efficiently, place it in a meaningful context, and write concise and compelling accounts, sometimes at breathtaking speed. The readings, discussions, exercises and assignments of this course are designed to help students acquire such skills and understand how to exercise them wisely.

Course objective

To give students the background and skills needed to originate, research, focus and craft clear, compelling and contextual accounts of breaking news in a deadline environment.

Learning objectives

- To build an understanding of the role news plays in American democracy.
- To discuss basic journalistic principles such as accuracy, integrity and fairness.
- To evaluate how practices such as rooting and stereotyping can undermine them.
- To analyze what kinds of information make news and why.
- To evaluate the elements of news by deconstructing award-winning stories.
- To evaluate the sources and resources from which news content is drawn.
- To analyze how information is attributed, quoted and paraphrased in news.
- To gain competence in focusing a story's dominant theme in a single sentence.
- To introduce the structure, style and language of basic news writing.
- To gain competence in building basic news stories, from lead through their close.
- To gain confidence and competence in writing under deadline pressure.
- To practice how to identify, background and contact appropriate sources.
- To discuss and apply the skills needed to interview effectively.
- To analyze data and how it is used and abused in news coverage.
- To review basic math skills needed to evaluate and use statistics in news.
- To report and write basic stories about news events on deadline.

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Suggested reading

- A standard textbook of the instructor's choosing.
- *America's Best Newspaper Writing*, Roy Peter Clark and Christopher Scanlan, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006
- *The Elements of Journalism*, Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, Three Rivers Press, 2001.
- *Talk Straight, Listen Carefully: The Art of Interviewing*, M.L. Stein and Susan E. Paterno, Iowa State University Press, 2001
- *Math Tools for Journalists*, Kathleen Woodruff Wickham, Marion Street Press, Inc., 2002
- *On Writing Well*, 30th Anniversary Issue" William Zinsser, Collins, 2006
- *The Associated Press Stylebook 2011*, Associated Press, Basic Books, 2011

Weekly schedule and exercises (13-week course)

We encourage faculty to assign students to read on their own Kovach and Rosentiel's *The Elements of Journalism* in its entirety during the early phase of the course. Only a few chapters of their book are explicitly assigned for the class sessions listed below.

The assumption for this syllabus is that the class meets twice weekly.

Week 1: Why journalism matters

Class 1: The role of journalism in society

The word *journalism* elicits considerable confusion in contemporary American society. Citizens often confuse the role of reporting with that of advocacy. They mistake those who promote opinions or push their personal agendas on cable news or in the blogosphere for those who report. But reporters play a different role: that of gatherer of evidence, unbiased and unvarnished, placed in a context of past events that gives current events weight beyond the ways opinion leaders or propagandists might misinterpret or exploit them.

This session's discussion will focus on the traditional role of journalism eloquently summarized by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel in *The Elements of Journalism*. The class will then examine whether they believe that the journalist's role has changed or needs to change in today's news environment. What is the reporter's role in contemporary society? Is objectivity, sometimes called fairness, an antiquated concept or an essential one, as the authors argue, for maintaining a democratic society? How has the term been subverted? What are the reporter's fundamental responsibilities? This discussion will touch on such fundamental issues as journalists' obligation to the truth, their loyalty to the citizens who are their audience and the demands of their discipline to verify information, act independently, provide a forum for public discourse and seek not only competing viewpoints but carefully vetted facts that help establish which viewpoints are grounded in evidence.

READING: Kovach and Rosenstiel, Chapter 1, and relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Students should compare the news reporting on a breaking political story in *The Wall Street Journal*, considered editorially conservative, and *The New York Times*, considered editorially liberal. They should write a two-page memo that considers the following questions: Do the stories emphasize the same information? Does either story appear to slant the news toward a particular perspective? How? Do the stories support the notion of fact-based journalism and unbiased reporting or do they appear to infuse opinion into news? Students should provide specific examples that support their conclusions.
2. Students should look for an example of reporting in any medium in which reporters appear have compromised the notion of fairness to intentionally or inadvertently espouse a point of view. What impact did the incorporation of such material have on the story? Did its inclusion have any effect on the reader's perception of the story?

Class 2: Objectivity, fairness and contemporary confusion about both

In his book *Discovering the News*, Michael Schudson traced the roots of objectivity to the era following World War I and a desire by journalists to guard against the rapid growth of public relations practitioners intent on spinning the news. Objectivity was, and remains, an ideal, a method for guarding against spin and personal bias by examining all sides of a story and testing claims

through a process of evidentiary verification. Practiced well, it attempts to find where something approaching truth lies in a sea of conflicting views. Today, objectivity often is mistaken for tit-for-tat journalism, in which the reporters only responsibility is to give equal weight to the conflicting views of different parties without regard for which, if any, are saying something approximating truth. This definition cedes the journalist's responsibility to seek and verify evidence that informs the citizenry.

Focusing on the "Journalism of Verification" chapter in *The Elements of Journalism*, this class will review the evolution and transformation of concepts of objectivity and fairness and, using the homework assignment, consider how objectivity is being practiced and sometimes skewed in the contemporary new media.

READING: Kovach and Rosenstiel, Chapter 4, and relevant pages of the course text.

ASSIGNMENT: Students should evaluate stories on the front page and metro front of their daily newspaper. In a two-page memo, they should describe what elements of news judgment made the stories worthy of significant coverage and play. Finally, they should analyze whether, based on what else is in the paper, they believe the editors reached the right decision.

Week 2: Where news comes from

Class 1: News judgment

When editors sit down together to choose the top stories, they use experience and intuition. The beginner journalist, however, can acquire a sense of news judgment by evaluating news decisions through the filter of a variety of factors that influence news play. These factors range from traditional measures such as when the story took place and how close it was to the local readership area to more contemporary ones, such as the story's educational value.

Using the assignment and the reading, students should evaluate what kinds of information make for interesting news stories and why.

In this session, instructors might consider discussing the layers of news from the simplest breaking news event to the purely enterprise investigative story.

ASSIGNMENT: Students should read and deconstruct coverage of a major news event. One excellent source for quality examples is the website of the [Pulitzer Prizes](#), which has a category for breaking news reporting. All students should read the same article (assigned by the instructor), and write a two- or three-page memo that describes how the story is organized, what information it contains and what sources of information it uses, both human and digital. Among the questions they should ask are:

- Does the first (or lead) paragraph summarize the dominant point?
- What specific information does the lead include?
- What does it leave out?
- How do the second and third paragraphs relate to the first paragraph and the information it contains? Do they give unrelated information, information that provides further details about what's established in the lead paragraph or both?
- Does the story at any time place the news into a broader context of similar events or past events? If so, when and how?
- What information in the story is *attributed*, specifically tied to an individual or to documentary information from which it was taken? What information is not attributed? Where does the information appear in the sentence? Give examples of some of the ways the sources of information are identified? Give examples of the verbs of attribution that are chosen.
- Where and how often in the story are people *quoted*, their exact words placed in quotation marks? What kind of information tends to be quoted — basic facts or more colorful commentary? What information that's attributed is *paraphrased*, summing up what someone said but not in their exact words.
- How is the story organized — by theme, by geography, by chronology (time) or by some other means?

- What human sources are used in the story? Are some authorities? Are some experts? Are some ordinary people affected by the event? Who are some of the people in each category? What do they contribute to the story? Does the reporter (or reporters) rely on a single source or a wide range? Why do you think that's the case?
- What specific facts and details make the story more vivid to you? How do you think the reporter was able to gather those details?
- What documents (paper or digital) are detailed in the story? Do they lend authority to the story? Why or why not?
- Is any specific data (numbers, statistics) used in the story? What does it lend to the story? Would you be satisfied substituting words such as "many" or "few" for the specific numbers and statistics used? Why or why not?

Class 2: Deconstructing the story

By carefully deconstructing major news stories, students will begin to internalize some of the major principles of this course, from crafting and supporting the lead of a story to spreading a wide and authoritative net for information. This class will focus on the lessons of a Pulitzer Prize winner.

READING: Clark/Scanlan, Pages 287–294

ASSIGNMENT: Writers typically draft a focus statement after conceiving an idea and conducting preliminary research or reporting. This focus statement helps to set the direction of reporting and writing. Sometimes reporting dictates a change of direction. But the statement itself keeps the reporter from getting off course. Focus statements typically are 50 words or less and summarize the story's central point. They work best when driven by a strong, active verb and written after preliminary reporting.

- Students should write a focus statement that encapsulates the news of the Pulitzer Prize winning reporting the class critiqued.

Week 3: Finding the focus, building the lead

Class 1: News writing as a process

Student reporters often conceive of writing as something that begins only after all their reporting is finished. Such an approach often leaves gaps in information and leads the reporter to search broadly instead of with targeted depth. The best reporters begin thinking about story the minute they get an assignment. The approach they envision for telling the story informs their choice of whom they seek interviews with and what information they gather. This class will introduce students to writing as a process that begins with story concept and continues through initial research, focus, reporting, organizing and outlining, drafting and revising.

During this session, the class will review the focus statements written for homework in small breakout groups and then as a class. Professors are encouraged to draft and hand out a mock or real press release or hold a mock press conference from which students can draft a focus statement.

READING: Zinsser, pages 1–45, Clark/Scanlan, pages 294–302, and relevant pages of the course text

Class 2: The language of news

Newswriting has its own sentence structure and syntax. Most sentences branch rightward, following a pattern of subject/active verb/object. Reporters choose simple, familiar words. They write spare, concise sentences. They try to make a single point in each. But journalistic writing is specific and concrete. While reporters generally avoid formal or fancy word choices and complex sentence structures, they do not write in generalities. They convey information. Each sentence builds on what came before. This class will center on the language of news, evaluating the language in selections from *America's Best Newspaper Writing*, local newspapers or the Pulitzers.

READING: Relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Students should choose a traditional news lead they like and one they do not like from a local or national newspaper. In a one- or two-page memo, they should print the leads, summarize the stories and evaluate why they believe the leads were effective or not.

Week 4: Crafting the first sentence

Class 1: The lead

No sentence counts more than a story's first sentence. In most direct news stories, it stands alone as the story's lead. It must summarize the news, establish the storyline, convey specific information and do all this simply and succinctly. Readers confused or bored by the lead read no further. It takes practice to craft clear, concise and conversational leads. This week will be devoted to that practice.

Students should discuss the assigned leads in groups of three or four, with each group choosing one lead to read to the entire class. The class should then discuss the elements of effective leads (active voice; active verb; single, dominant theme; simple sentences) and write leads in practice exercises.

READING: Relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Have students revise the leads they wrote in class and craft a second lead from fact patterns.

Class 2: The lead continued

Some leads snap or entice instead of summarize. When the news is neither urgent nor earnest, these can work well. Though this class will introduce students to other kinds of leads, instructors should continue to emphasize traditional leads, typically found atop breaking news stories.

Class time should largely be devoted to writing traditional news leads under a 15-minute deadline pressure. Students should then be encouraged to read their own leads aloud and critique classmates' leads. At least one such exercise might focus on students writing a traditional lead and a less traditional lead from the same information.

READING: Relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Students should find a political or international story that includes various types (direct and indirect) and levels (on-the-record, not for attribution and deep background) of attribution. They should write a one- or two-page memo describing and evaluating the attribution. Did the reporter make clear the affiliation of those who expressed opinions? Is information attributed to specific people by name? Are anonymous figures given the opportunity to criticize others by name? Is that fair?

Week 5: Establishing the credibility of news

Class 1: Attribution

All news is based on information, painstakingly gathered, verified and checked again. Even so, "truth" is an elusive concept. What reporters cobble together instead are facts and assertions drawn from interviews and documentary evidence.

To lend authority to this information and tell readers from where it comes, reporters attribute all information that is not established fact. It is neither necessary, for example, to attribute that Franklin Delano Roosevelt was first elected president in 1932 nor that he was elected four times. On the other hand, it would be necessary to attribute, at least indirectly, the claim that he was one of America's best presidents. Why? Because that assertion is a matter of opinion.

In this session, students should learn about different levels of attribution, where attribution is best placed in a sentence, and why it can be crucial for the protection of the accused, the credibility of reporters and the authoritativeness of the story.

READING: Relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Working from a fact pattern, students should write a lead that demands attribution.

Class 2: Quoting and paraphrasing

"Great quote," ranks closely behind "great lead" in the pecking order of journalistic praise. Reporters listen for great quotes as intently as piano tuners listen for the perfect pitch of middle C. But what makes a great quote? And when should reporters paraphrase instead?

This class should cover a range of issues surrounding the quoted word from what it is used to convey (color and emotion, not basic information) to how frequently quotes should be used and how long they should run on. Other issues include the use and abuse of partial quotes, when a quote is not a quote, and how to deal with rambling and ungrammatical subjects.

As an exercise, students might either interview the instructor or a classmate about an exciting personal experience. After their interviews, they should review their notes choose what they consider the three best quotes to include a story on the subject. They should then discuss why they chose them.

READING: Relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: After completing the reading, students should analyze a summary news story no more than 15 paragraphs long. In a two- or three-page memo, they should reprint the story and then evaluate whether the lead summarizes the news, whether the subsequent paragraphs elaborate on or "support" the lead, whether the story has a lead quote, whether it attributes effectively, whether it provides any context for the news and whether and how it incorporates secondary themes.

Week 6: The building blocks of basic stories

Class 1: Supporting the lead

Unlike stories told around a campfire or dinner table, news stories front load information. Such a structure delivers the most important information first and the least important last. If a news lead summarizes, the subsequent few paragraphs support or elaborate by providing details the lead may have merely suggested. So, for example, a story might lead with news that a 27-year-old unemployed chef has been arrested on charges of robbing the desk clerk of an upscale hotel near closing time. The second paragraph would "support" this lead with detail. It would name the arrested chef, identify the hotel and its address, elaborate on the charges and, perhaps, say exactly when the robbery took place and how. (It would not immediately name the desk clerk; too many specifics at once clutter the story.)

Wire service stories use a standard structure in building their stories. First comes the lead sentence. Then comes a sentence or two of lead support. Then comes a lead quote — spoken words that reinforce the story's direction, emphasize the main theme and add color. During this class students should practice writing the lead through the lead quote on deadline. They should then read assignments aloud for critique by classmates and the professor.

ASSIGNMENT: Using a fact pattern assigned by the instructor or taken from a text, students should write a story from the lead through the lead quote. They should determine whether the story needs context to support the lead and, if so, include it.

Class 2: When context matters

Sometimes a story's importance rests on what came before. If one fancy restaurant closes its doors in the face of the faltering economy, it may warrant a few paragraphs mention. If it's the fourth restaurant to close on the same block in the last two weeks, that's likely front-page news. If two other restaurants closed last year, that might be worth noting in the story's last sentence. It is far less important. Patterns provide context and, when significant, generally are mentioned either as part of the lead or in the support paragraph that immediately follows. This class will look at the difference between context — information needed near the top of a story to establish its significance as part of a broader pattern, and background — information that gives historical perspective but doesn't define the news at hand.

READING: Relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: The course to this point has focused on writing the news, but journalists can't write until they've reported. This typically starts with background research to establish what has come before, what hasn't been covered well and who speaks with authority on an issue. Using databases such as Lexis/Nexis, students should background or read specific articles about an issue in science or policy that either is highlighted in the studies section of [Journalist's Resource](#) website or is currently being researched on your campus. They should engage in this assignment knowing that a new development on the topic will be brought to light when they arrive at the next class.

Week 7: The reporter at work

Class 1: Research

Discuss the homework assignment. Where do reporters look to background an issue? How do they find documents, sources and resources that enable them to gather good information or identify key people who can help provide it? After the discussion, students should be given a study from [Journalist's Resource](#) website related to the subject they've been asked to explore.

The instructor should use this study to evaluate the nature structure of government/scientific reports. After giving students 15 minutes to scan the report, ask students to identify its most newsworthy point. Discuss what context might be needed to write a story about the study or report. Discuss what concepts or language students are having difficulty understanding.

READING: Clark, Scanlan, pages 305–313, and relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Students should (a) write a lead for a story based exclusively on the report (b) do additional background work related to the study in preparation for writing a full story on deadline. (c) translate at least one term used in the study that is not familiar to a lay audience.

Class 2: Writing the basic story on deadline

This class should begin with a discussion of the challenges of translating jargon and the importance of such translation in news reporting. Reporters translate by substituting a simple definition or, generally with the help of experts, comparing the unfamiliar to the familiar through use of analogy.

The remainder of the class should be devoted to writing a 15- to 20-line news report, based on the study, background research and, if one is available, a press release.

READING: Pages 1–47 of Stein/Paterno, and relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Prepare a list of questions that you would ask either the lead author of the study you wrote about on deadline or an expert who might offer an outside perspective.

Week 8: Effective interviewing

Class 1: Preparing and getting the interview

Successful interviews build from strong preparation. Reporters need to identify the right interview subjects, know what they've said before, interview them in a setting that makes them comfortable and ask questions that elicit interesting answers. Each step requires thought.

The professor should begin this class by critiquing some of the questions students drew up for homework. Are they open-ended or close-ended? Do they push beyond the obvious? Do they seek specific examples that explain the importance of the research or its applications? Do they probe the study's potential weaknesses? Do they explore what directions the researcher might take next?

Discuss the readings and what steps reporters can take to background for an interview, track down a subject and prepare and rehearse questions in advance.

READING: Stein/Paterno, pages 47–146, and relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Students should prepare to interview their professor about his or her approach to and philosophy of teaching. Before crafting their questions, the students should background the instructor's syllabi, public course evaluations and any pertinent writings.

Class 2: The interview and its aftermath

The interview, says Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist Jacqui Banaszynski, is a dance which the reporter leads but does so to music the interview subject chooses. Though reporters prepare and rehearse their interviews, they should *never* read the questions they've considered in advance and always be prepared to change directions. To hear the subject's music, reporters must be more focused on the answers than their next question. Good listeners make good interviewers — good listeners, that is, who don't forget that it is also their responsibility to also lead.

Divide the class. As a team, five students should interview the professor about his/her approach to teaching. Each of these five should build on the focus and question of the previous questioner. The rest of the class should critique the questions, their clarity and their focus. Are the questioners listening? Are they maintaining control? Are they following up? The class also should discuss the reading, paying particularly close attention to the dynamics of an interview, the pace of questions, the nature of questions, its close and the reporter's responsibility once an interview ends.

ASSIGNMENT: Students should be assigned to small groups and asked to critique the news stories classmates wrote on deadline during the previous class.

Week 9: Building the story

Class 1: Critiquing the story

The instructor should separate students into groups of two or three and tell them to read their news stories to one another aloud. After each reading, the listeners should discuss what they liked and struggled with as the story audience. The reader in each case should reflect on what he or she learned from the process of reading the story aloud.

The instructor then should distribute one or two of the class stories that provide good and bad examples of story structure, information selection, content, organization and writing. These should be critiqued as a class.

READING: Relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Students, working in teams, should develop an angle for a news follow to the study or report they covered on deadline. Each team should write a focus statement for the story it is proposing.

Class 2: Following the news

The instructor should lead a discussion about how reporters "enterprise," or find original angles or approaches, by looking to the corners of news, identifying patterns of news, establishing who is affected by news, investigating the "why" of news, and examining what comes next.

Students should be asked to discuss the ideas they've developed to follow the news story. These can be assigned as longer-term team final projects for the semester. As part of this discussion, the instructor can help students map their next steps.

READING: Wickham, Chapters 1–4 and 7, and relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Students should find a news report that uses data to support or develop its main point. They should consider what and how much data is used, whether it is clear, whether it's cluttered and whether it answers their questions. They should bring the article and a brief memo analyzing it to class.

Week 10: Making sense of data and statistics

Class 1: Basic math and the journalist's job

Many reporters don't like math. But in their jobs, it is everywhere. Reporters must interpret political polls, calculate percentage change in everything from property taxes to real estate values, make sense of municipal bids and municipal budgets, and divine data in government reports.

First discuss some of the examples of good and bad use of data that students found in their homework. Then, using examples from [Journalist's Resource](#) website, discuss good and poor use of data in news reporting. (Reporters, for example, should not overwhelm readers with paragraphs stuffed with statistics.) Finally lead students through some of the basic skills sets outlined in Wickham's book, using her exercises to practice everything from calculating percentage change to interpreting polls.

ASSIGNMENT: Give students a report or study linked to the [Journalist's Resource](#) website that requires some degree of statistical evaluation or interpretation. Have students read the report and compile a list of questions they would ask to help them understand and interpret this data.

Class 2: The use and abuse of statistics

Discuss the students' questions. Then evaluate one or more articles drawn from the report they've analyzed that attempt to make sense of the data in the study. Discuss what these articles do well and what they do poorly.

READING: Zinsser, Chapter 13, "[Macabre Reminder: The Corpse on Union Street,](#)" Dan Barry, *The New York Times*

Week 11: The reporter as observer

Class 1: Using the senses

Veteran reporters covering an event don't only return with facts, quotes and documents that support them. They fill their notebooks with details that capture what they've witnessed. They use all their senses, listening for telling snippets of conversation and dialogue, watching for images, details and actions that help bring readers to the scene. Details that develop character and place breathe vitality into news. But description for description's sake merely clutters and obscures the news. Using the senses takes practice.

The class should deconstruct "[Macabre Reminder: The Corpse on Union Street.](#)" a remarkable journey around New Orleans a few days after Hurricane Katrina devastated the city in 2005. The story starts with one corpse, left to rot on a once-busy street and then pans the city as a camera might. The dead body serves as a metaphor for the rotting city, largely abandoned and without order.

ASSIGNMENT: This is an exercise in observation. Students may not ask questions. Their task is to observe, listen and describe a short scene, a serendipitous vignette of day-to-day life. They should take up a perch in a lively location of their choosing — a student dining hall or gym, a street corner, a pool hall or bus stop or beauty salon, to name a few — wait and watch. When a small scene unfolds, one with beginning, middle and end, students should record it. They then should write a brief story describing the scene that unfolded, taking care to leave themselves and their opinions out of the story. This is pure observation, designed to build the tools of observation and description. These stories should be no longer than 200 words.

Class 2: Sharpening the story

Students should read their observation pieces aloud to a classmate. Both students should consider these questions: Do the words describe or characterize? Which words show and which words tell? What words are extraneous? Does the piece convey character through action? Does it have a clear beginning, middle and end? Students then should revise, shortening the original scene to no longer than 150 words. After the revision, the instructor should critique some of the students' efforts.

READING: Relevant pages of the course text

ASSIGNMENT: Using campus, governmental or media calendars, students should identify, background and prepare to cover a speech, press conference or other news event, preferably on a topic related to one of the research-based areas covered in the Policy Areas section of [Journalist's Resource](#) website. Students should write a focus statement (50 words or less) for their story and draw up a list of some of the questions they intend to ask.

Week 12: Reporting on deadline

Class 1: Coaching the story

Meetings, press conferences and speeches serve as a staple for much news reporting. Reporters should arrive at such events knowledgeable about the key players, their past positions or research, and the issues these sources are likely discuss. Reporters can discover this information in various ways. They can research topic and speaker online and in journalistic databases, peruse past correspondence sent to public offices, and review the writings and statements of key speakers with the help of their assistants or secretaries.

In this class, the instructor should discuss the nature of event coverage, review students' focus statements and questions, and offer suggestions about how they cover the events.

ASSIGNMENT: Cover the event proposed in the class above and draft a 600-word story, double-spaced, based on its news and any context needed to understand it.

Class 2: Critiquing and revising the story

Students should exchange story drafts and suggest changes. After students revise, the instructor should lead a discussion about the challenges of reporting and writing live on deadline. These likely will include issues of access and understanding and challenges of writing around and through gaps of information.

Weeks 13/14: Coaching the final project

The final week or two of the class is reserved for drill in areas needing further development and for coaching students through the final reporting, drafting and revision of the enterprise stories off the study or report they covered in class.