

**Course:** J100: Introduction to Newswriting (3 units)  
**Instructor:** Gary Moskowitz

<p><b>UC BERKELEY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM</b> <b>J100: Introduction to News Reporting</b></p> <p><b>May 21-June 28, 2018</b> <b>Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9-11am, Thursday 9-10:30am</b></p> <p><b>Section 1</b> Instructor: Gary Moskowitz Class Location: Davis Hall room 534 Office Location: Northgate Hall Office Hours: TBD</p>	<p><b>Section 1</b> GSI: Sara Harrison Class Location: Davis Hall room 534 Office Location: Northgate Hall Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 11:30 - 12:30 or by appointment</p>
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### **Instructor Bios**

[Gary Moskowitz](#) writes and reports on the music industry for the Economist and has written about music, arts & culture for the New York Times, the Atlantic, San Francisco Weekly, San Francisco Magazine, the Village Voice, and other publications. He teaches journalism courses at San Francisco State University and California State University, East Bay. He is a former Mother Jones Magazine fellow, a former community news beat reporter for the Los Angeles Times, and a former journalism instructor at City University London. He is also a trumpet player and gigs regularly in the Bay Area with [Radio Veloso](#). He is working on a nonfiction book about life in bands.

[Sara Harrison](#) is a freelance writer and journalist based in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is a former assistant editor for the politics section of the *Los Angeles Review of Books* and her work has been featured in *Quartz*, *Civil Eats*, and *Zocalo Public Square*. Sara is currently a graduate student at the [UC Berkeley School of Journalism](#) where she is a Dean's Merit Fellow. She holds a B.A. in English from Carleton College.

### **Course Overview**

This is a fast-paced, intensive introductory course that lays out basic journalism techniques and principles, introduces students to classic examples of journalism, gives them exposure to professional practitioners and newsmakers, instills ethical

behavior, and provides practice in writing various types of journalistic stories. Designed both for those who are new to journalism and those with some journalism experience, this course will boost the skills of students no matter their level of expertise. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Each class will focus on key journalism concepts via news discussions, textbook readings, exercises, quizzes, and a “newsroom” approach to story development. Students will receive hands-on instruction in interviewing, reporting, writing leads, story structure, and working with speed and accuracy. Students will apply their learning by pitching, writing/reporting, editing, and revising several different types of stories. The course is modular, so you will build basic skills one at a time while working towards more ambitious projects.

This is a lively seminar-style class, so student participation in all discussions and classroom activity is vital. Students are expected to be involved, show improvement, and produce publishable journalistic content, and therefore will be edited much more closely than you may have experienced in other courses. Writing, editing, and rewriting is the way reporters learn.

### **Learning Objectives**

We'll learn about the nuts and bolts of reporting — interviewing, quoting and note-taking skills — and build on that with additional skills such as observing detail, drawing character, and scene-setting. Students will learn how to report on civic events and how to write about arts & culture, and they will learn about opinion writing, the profile piece, and the longer, more in-depth news feature story.

By the end of the course, students should fully understand all of these story types and be able to produce polished reporting and writing for publication. You will understand the basics of pitching a story, finding sources, conducting interviews, organizing your story, writing, rewriting, revising, and editing your draft.

### **Required Readings**

- [Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method \(Mass Communication and Journalism\) 8th Edition](#) by Carole Rich
- Additional readings provided via bCourses
- [Associated Press Style Guide](#) (digital subscription [HERE](#))
- You are expected to read reliable **newspaper, magazine, and web journalism stories every day**, and be able to summarize, describe, and aggregate those articles via the class *News Aggregator rubric*

### **DAILY CLASSROOM AGENDA**

Our daily work flow will include the following three elements:

*Current events*

Discussion of the news of the day via News Aggregations (using News Aggregator rubric)

*Textbook*

Readings + exercises + discussion + quizzes pulled from the assigned texts

*Newsroom*

Story pitches + Writing + Reporting + Editing + Revising

**J100 NEWSROOM SCHEDULE**

Our story production cycle begins on TUESDAYS and typically proceeds like this:

Tuesday: PITCH

Wednesday: STORY SKELETON

Thursday: ROUGH DRAFT

Monday: FINAL DRAFT

**Summer 2018 Schedule**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Week 1 May 21-24	Introduction Syllabus Fact-checking exercise	Daily Cal critique	Guest Speaker: Otis Taylor, Jr., SF Chronicle East Bay Columnist	Quiz: Chapter 1, Chapter 2
Week 2 May 28-31	NO CLASS: MEMORIAL DAY	Daily Cal critique Pitch Opinion Story	Guest Speaker: Piedmont Vice Mayor Teddy Gray Vasquez King <a href="https://synergypublicaffairs.com/blog/">https://synergypublicaffairs.com/blog/</a>	Quiz: Chapter 5, Chapter 7
Week 3 June 4-7	Daily Cal critique Opinion Story DUE	Pitch Event Story	Guest Speaker: Mira Veda, CEO of Lipstick&Politics on the intersection of technology and the media (confirmed)	Quiz: Chapter 4, Chapter 17

Week 4 June 11-14	Daily Cal critique Event Story DUE	Pitch Profile Story	Guest Speaker: Kevin Fagan, SF Chronicle Homelessness reporter	Quiz: Chapter 8, Chapter 9
Week 5 June 18-21	Daily Cal critique Profile Story DUE	Pitch News Feature Story	Guest Speaker: Annie Campbell Washington, Vice Mayor and Oakland City Council member.... <i>Tentative or</i> Roya S. Winner, Consumer Communications Manager for Social Good at Facebook (tentative)	Quiz: Chapter 10
Week 6 June 25-28	Daily Cal critique		Guest Speaker: Jeff Chang, author, "We Gon' Be Alright"	Quiz: Chapter 19 News Feature Story DUE

**Overall Grading Breakdown:**

	Points: 600 Total	Assessment	Learning outcomes
Final Stories  Opinion Story (100 points) Event Story (100points) Profile Story	400 points	Graded	Recognizes newsworthy stories; chooses best story structure; interviews effectively; produces polished pieces; observes detail; writes in authoritative style; uses evidence; meets deadlines; includes multiple viewpoints; avoids bias

(100 points) News Feature (100 points)			
Assignments Two News Aggregations (10 points each x 2 = 20 points) Four story pitches (10 points each x 4 = 40 points)	60 points	Submitted for completion	Develops and assesses sources; pitches effectively, critically analyzes news media
Quizzes (9 total x 10 points each = 90 points)	90 points	Graded	Demonstration of textbook reading comprehension, understanding of media ethics, style & story forms
In-class participation & attendance	50 points	News & textbook discussions, newsroom work	Understands current forms of journalism, understands social and political role of journalism, critically analyzes story and grasps importance of news, understands ethical dilemmas

### **Standards and Evaluation**

Expect your assignments to be rigorously edited by your instructor, GSI, and/or tutor.

We give the kind of editing you could expect from a professional workplace and newsroom (as well as from graduate school), and it's designed to give you detailed feedback on what's working and what isn't, as well as give you some ideas about how to improve. Your effort, improvement over time, in-class participation and timely, thorough completion of the coursework will be considered in your overall assessment.

### **Grading Criteria for Reported Stories**

Topics that are relevant, timely, and interesting

Clear, concise, compelling, attention-grabbing lede

Clear, concise, explanatory nut graf

ORIGINAL attributed quotes

Original reporting

Sourced facts

Explanatory paragraphs arranged in a logical sequence/order

Ideas/issues explained simply and clearly

Informed/critical analysis of a chosen topic/issue

Neutral tone  
 Follows AP style  
 Proofread for grammar, punctuation, spelling  
 Absence of bias & assumptions, Absence of plagiarism  
 Turned in by deadline  
 Overall effort

### Grading Standards & Scale

A+ (98-100%) A (93-97%) A- (90-92%)	Outstanding work. Exhibits original thinking, ambitious reporting and research, excellent grammar & style. Strong ledes and nut grafs. Participates actively in class discussions; meets deadlines & misses little or no class time. Shows improvement over the course of the semester.
B+ (87-89%) B (83-86%) B- (80-82%)	Very good work. Assignments exhibit original thinking, strong reporting and research, fact-checking and proofreading, limited grammar and style errors, and good journalistic style. Effective ledes & nut grafs. Participates in class and in news discussions; meets most deadlines & misses little class time. Shows some improvement over the course of the semester.
C+ (77-79%) C (73-76%) C- (70-72%)	Satisfactory work. Stories contain minimal reporting and lack original ideas or research, need more fact-checking and proofreading, and show little grasp of journalistic style. Weak ledes & nut grafs. Consistent style and grammar errors. Some participation in class and news discussions; misses multiple deadlines & more than ONE class session. Does little of the reading. Shows little improvement over the semester.
D+ (67-69%) D (63-66%) D- (60-62%)	Poor work. Stories contain little to no reporting, original ideas or research. Major style and grammar errors in all work. Work is sloppy, rushed or not factual. Little to no grasp of journalistic style. Almost never participates in class or news discussions; misses most deadlines & more than TWO class sessions. Isn't doing the reading. Shows no improvement over the course of the semester.
F ( ≤ 59%)	Failing. Misses most classes, completes little or no class work.

### Deadlines

News Aggregations and Pitches must be uploaded to bCourses by 9:00 a.m. the day they are due. Final stories must be uploaded to bCourses by 11:00 a.m. on Tuesdays. Learning to meet deadlines is an important part of becoming a journalist, so we do not grant extensions for any reason other than illness or family emergencies.

Late stories will be marked down 10% (one letter grade) for each day they are late. Assignments that are more than three days late will not be accepted. Quizzes cannot be made up. Credit-only assignments (News Aggregations and Pitches) will not be accepted after the deadline.

### **Attendance Policy**

Class starts on the hour. If you are late, it is your responsibility to check in with the GSI to ensure you are not marked absent. Please do not schedule interviews or reporting trips during class time. If you miss more than two class sessions, you will be in danger of failing the course.

If you must be absent because of an illness, travel or unavoidable personal appointment, please give the instructor or GSI notice as far in advance as possible. All your assignments will still be due on bCourses the day you are absent. It is your responsibility to catch up on anything you miss if you are absent. That means: checking bCourses, getting notes from a peer, or seeing the instructor/GSI during office hours.

### **Email, bCourses & Technology**

Laptops and iPads are appropriate for taking notes, following along with course materials online, and engaging in peer workshopping, but should not be used for chatting, texting, email or using social media during class time. Laptops should be closed during guest speaker visits, unless you have an accommodation. Phones should be turned off.

We will use bCourses for a significant portion of this class. Students will submit all assignments via bCourses and will find supplemental readings, course updates, and announcements there. Students should check their UC Berkeley email daily for course updates or announcements. Students should use Google Docs for peer workshopping during newsroom time.

### **Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism**

Students will abide by the [Student Code of Conduct](#). There is a zero tolerance policy for work that is submitted without proper attribution and that constitutes plagiarism. If students are unsure about the expectations regarding the Student Code of Conduct, please seek advice from the instructors.

Digital and paper trails are crucial elements of accountability in journalism. Students are expected to record all interviews with a digital recorder or their smartphone and keep an archive of them for the duration of the term. Students must also keep all reporting notes and completed assignments organized & accessible in Google Docs for the duration of the term. Students should be prepared to provide notes and/or recordings to instructors, if asked.

### **Disabled Student Services:**

If you require an academic accommodations for this course, you must follow the intake and accommodation procedure to obtain a [Letter of Accommodation](#).

Please contact Extension Disabled Student Services (EXDSS) at extension-dss@berkeley.edu or (510) 643-5732. If you already have a Letter of Accommodation from Extension Disabled Student Services for this course, please make an appointment with me to have a confidential discussion of what you will require for this course.