



ENGL 308: REPORTER'S PRACTICUM

- *Credits: 3, Section: 010*
- *Spring 2019 | T/TH 2:00 - 3:15 pm*
- *Brown Lab Room 116*

Welcome to real journalism!

Before we begin, I'd like to share a little bit of my backstory.

My name is Deborah Howlett. I grew up in Oregon but have lived in New Jersey nearly as long. In between I lived in Washington, DC, and Chicago. I'm married to a wonderful woman who has nothing to do with journalism and we have two daughters in high school. I like sports and politics, and I'm a decent cook.

I grew up in the Watergate era and wanted to be a journalist as far back as I can remember. I spent my career as a reporter, mainly at USA Today, first as a national reporter, then as a political reporter and ultimately as the bureau chief in Chicago. I've covered wars and presidential campaigns; murder trials and Super Bowls; terrorist attacks and natural disasters. I've reported from 48 of the 50 states and at least a dozen foreign countries.

My interests in journalism are in using emerging digital platforms to deliver news that adheres to the highest professional standards as well as using blockchain technology to support the paid publishing of legitimate news. I am also interested in issues of gender representation in sports media.

My Contact Information:

E-mail address: dhowlett@udel.edu

Website: <http://debhowlett.com>

Office location: Memorial Hall Room 221

Office hours: Tuesday 3:30-5:30 pm or by appointment

Phone number: 609-712-0445

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Builds on ENGL 307 with extensive reporting and writing for the campus newspaper. Attention to libel and privacy issues.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

You will build on the core skills you developed in News Writing and Editing to produce copy for *The Review*, the independent student newspaper at the University of Delaware since 1890. You will take on assignments requiring you to think and act as a professional reporter. You will interview real people for real stories. You will review court files. You will pitch story ideas. You will edit copy. It will be uncomfortable. It will be challenging. And it will be rewarding.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester, you will have developed the skills necessary to produce high-quality journalism suitable for publication. Specifically, you will be able to:

- Identify ideas that are worth pursuing as news stories, based on a clear understanding of news values and a familiarity with the audience.
- Locate information and sources necessary to report a news story: Sources with first-hand knowledge, expertise and insight; data and documents; key research; critical biographic information; and new information.
- Interview sources with precision and accuracy, coaxing from them new details and quotable words.
- Write news stories with clarity and purpose, free from errors of style and grammar, and in formats suitable to several different media platforms.

Course Readings

This class has no required text, but we will be reading a considerable amount. Becoming a good writer means reading. Lots of reading. More reading. And even more reading. And then talking about what we read.

Students must subscribe to *The New York Times* and read it daily (on-line is fine). You have free basic access via the UD library <https://library.udel.edu/databases/nytdigital/> or the Times offers an all access student rate is \$1.50 a week. Students also must read daily two other serious online news sources such as Politico.com, Axios.com, WallStreetJournal.com, WashingtonPost.com, USAToday.com, Economist.com, TheAtlantic.com, Delawareonline.com, or udreview.com Finally, students also must read the print version of the campus newspaper, *The Review*, before class on Tuesday.

COURSE RESOURCES

- New York Times subscription: You can subscribe to the digital version for free through the University of Delaware: <https://library.udel.edu/databases/nytdigital/>
- AP Stylebook (Print or digital)
- No. 2 Ticonderoga Carmine Red pencils (optional)

COURSE MECHANICS

This is a laboratory class, not a lecture. You will be actively working in class rather than listening to the professor drone on. Therefore, your presence in every class is essential to our success. You are also expected to involve yourself at *The Review*.

- **Sunday:** Attend *The Review* editorial staff meeting at noon. You can pitch or find story assignments at this meeting
- **Tuesday:** We will have story conference. This is a time where we will raise questions, provide guidance, and consider the possibilities for story ideas. Come to class prepared to discuss a story you have in the works.
- **Thursday:** We will have editing lab. This is when we will break into small groups and peer edit. Bring a printed copy of your story to class and a red pencil.

ASSESSMENTS

- **Stories**

Students will produce nine stories over the course of the semester, with topics and contents appropriate for publication by *The Review*. The stories may take any form, including print, video or podcast, and may include news, sports, business, features, or op-ed. Each should be 400-500 words (longer requires pre-approval by an editor at *The Review*), and must meet the highest standards for reporting and writing.

Students will also produce one long-form story, length to be determined by an editor at *The Review*, but generally 1000 words. It must demonstrate depth of reporting using primary source materials (such as documents, data, extensive interviewing etc). It should be timely and relevant, and must meet the highest standards for reporting and writing. Only one story per week will be accepted.

Stories are due Thursday by midnight and will account for two thirds of the grade

- **In-class Assignments**

Students will have weekly in-class assignments, including news quizzes, style tests, and case studies.

Assignments will count for one third of the grade.

GRADES

Grades will be awarded according to the guideline established by the University of Delaware, which are outlined here: <http://www1.udel.edu/registrar/students/grades.html> This is how they break down by percentage of available points: A >93.0; A- ≥90.0; B+ >87.0; B >83.0; B- ≥80.0; C+ >77.0; C >73.0; C- ≥70.0; D+ >67.0; D >63.0; D- ≥60.0; F ≤59.0

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

There is no mandatory attendance policy for this course. However, much of what we learn will happen during class and that means your attendance is vital. If you miss a daily quiz or an in-class assignment without an excused absence, there will be no make-up. Missing class for a religious observance or holiday when the university is open (for example Diwali or Yom Kippur or Eid al Adha) is acceptable. If serious illness, family emergencies, or other crises occur during the term, you must contact the Dean of Students Office (831-8939) as soon as possible. This office can assist you in notifying faculty and in validating for your teachers what has happened.

Distractions

Cell phones should be on silent and in your pocket or bag. Please refrain from texting or tweeting during class time. Laptops may be used for note-taking and research, not Netflix. Sleeping during class is frowned upon, especially if you snore.

Readings

All readings should be done before the class period for which they are listed. Think of it as pre-reading so that we might have an intelligent discussion of the material in class. Early in the semester, much of the reading will be from the text. In the second half, it will mostly be long-form works of journalism in the genre we will be discussing that week.

Assignments

Deadlines are sacrosanct in journalism. All assignments (except in-class) are due at midnight on Thursday. Late work will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made in advance.

Communication

Because I am old and set in my ways, I prefer email as a means of quickly communicating information (or even a phone call). Please check your email at least daily. However, I am not averse to receiving texts, if that is your preferred means of communication. If there is a more complicated issue please feel free to call me or stop by my office during regular office hours or make an appointment.

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with UD policies regarding academic dishonesty. To falsify the results of one's research, to steal the words or ideas of another, to cheat on an assignment, to re-submit the same assignment for different classes, or to allow or assist another to commit these acts corrupts the educational process. Students are expected to do their own work and neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance. Complete details of the university's academic integrity policies and procedures can be found at <http://www1.udel.edu/studentconduct/policyref.html> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

Office of Student Conduct, 218 Hulliher Hall, (302) 831-2117. E-mail: student-conduct@udel.edu

Harassment and Discrimination

The University of Delaware works to promote an academic and work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. As a member of the community, your rights, resource and responsibilities are reflected in the non-discrimination and sexual misconduct policies. Please familiarize yourself with these policies at www.udel.edu/oei ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#). You can report any concerns to the University's Office of Equity & Inclusion, at 305 Hullahen Hall, (302) 831-8063 or you can report anonymously through UD Police (302) 831-2222 or the EthicsPoint Compliance Hotline at www1.udel.edu/compliance ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#). You can also report any violation of UD policy on harassment, discrimination, or abuse of any person at this site: <http://sites.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct/how-to-report/> ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)

Faculty Statement on Disclosures of Instances of Sexual Misconduct

If, at any time during this course, I happen to be made aware that a student may have been the victim of sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic/dating violence, or stalking), I am obligated to inform the university's Title IX Coordinator. The university needs to know information about such incidents in order to offer resources to victims and to ensure a safe campus environment for everyone. The Title IX Coordinator will decide if the incident should be examined further. If such a situation is disclosed to me in class, in a paper assignment, or in office hours, I promise to protect your privacy--I will not disclose the incident to anyone but the Title IX Coordinator. For more information on Sexual Misconduct policies, where to get help, and how to reporting information, please refer to www.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#). At UD, we provide 24-hour crisis assistance and victim advocacy and counseling. Contact 302-831-1001, UD Helpline 24/7/365, to get in touch with a sexual offense support advocate. For information on various places you can turn for help, [click here.](#) ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#) For more information on Sexual Misconduct policies, where to get help, and reporting information please refer to www.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)

Inclusion of Diverse Learning Needs

Any student who thinks he/she may need an accommodation based on a disability should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) office as soon as possible. The DSS office is located at 240 Academy Street, Alison Hall Suite 130, Phone: 302-831-4643, fax: 302-831-3261, DSS Website (<http://www.udel.edu/DSS/www.udel.edu/DSS> ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)). You may contact DSS at dssoffice@udel.edu

Non-Discrimination

The University of Delaware does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, disability, religion, age, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law in its employment, educational programs and activities, admissions policies, and scholarship and loan programs as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies. The

University of Delaware also prohibits unlawful harassment including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

For inquiries or complaints related to non-discrimination policies, please contact: Director, Institutional Equity & Title IX Coordinator- Susan L. Groff, Ed.D. groff@udel.edu, 305 Hulliher Hall Newark, DE 19716 (302) 831-8063

For complaints related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact: Director, Office of Disability Support Services, Anne L. Jannarone, M.Ed., Ed.S. - ajannaro@udel.edu Alison Hall, Suite 130, Newark, DE 19716 (302) 831-4643 OR contact the U.S. Department of Education - Office for Civil Rights (<https://wdcrobcop01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/OCR/contactus.cfm> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.)