



# 2022 - 2023 COURSE SYLLABUS

## JOURNALISM / NEWSPAPER

(JOG448/JOG449; 10 total credits)

**Mr. Gleason**

Room B-12 (p.4A; I also teach in C-314)

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Main platforms:

Google Classroom, Google Drive, Airtable

*The Kennedy Clarion*: [www.jfkclarion.com](http://www.jfkclarion.com) @jfkclarion

**KennedyClarion** 

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Journalism/Newspaper offers you an opportunity to learn about the foundations of journalistic practice, to analyze the role of journalism in a free society, and to produce Kennedy High School's student-run news source, *The Kennedy Clarion*, in a workplace environment.

The *Clarion* reaches students and the community through our website and social media accounts. In professional news outlets, reporters work hard, collaborate, and innovate to keep the public informed; likewise, you in Journalism/Newspaper must do the same to keep our school newspaper relevant and vital to Kennedy and the larger community.

The newspaper is essentially a legitimate business concern: you have a mission to keep audiences and advertisers engaged by asserting yourself, being involved, and reporting well. Some staffers will be hired to leadership positions, including Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, and Photo Editor.

You contribute to the larger Kennedy story by proposing and writing news articles for the main sections of News, Features, Opinions, Arts/Entertainment, and Sports. Contributions include reporting, writing, editing, taking photographs, designing, cartooning, and -- as resources allow -- basic video production and podcasting. In addition, you will help promote the paper with marketing strategies and, as needed, sell advertising to raise money.

Arguably, *The Clarion* is even more important during COVID-19 to promote everyone's shared Kennedy experience. We play a huge role in rebooting Cougar life amidst the changes brought on by the lingering pandemic.

Your work published in the *Clarion* may additionally be submitted for publication in regional news sources, due to our connection to the *Sacramento State Hornet* and the Student Educator Reporting program (Sacramento County Office of Education). There are often opportunities for entering your work into student-journalism or general essay contests during the school year.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The class comprises five ongoing strands, by which you learn about journalism and its role in free society. You also practice the craft of journalism -- alone and in teams -- to report on our Kennedy story under consistent deadlines.

STRAND 1	<b>THE KENNEDY CLARION:</b> <i>STUDENT-RUN KENNEDY NEWS SOURCE</i>	Find stories, set deadlines, interview people to gather statements, research information, write articles, work in teams, edit/revise, add visual elements, produce video/audio segments, and devise marketing strategies to promote the <i>Clarion</i> .
STRAND 2	<b>JOURNALISM, a.k.a. "THE FOURTH ESTATE"</b>	Learn the foundational elements and modern history of journalism, and analyze how a free press serves the public by keeping citizens informed in a democratic society.
STRAND 3	<b>FIRST AMENDMENT, ETHICS, AND THE LAW</b>	Study the First Amendment of the United States Constitution and our 'five freedoms' while analyzing ethical considerations and legal precedents which affect news reporting.
STRAND 4	<b>NEWS COVERAGE &amp; MEDIA LITERACY</b>	Dissect elements of the vast news landscape, how it presents itself, and how it affects how readers and viewers consume information.
STRAND 5	<b>CONNECTING TO OUR NEWS COMMUNITY</b>	Learn from adjacent news programs, such as the <i>Sacramento State Hornet</i> , the <i>Sacramento Bee</i> , and the Sacramento County Office of Education (via the Student Educator Reporting program, formerly <i>Sac Breeze</i> ).

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS / GRADING

### CATEGORY

20%	Daily	In-class journals and tasks Quizzes on strand content & current events Professionalism: punctuality, badges, setting & keeping deadlines and appointments
30%	Minor	Group work, presentations News-story pitches, initial story development, and setting reasonable but efficient deadlines.
50%	Major	Projects, research, production work News-story progress -- research, scheduling and shooting photos/video, interviewing, writing and editing. Things to avoid: missing deadlines, taking too long to finish a story, wasting time and having to redo elements due to technical mistakes.

### EFFORT

The rewards of your work in class are earned through effort. You must complete all in-class writing exercises and promotional efforts. In addition, you must submit writing and/or photographs for consideration for each *Clarion* post. You must contribute a variety of writing formats within and beyond your areas of interests including news, opinion, sports, and reviews as well as photography. Work must meet publication standards, journalistic ethics, and include proper coverage and caption information.

This class requires you to manage your own time and to be a valuable team member by contributing to class discussions and team efforts. You must be available to attend and report on school social, academic, and sporting events that occur outside the school academic schedule.

### CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS -- VIRTUAL OR OTHERWISE

I'm looking forward to a productive, insightful, and enjoyable school year working with you. As in most working collaborations, some days can be better than others, so we learn to "do the work even on a bad day" and persevere. My role is to engineer opportunities for academic discovery for all students; that process will require habits of mind for critical thinking, habits of heart for respectful interaction, and the patience and stamina needed to fight through setbacks and frustrations.

## Behavior

The class involves everyone's needs for enrichment and advancement; therefore, classroom time means shared time with equal stakes for all. You are expected to respect and maximize this shared time without disruption. Don't waste class time. Please also understand that your personal needs – while important to you – cannot overtake the class agenda.

## ✓ READINESS CHECK

Distracted	→ →	Centered
Judgmental	→ →	Curious
Panicked	→ →	Prepared
Unkind	→ →	Thoughtful

This class offers several opportunities to go outside the classroom for purposes of completing assignments. Please do not abuse this privilege.

Refer to the *John F. Kennedy High School Student Handbook* for campus-wide rules for behavior and expectations. Take particular note of Kennedy's policies on plagiarism.

## Attendance & Tardies

As they say: *Get up, dress up, show up*. Missing multiple days of class in a semester, whether excused or unexcused, can endanger earning course credit. As the bell rings, you are expected to be seated and ready to start. If you arrive late, be polite and enter quietly without distraction. Absences and tardies erode your participation potential and leave you stranded on the runway while everyone else takes off.

## Addenda

Food and drink can be distracting -- please don't flex your snacks.  
Plan ahead when possible for bathroom needs so you don't miss class.  
Tissues are often available; however, they are not hallway passes.

## TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL TOOLS

Be truly present. Keep mobile devices out of reach and out of sight, unless I specifically allow their use in a lesson. I have a container for storing phones during class, which I may require students to use at any time.

In our digital age, our brains are stimulated, and yet stupefied. We often have too many tabs open in our browsers and brains. Reading on our devices is a wide-ranging thrill; however, it tends to be shallower reading. Longer-form reading immerses us and focuses our concentration. That's one of the roles of an English class: to condition our brains to switch from 'browsing' mode to 'deep reading' mode successfully. It still matters.

On the technical level, internet connections and platforms like Google Drive, Google Classroom, and Airtable can be laggy, glitchy, and temperamental, so let's all remember our patience and grace through those frustrating moments.

## THOUGHTS ON COVID & IN-SCHOOL LEARNING

COVID, ZOOM, hybrid learning, and masking at school have challenged how we've done school. Yet, we are bringing our momentum back.

The last school year revealed some real toughness of character in many students – getting through an unusual time and still succeeding. Other students struggled in a classroom environment where teachers and peers expect everyone to concentrate, remain seated, and not check their phones every few moments.

We need to work extra hard to meet challenges academically, socially, and behaviorally during school time.

A classroom, among other things, is a venue for focused learning and discovery; everyone needs to be present for it to work. I have been heartened by students' efforts to look out for others' well-being, as well their own.

Again, please plan to be truly present. Let's have a great year together on the learning path, and tell Kennedy's story!