



2024 - 2025 COURSE SYLLABUS

JOURNALISM / NEWSPAPER

(JOG448/JOG449; 10 total credits)

The purpose of journalism is “to provide citizens with the information they need to make the best possible decisions about their lives, their communities, their societies, and their governments.”

– American Press Institute

Mr. Gleason

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

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Main platforms:

Google Classroom, Google Drive, Airtable

The Kennedy Clarion:

- www.jfkclarion.com
- @jfkclarion on Instagram



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 operate in a workplace environment to produce Kennedy’s online news source, *The Kennedy Clarion*.

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* can play a huge role in boosting Cougar life, positive school culture, and events through the year to add value to experiences and perspectives at Kennedy.

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	THE KENNEDY CLARION: <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	JOURNALISM, a.k.a. "THE FOURTH ESTATE"	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	FIRST AMENDMENT, ETHICS, AND THE LAW	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	NEWS COVERAGE & MEDIA LITERACY	Dissect elements of the vast news landscape, how it presents itself, and how it affects how readers and viewers consume information.
STRAND 5	CONNECTING TO OUR NEWS COMMUNITY	Learn from adjacent news organizations, 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).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS / GRADING

20%	Foundational Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Professionalism: being punctual, wearing your badge, representing our organization well, checking with editor(s), teacher before leaving class on assignment● Baseline effort & engagement
35%	Level-1 Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Reporting: Pitching stories, setting reasonable but efficient deadlines, early development (research & interviews)● Consistent effort & engagement with activities, tasks● General:
45%	Level-2 Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Reporting: Developing stories, meeting deadlines, overall development (writing lead, writing article, editing, headlines, visuals, captions & other necessary elements)● Proficiency with strand content

EFFORT

The rewards of your work in class are earned through effort. You must complete all in-class writing exercises and help 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.

ASSERTING YOURSELF & MANAGING YOUR TIME

Assert your ideas and advocate for your reporting – you propose ideas to the editors, and set deadlines for completing! Don't just wait around for direction. Most articles are due within 1-2 weeks – or just a few days for more time-sensitive topics, or longer for more complex pieces. News doesn't stop, nor should you.

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 open to attending and reporting on school events that may occur outside the school academic schedule. That is the ongoing homework of the class.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

I'm looking forward to a productive, insightful, and enjoyable school year working with you. As with most working collaborations, some days can be better than others, so we learn to “do the work even on a bad day” and persevere. I am here to create opportunities for academic discovery for all students, and this requires you to build habits of mind for critical thinking, habits of heart for respectful interaction, and the patience and stamina needed to work through setbacks and frustrations toward growth.

Behavior	Everyone needs class to run smoothly for your advancement and success; 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. Refer to the <i>John F. Kennedy High Student Handbook</i> for campus-wide rules for behavior and expectations.
Attendance & Tardies	<i>Get up, dress up, show up.</i> If you miss multiple days of class in a semester – excused or unexcused – you may not earn course credit. As our bell rings, I expect you to be seated and ready to start. If you arrive late, be polite and enter quietly without distraction. Absences and tardies hurt your participation, and we don't want to leave you behind.
Food, Drink	I allow fruits, vegetables, or water if they aren't distracting.
Personal Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use the bathroom ahead of time so you don't miss class. Leave your phone/earphones in class. ● Blow your nose if necessary during class, but tissues don't permit you to roam around and visit.
Tech	<p>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 shallow scanning rather than deep reading. By contrast, longer-form reading immerses us and focuses our concentration. That's one of the roles of this class: to condition our brains to switch from 'browsing' mode to 'deep reading' mode successfully. It still matters. Be truly present, and stay human.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Keep your ears clear – no earbuds, Air Pods, etc., during class ● Place mobile devices out of reach and out of sight, unless I specifically allow their use in a lesson. ● Show patience and grace when internet connections are laggy and online platforms are glitchy. ● Submit your own work using real (not artificial) intelligence to avoid plagiarism.

☆ Let's have a great year together on the learning path!