

macleay college

Unit & Elective Descriptors

# Diploma of Journalism



## Core units – year one

### Foundations of News

This subject is designed to help you learn the basic elements of news gathering, reporting and writing in a news style. The primary goal of this subject is to develop the foundational skills of a reporter - news values, how to recognise and assess the merits of stories, how to write a newsworthy introduction, how to structure a story and get the facts in the right order and how to cover events in real time at press conferences and court cases.

### Media History and the Ethics of News

In this subject you'll be developing and enhancing your understanding of the media – its role, culture, power and effect as well as the ethical dilemmas faced daily by journalists. The subject encourages the analysis of current media, recognising the diverse treatment and presentation of news in Australia and abroad. The subject helps you broaden your knowledge of current affairs and newsworthy events in Australia and internationally, and you'll be reviewing and discussing the coverage of news stories as they happen. The issue of journalistic ethics underpins all tutorials and discussions and you'll be considering these issues in conjunction with writing-based exercises to help you develop your news writing skills.

### News Research

In this subject you'll be introduced to traditional and digitally driven news research. You'll be learning about, and discussing the best way to develop and research, story ideas and the tools needed to find what's true and accurate, particularly in the current 'post truth' and 'fake news' era. The subject also demonstrates that the best story ideas are borne out of critical and original thinking.

### Data Journalism

Data journalism is a journalistic process based on analysing and filtering large data sets to find news stories. Sourcing and importing data, scraping for data and creating your own data sets have become core skills in digital newsrooms around the world. You'll be learning how to perform these tasks as well as how to visualise data so that it's easily comprehensible to an audience. While data-driven journalism deals with open data that is freely available online and analysed with open source tools, this subject also introduces you to the ethical and legal limits of the craft.

### Media Law and Practice

In this subject you'll be developing a fundamental understanding of media law and its role in protecting the rights of the journalist, the public and the publisher. You'll learn about the legal risks associated with newsgathering and with published content. The subject helps you develop the skills necessary to recognise questionable information and potential breaches. You'll be examining the law as it relates to different platforms and different jurisdictions. You'll also experience a court in action and be shown how media laws shape coverage of current events.

### Video Journalism

In this subject you will learn the skills needed to be a video or TV journalist in the digital age. You'll be learning how to perform in front of the camera and how to shoot a story as well as skills in editing, script writing and packaging using editing systems like Premiere Pro.

### Feature Writing

In this subject you'll be introduced to different styles of feature writing and pitching ideas to magazines and newspapers. You'll be learning about the differences between hard news and features, the different structures used by feature writers to engage with their audience and the differences between writing long-form stories for newspapers and digital publications. The subject also teaches the craft of writing the perfect sentence, the perfect paragraph and, therefore, the perfect feature. Student projects in this subject are often published on the Macleay student journalism website, Hatch.

### Mobile Journalism

MOJO is the name given to the way journalists conceive, research, shoot and edit their stories on mobile devices and it's fast becoming a core and required skill in all newsrooms. In this subject you'll learn about the various workflows available and the technical fundamentals associated with digital media production with a strong emphasis on mobile platforms (iOS, Android, Mobile PC). The subject teaches you how to troubleshoot and work with the ever-increasing number of app libraries and how to apply this knowledge to produce broadcast-quality radio and video packages.

## Core units – year one (continued)

### **Reporting on Government and Institutions**

This subject explains the roles of central and local government and examines the relationship between journalists and these institutions. It also explores the public role of other important institutions such as religious organisations and NGOs. You'll be covering local councils and national politics in practical exercises and will be learning how to assess the comparative news value of government decisions. You'll be learning how and where to obtain information from council agendas and central government records and how to distinguish between news and government spin. And you'll also be looking at the intersection between the public role of the journalist and the public interest in effective government.

### **Radio Journalism**

In this subject you'll be developing the skills you need to produce audio content including scriptwriting, packaging using phone apps and podcasting. You'll be learning these skills in the context of digital and multimedia productions. The subject includes helping you to develop a radio voice as well as your reporting skills. You'll be learning how to work in a radio newsroom, broadcast live and produce podcasts.

### **Professional News Practice/Internship**

In this subject you'll be developing a good understanding of the unique industry you're hoping to enter – the way it operates and the opportunities it offers. The subject covers the information and skills you need to help you establish a complete set of pro-active job-seeking skills and tools. You'll be learning about the skills required for job applications and interviews as well as the value and importance of networking. You'll be using your writing, production and web skills to produce a CV and shown how to develop a social media profile as an engaged journalist.

## Electives – year one

### Sports Journalism

In this subject you'll be learning about the challenges of covering sports, both live and in retrospect, that may have been seen by millions of people who all think they know what happened. You'll be looking at the challenges of covering sports stars and sporting institutions and the commercial and emotional pressures of covering the 'home team'. Most importantly you'll be learning how important it is to place sport in a wider cultural space that allows you to evaluate and critically analyse its impact on Australia.

### Food, Fashion, Lifestyle and Travel

Food, fashion and lifestyle writing have seen a revival in the past five years and have become a specialist genre of media production. In this subject you'll be learning about the different styles of media production in food, fashion, lifestyle and travel, including blogging and magazine restaurant reviewing.

### Business Journalism

Covering business and the economy is one of the growth areas of journalism. In this subject you'll be learning how business functions and why news about the economy is so important.

### Investigative Journalism

This unit will challenge students to debate the issues which should inform the work of the investigator, from the ethics of dealing with sources to the tension between the public interest and what is merely interesting to the public. At its best, investigative journalism provokes change, and influences the agendas of both citizens and policy makers. But it also, according to critics, negatively impacts the process of decision making in government and, in some cases, is said to damage national security and financial markets. Where does the balance lie? Students will study and critique the ethical decisions made in major investigations, both historic and current, and learn how to use their knowledge and judgement to solve problems in their own investigations.

### Music Journalism

Music is a part of our daily lives and is a huge international industry. This subject studies the history of reporting music, the different genres of music reporting, the emotions involved and how to reflect these in writing. It also covers the ins and outs of accessing information about a specialist area and how to profile music and musicians.

### Photojournalism

In this subject you'll be learning the theoretical and practical fundamentals needed to be able to produce great photo essays. You'll be exposed to the potential of photojournalism through the exploration of current reportage and documentary photography in print and digital mediums.

### Podcasting

In this unit students will learn end-to-end production techniques and create their own podcasts. Each week's lesson will blend theoretical learning with practical, hands-on production practice to allow students to gain confidence in their skills while also providing an understanding of the trends underpinning podcasting today. Students will learn about history, major innovations and trends throughout the trimester but will be required to build their technical and editorial skills every week. Each lesson will include a practical component where students will advance their recording, scripting and editing capabilities.