

COMM 240A: STUDENT MEDIA: BEGINNING STAFF

Citrus College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Fall 2025
Credits:	3
Total Contact Hours:	90
Lecture Hours :	36
Lab Hours:	54
Hours Arranged:	0
Outside of Class Hours:	72
Total Student Learning Hours:	162
Prerequisite:	COMM 101 or concurrent enrollment.
Strongly Recommended:	ENGL C1000.
District General Education:	A2. Communication & Analytical Thinking
Transferable to CSU:	Yes
Transferable to UC:	No
Grading Method:	Standard Letter

Catalog Course Description

An introductory lecture/laboratory journalism course that produces the college media website, the Clarion. Beginning staff members learn facts-based story telling techniques and modern news production skills. In collaboration with other student media classes, beginning staffers write, photograph, illustrate, and edit news, features and opinions for publication for student media. 36 lecture hours, 54 lab hours.

Course Objectives

- Students analyze events, ideas, and trends in terms of their news values.
- Students research and gather verifiable facts, information and supporting quotations in reporting and writing news stories that are truthful, accurate, fair and balanced.
- Students follow industry standards of copy preparation, style, editing and revision.
- Students demonstrate computer literacy and basic photo journalism skills.
- Students learn team work, time management, productivity under deadline and accountability.
- Students develop professional portfolios of written articles and visuals.

Major Course Content

1. Student media staff organization
 - a. Role of faculty advisers, lab supervisors, student editors
 - b. Duties and responsibilities of beginning staff members
 - c. Publication schedule and deadlines
 - d. Student Media Staff Manual
2. News gathering essentials

- a. Research methods
 - b. Interviewing and attribution of multiple sources
 - c. Note-taking techniques
 - d. Diversity in news coverage
3. Basics of news writing
 - a. Copy preparation
 - b. Summary news leads
 - c. Sentence structure, style and voice
 - d. News story structure
 - e. Editing and revision techniques
 4. Reporting campus community news
 - a. Covering a beat
 - b. Covering meetings
 - c. Covering speeches
 - d. Covering breaking news
 - e. Covering sports
 5. Fundamentals of visual journalism
 - a. Introduction to photo composition
 - b. Writing captions
 - c. Graphics and illustration
 6. Principles of media law and ethics
 - a. Introduction to libel privacy, copyright law
 - b. Code of Ethics: Society of Professional Journalists

Lab Content

1. Writing for publication/genres guided practice for student media
2. Compare and contrast photo techniques and photo layout with guided practice
3. Compare and contrast art techniques and art layout with guided practice
4. Production of a regular news or feature non-fiction product with a journalism emphasis by and for students that's distributed to a campus or community audience. Includes weekly news-gathering activities and assignments, regardless of publication frequency.

Suggested Reading Other Than Required Textbook

Read professional newspapers, news magazines and news websites.

Examples of Required Writing Assignments

News stories, features, sports, arts and entertainment, profiles, opinions and editorials for student media.

Examples of Outside Assignments

Textbook readings and exercises. Covering news events relating to Citrus College. Attending student journalism conferences.

Instruction Type(s)

Lab, Lecture, Online Education Lab, Online Education Lecture