

**TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Larkspur, California**

Course of Study  
**ADVANCED JOURNALISM**  
Contemporary Strand

**I. INTRODUCTION: COURSE DESCRIPTION**

- A. Students in this course will produce the school newspaper -- reporting, writing, pasting up copy--to report the news of the school community and issues and events of concern to the students. While emphasis will be on newspaper production, students will continue to deal with the issues attendant to reporting the news and meeting their responsibilities to one another and to the public.

Reading core works of literature, such as Jessica Mitford's *The American Way of Death* and Woodward and Bernstein's *All the President's Men*, will provide students with the opportunity to study nonfiction writing and to discuss reporting techniques and the role of journalists in society.

Students will continue to perfect their composition skills, concentrating especially on persuasion. Students will be responsible for determining the editorial policies and content of the newspaper, supervising its internal and external circulation, and generating enough revenue through advertising sales to publish the newspaper.

- B. Advanced Journalism addresses the following district student learning outcomes:
- #1 communicate articulately, effectively and persuasively when speaking and writing;
  - #2 read and analyze material in a variety of disciplines;
  - #3 use technology as a tool to access information, analyze and solve problems, and communicate ideas;
  - #10 analyze and propose solutions to contemporary issues using a variety of perspectives;
  - #11 interpret, experience, create, and/or perform artistic work.

Advanced Journalism addresses the following Tam 21<sup>st</sup> Century Goals:

- acquire, manage and use knowledge and skills;

- think critically and creatively
- develop skills needed for effective teamwork;
- develop respect and understanding for the diversity of our community;
- understand individual and cultural differences;
- take responsibility for self and community;
- gain skills for success in the work place.

C. Advanced Journalism students will gain a sound foundation in critical thinking, reading, and in writing and editing skills.

D. Advanced Journalism students will be provided with the following learning experiences:

Writing:

1. to write simply and economically with coherence, angle, and sufficient supporting detail, using proper attribution when needed;
2. to work on copy-editing, to catch errors and omission, and to perfect form and context;
3. to practice clarity and conciseness in writing and to hone the writing skills taught in the introductory courses;
4. to learn the difference between primary and secondary sources;
5. to learn techniques of nonfiction writing.

Reading:

1. to read for main and subordinate ideas;
2. to identify a writer's tone, point of view, intentions, etc,
3. to recognize opinion and assumption in writing and to recognize slanting in newspaper articles;
4. to increase vocabulary through, among other things, a study of words selected from core reading and current newspaper accounts;

5. to learn to use critical thinking skills in analyzing and interpreting the literature.

Ethics:

1. to learn to balance coverage and seek the truth beyond the reporter's own biases;
2. to learn to work cooperatively to solve the problems of writing, editing, and layout;
3. to apply the lessons of responsibility – fairness, accuracy, balance—learned in the first two journalism courses;
4. to deal responsibly with the ethical issues that emerge in reporting the news;
5. to develop responsibility toward one another in meeting deadlines.

Publication:

1. to see and deal with the effects of writing to a real audience;
2. to evaluate the application of journalistic skills – e.g. writing, copy editing, layout, headline writing;
3. to maintain a community forum in the pages of the newspaper;
4. to inform the student body of events, achievements, and concerns of classmates in order to create a community spirit;
5. to bring issues to the attention of other students in order to stimulate thought and discussion leading to problem solving;
6. to allow the students to publish a newspaper under the rights set forth in the Constitution so that they may learn first-hand how a democracy functions.

## **II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

### **A. Writing**

1. use the stages in the writing process, especially responding, revising, and editing (R/LAF W W/S 1.0, 1.9);

2. apply basic grammar and appropriate vocabulary in the context of their writing (R/LAF W W/S O/F 1.5; W/OE 1.1, 1.2, 1.3);
3. to write simply and economically with coherence, angle, and sufficient supporting detail, using proper attribution when needed (R/LAF W W/S 1.1, 1.4);
4. draw generalizations from recorded observation and experience (R/LAF W W/A 2.3b);
5. to learn and use primary and secondary sources (R/LAF W W/A 2.4d);
6. to work on copy-editing, to catch errors and omissions, and to perfect form and content;
7. examine ideas and information from a variety of sources and draw conclusions about the point and purpose of that information and to evaluate the conclusions and determine whether or not they are sound (R/LAF W W/A 2.4d);
8. analyze information from various sources through systematic notetaking, integrate material from outside sources into their own work, and acknowledge those sources.

B. Nonfiction/reading

1. to read for main and subordinate ideas; put ideas in one's own words through such devices as paraphrase, précis, modeling, unscrambling sample passages, reading and interpreting maps, charts, and graphs. Recognize that rereading enhances the reader's understanding and appreciation (R/LAF R R/C 2.1, 2.3);
2. determine the author's point of view and distinguish his or her bias from established fact ( R/LAF R R/C E/C 2.6);
3. to recognize opinion and assumption in writing and to recognize slanting in newspaper articles (R/LAF R R/C E/C 2.6);
4. to increase vocabulary through, among other things, a study of words selected from core reading and current newspaper accounts (R/LAF R 1.0);
5. to learn to use critical thinking skills in analyzing and interpreting the literature (R/LAF R C/A 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5).

## Speaking and Listening

When speaking, students will:

1. function effectively in class discussion by answering and asking questions coherently and by clarifying responses with clear explanations; conceive and develop ideas that are soundly reasoned and well supported;
2. become more proficient in the various roles in editing and response groups; learn new roles: for example, panel chair, panel member, large group discussion leader, recorder, resource person;
3. learn argumentation techniques that allow both sides of a question to surface; learn skills in logic and reasoning to support arguments on conflicting sides of a question (R/LAF L/S O/D 1.5, 1.6);
4. give careful attention to preplanning a speech; develop a regard for the audience with respect to gaining attention, sustaining interest, making efficient use of time; learn skills in organizing for various modes of presentation: analysis, persuasion, explanation, interpretation, direction, and comparison (R/LAF L/S O/D 1.7 A/E 1.13);
5. practice oral interpretation of literature, using the techniques of emphasis, expression, dramatic pause, inflection; practice parts in dramas, attempting realistic character identity, fluency in reading dialogue, and appropriate tone and mood (R/LAF L/S S/A 2.3a—e; 2.5).

When listening, students will:

1. develop techniques that promote supportive, polite concern for the speaker, and learn the skills necessary to offer tactful, constructive criticism.
2. identify main and subordinate ideas presented in lectures and discussions, and evaluate them for sound reasoning and convincing support; take into account the nuances, the subtle shades of meaning (R/LAF L/S A/E 1.11—1.14).

### C. Student Assessment

Students will be assessed through a variety of indicators including homework, group work, oral presentations, visuals related to the reading, quizzes on the literature, essays and other writing assignments.

The adviser will mark up each issue of the paper. He/she may also issue to the class a written critique similar to one done on a daily basis on the Ombudsman of the *New York Times* entitled "Winners and Sinners."

Students will be expected to take an essay examination that requires them to apply the thinking and writing skills they have developed in order to synthesize and analyze material from three or four major works covered during the semester. Students will be expected to support their main ideas with specific examples from the works under discussion.

Test questions might ask students to—

- a. analyze what production of your school newspaper taught you about truth in reporting, editorial stands on tough issues, covering controversy and upholding the Constitution's guarantee of a free press;
- b. analyze the role of the free press in a democratic society, giving specific examples from the literature covered throughout the semester.

D. Course Assessment

Advanced Journalism will be assessed through formal and informal surveys of the students. Course and unit goals will be reviewed by teacher on a regular basis.

### III. METHODS AND MATERIALS

A. Methods

1. Students critique each other's writing during production and after publication. The instructor will comment on and grade short papers, reading logs, essay tests, and longer papers on the score and supplementary reading lists;
2. The instructor will grade and comment on articles submitted for publication.
3. Students will keep a portfolio with stories they wrote, rewrites and stories they formatted and edited for their page; students will do self-assessment; the instructor will assess the portfolio according to standards articulated in a rubric.

B. Materials

## Core Readings

Baker, Russell	<i>The Good Times</i>
Carson, Rachel	<i>The Silent Spring</i>
Doig, Ivan	<i>The House of Sky</i>
Halberstam, David	<i>The Amateurs</i>
Jacobson, Sid & Colon, Ernie	<i>911 Report: a Graphic Adaptation</i>
McPhee, John	<i>Table of Contents</i>
Mitford, Jessica,	<i>The American Way of Death</i>
Wallis, David	<i>Killed: Great Journalism Too Hot to Print</i>
Weif, David	<i>Circle of Poison</i>
Welty, Eudora	<i>One Writer's Beginnings</i>
Woodward, David and	
Berstein, Carl	<i>All the President's Men</i>

## Supplementary Readings

A seventeen-page book list is available on request.

## IV. GENERAL INFORMATION

Advanced Journalism is a 5 credit course open to all juniors, seniors and second semester sophomores who have met the prerequisites

- A. Prerequisites: Students must have satisfactorily completed Nonfiction I and Nonfiction II.
- B. Requirements Met

This course may be used in partial fulfillment of the English graduation requirement.

This course is accepted toward the "g" requirement for UC admissions. It is also accepted for the CSU English requirement.

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