Course Title: Journalism 1

Course #: 1247-1248

Course Description: This class is a writing course of news, feature, sports, and opinion pieces with an emphasis on work being published in Cathedral Catholic High School's online publication, El Cid. The course is based on the teaching of solid journalistic methods of information gathering and legal/ethical conduct, employing extensive reading of current literature, analysis of published writing samples, and continual critical thinking and self-reflection regarding real-life activities in the areas of writing news, interviewing/researching, editing, design/layout, photojournalism, polling, advertising, fundraising, and publishing. Students make use of constructive criticism from peers and adviser in order to write pieces for a targeted audience and community. A study of AP Style and current events is included.

UC/CSU Approval: “g” approved

Grade Level: 10-12

Estimated Homework Per Week: Journalism 1 homework load depends upon many factors, including student information gathering skills, composing speed, source availability, editing process, etc. Students must meet five deadlines for each story, which generally run on three-week cycles. As such, students spend roughly 2-5 hours per week working on their stories.

Prerequisite: Completion of most recent English course with a grade of C or higher

Recommended Prerequisite Skills: Prospective Journalism 1 students should be avid writers who desire constructive criticism regarding their compositions and composing processes. Students should possess strong interpersonal communication skills that facilitate information gathering, interviewing, and writer-editor relationships. Critical reading skills, especially as they relate to current events, are a benefit.

Course Grade Categories:
- Classwork/Projects/Story Preparation (25%)
- Final Exam (15%)
- Stories/Photojournalism (45%)
- Tests/Quizzes (15%)
Major Assessments/Units/Topics:
This course tasks students to write five, full-length stories with three sources and one picture/infographic/image plus cutline, one for each of the paper’s six sections, and four news/sports briefs per semester. To hone their photojournalism skills, students must submit one photograph with cutline per week for inclusion in the paper’s Week in Pictures. In addition, students take weekly current events and AP style quizzes.

Topics:
History of Journalism - This topic provides students an overview of major time periods and movements impacting the evolution of journalism in the United States.

News Literacy - This topic encourages students to develop as informed, engaged, participatory, conscious news producers and consumers, helping students identify what is fit to print and to determine what platform best suits its purposes.

News Gathering - This topic introduces students to major news values journalists use to determine coverage, as well as basic story structures and information gathering techniques.

Photojournalism/Digital Storytelling - This topic covers the role of photojournalists in the newsroom with emphasis on the difference between photographers and photojournalists, cutline writing, and composition.

News Writing/Story Structures/Rhetoric - This topic introduces students to the basic news values and structures used by journalists to compose and organize news, sports, and feature stories. Students develop a process-oriented approach to writing. A heavy dose of “generative rhetoric” is included to improve students’ sentence sense and structure.