

Course Title: Introduction to Journalism

Course Coordinator: Dr Sachindra Mishra

Course Duration: 25-30 Hours

Course Fee: Rs 2000/

Objectives:

This course aims to introduce English Literature students to the core principles, practices, and evolving landscape of journalism. It seeks to bridge literary sensibilities with journalistic techniques, enabling students to critically engage with media content, understand the power of storytelling in news, and develop professional writing skills suited for journalistic careers.

Aims:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. **Understand the Nature and Function of News:**
 - Define what constitutes news and identify different news values.
 - Differentiate between hard news, soft news, features, and editorials.
2. **Explore the Duties and Responsibilities of a Reporter:**
 - Recognize the ethical and professional responsibilities of a journalist.
 - Understand the role of objectivity, accuracy, fairness, and accountability in reporting.
3. **Critically Examine the Current State of Journalism:**
 - Analyze contemporary challenges facing journalism, including fake news, media bias, press freedom, and digital disruption.
 - Explore the impact of social media and citizen journalism on mainstream reporting.
4. **Study Theories and Concepts of Journalism and Mass Communication:**
 - Gain a foundational understanding of key communication theories such as Agenda-Setting, Gatekeeping, Framing, and Public Sphere theory.
 - Examine models of mass communication and their relevance to modern journalism.
5. **Learn the Techniques of News Writing:**
 - Acquire practical skills in news gathering, interviewing, verifying facts, and structuring news stories.
 - Practice writing clear, concise, and compelling news articles using the inverted pyramid structure and appropriate journalistic language.
6. **Develop Editorial and Opinion Writing Skills:**
 - Understand the structure, tone, and persuasive strategies used in editorials.

- Learn to express informed opinions, support arguments with evidence, and craft editorials on current issues.
7. **Integrate Literary Skills with Journalistic Writing:**
- Leverage literary background to enhance narrative journalism and feature writing.
 - Foster critical thinking, analytical writing, and effective communication across genres.

Module 1: Understanding News

- What is News? Definition and Scope
- Types of News: Hard News, Soft News, Features
- News Values (Timeliness, Proximity, Prominence, etc.)
- Difference Between News, Views, and Opinions
- Basic News Structure: The Inverted Pyramid

Activities:

- Class discussions on current headlines
- Comparative analysis of news reports from different newspapers

Module 2: Duties and Responsibilities of a Reporter

- Role of a Reporter in Society
- Core Responsibilities: Accuracy, Objectivity, Fairness
- Ethics in Journalism: Truth, Privacy, Confidentiality, Harm
- Role of Investigative Journalism
- Code of Conduct: Press Council Guidelines

Activities:

- Case studies of ethical dilemmas in journalism
- Guest lecture by a working journalist (optional)

Module 3: Current State of Journalism

- Journalism in the Age of Social Media and Digital Media
- Rise of Fake News and Misinformation
- Crisis of Credibility and Public Trust
- Ownership of Media and Political Bias
- Freedom of the Press: Global and Indian Contexts

Activities:

- Research on media conglomerates and their influence
- Debate: "Is Journalism Dying or Evolving?"

Module 4: Theories and Concepts of Journalism and Mass Communication

- Introduction to Communication and Mass Media
- Key Theories:
 - Agenda-Setting Theory
 - Gatekeeping Theory
 - Framing Theory
 - Cultivation Theory
 - Public Sphere (Habermas)
- Role of Mass Communication in Shaping Public Opinion

Activities:

- Theory presentations by student groups
- Analysis of media events through theoretical frameworks

Module 5: Journalistic Terms

- **Banner**
- **Beat Story**
- **By Line**
- **Box Story**
- **Caption**
- **Copy Editor**
- **Correspondent**
- **Dummy**
- **Editorial**
- **Freelance**
- **Lead**
- **Ombudsman**
- **Scoop**
- **Stringer**
- **Yellow Journalism**
- **Clickbait**
- **Nut Graph**
- **Mast Head**

Module 6: Techniques of News Writing

- News Writing Formats: Inverted Pyramid, Hourglass, Narrative
- 5Ws and 1H (Who, What, Where, When, Why, How)
- Reporting Techniques: Interviewing, Observation, Note-taking
- Attribution, Quotations, and Source Validation
- Common Errors in News Writing

Activities:

- Field assignments: Write a local news story
- Peer reviews of student article

Suggested Readings:

1. Mencher, Melvin. *News Reporting and Writing*
2. Mehta, DS. *Mass Communication & Journalism in India*
3. Ahuja, B.N. *Theory and Practice of Journalism*
4. Parthasarthy, L. *Basic Journalism*
5. Harcup, Tony. *Journalism: Principles and Practice*
6. Kovach, Bill and Rosenstiel, Tom. *The Elements of Journalism*
7. Kamath, K.V. *The Journalists Handbook*
8. Conboy, Martin. *The Language of the News*
9. Keeble, Richard. *The Newspapers Handbook*
10. Selected articles from *The Guardian, The New York Times, The Hindu, Scroll, etc.*

Assessment:

100 marks

1. Four essay type questions to be attempted out of a choice of six
2. Short notes on any four out of a choice of six
3. Writing a news story on the basis of given facts