

Reporting in America

Benjamin Shors, M.A.

[Bio](#)

Clinical Assistant Professor

bshors@wsu.edu

(509) 335-1547

Purpose of the Course

This is a reporting course that will instruct students on American news reporting and writing skills, including breaking news and writing for the web. Students will be expected to write and produce news stories using documents, cultivated news sources, and independent research.

Course Goals

By the end of the course, students should have an understanding of basic reporting techniques, practical media ethics, and applied news production skills. These skills translate across the communications world, from journalism to public relations to advertising and organizational communication.

Guiding Course Questions

What are the basic elements of U.S. news reporting?

How do journalists write for different formats?

How do journalists produce content for professional media?

Course Materials

- * *The Spokesman-Review*
- * *Seattletimes.com*
- * Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual
- * Supplemental reading materials will also be provided

Assignments

Opinion piece: Students will produce written and audio commentaries titled "This is Home." The first version will be finished in the first week; the second version will be due at the end of the fourth week. This will be 90 seconds when read aloud, or about 250 words when written. **First draft due Monday, July 1.**

News Story: In a field reporting exercise, students will cover a Native American cultural event or the Fourth of July

celebration in Pullman. Students will produce a 60-second video story or a 500-word written story; minimum of three interviews (these interviews must not be other SUSI students). **Due Thursday, July 11.**

Self-evaluation: Students will examine the rough draft and final version of their opinion pieces. This short writing assignment should discuss the evolution of the piece, as well as the evolution of their views of the United States and its media systems. **Monday, July 22**

Measurements

This course will provide a foundation for an understanding of American media techniques and practices. Students will be expected to produce news content for media outlets in their home countries, as well as for American news media. Students will also be required to reflect on their commentaries. I will provide extensive feedback on your work, but I will not grade it. If you have any questions, please contact me at bshors@wsu.edu.