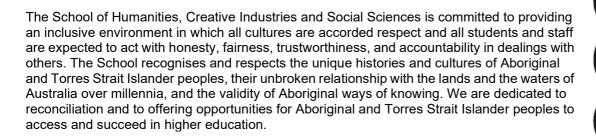## School of Humanities Creative Industries & Social Sciences

CMNS2280: Feature Writing
Newcastle City Precinct
Semester 2 - 2023

The School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness, and accountability in dealings with others. The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.

OVERVIEW

Course Description
In this course students will explore the theory and practice of features journalism in print and digital formats. Students will develop their research, interviewing, and writing skills by producing a variety of feature articles for publication in text and digital forms.

Assumed Knowledge
CMNS1090 Media Storytelling/Foundations of Professional Writing

Contact Hours
Newcastle City Precinct
Lecture
Face-to-Face On Campus
1 hour in Week 1

Tutorial
Face-to-Face On Campus
2 hours per Week for 11 weeks from Week 2 to Week 12

Unit Weighting
10
Workload
Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10-unit course.

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator	**Newcastle City Precinct** Ms Alysson Watson Alysson.Watson@newcastle.edu.au Consultation: Via email
Teaching Staff	Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.
School Office	**School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences** NU Space, Level 4 409 Hunter Street Newcastle HCISS@newcastle.edu.au +61 4985 4500

SYLLABUS

Course Content	Students will read and analyse published works of long-form and opinion-based journalism and produce their own articles in a virtual newsroom. Topics will include opinion writing, reviewing, interviewing techniques, news writing, storytelling, using images, online layout, using language, narrative techniques, pitching and freelance journalism.
Course Learning Outcomes	**On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:** 1. Identify the role of journalism in society. 2. Apply professional writing and research skills to produce features journalism appropriate to print and digital forms. 3. Critically reflect on their professional practice.
Course Materials	**Other Resources:** See Canvas

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment Due
1	17 Jul	Introductory lecture	No tutorial	
2	24 Jul	Writing refresher: What is a news story? What is a feature story? How and where to find a feature story?	Finding features in the news.	For Week 3: Source an opinion piece from a professional publication, read, analyse, share link on Discussion Forum.
3	31 Jul	Opinion writing: How to write a film review	Analysis of published opinion pieces and analysis of published film reviews	
4	7 Aug	Finding stories: News sense, News gathering, Research, Interviewing.		**Assessment 1** **Film review, due midnight Sunday, 20%** For Week 5: Source a profile from a professional publication, read, analyse, share link on Discussion Forum.
5	14 Aug	Profile writing	Analysis of published profiles	For Week 6: Write a profile pitch.
6	21 Aug	Peer review and tutor feedback on profile pitches	Workshop of profile pitches	**Assessment 2** **Profile pitch, due midnight Sunday, 5%**
7	28 Aug	Editing and rewriting, Critical reflection	Rewrite marked film reviews for resubmission	**Assessment 1** **Film review (rewrite), midnight Sunday: 5%** For Week 8: Write a draft of your profile
8	4 Sep	Longform digital storytelling: Digital storytelling tools Text, audio, video	Analysis of digital features. Peer and tutor review of draft profiles.	**Assessment 2** **Profile, due by midnight Sunday, 20%** For Week 9: Devise two story ideas for digital feature to pitch to class
9	11 Sep	Pitch your digital feature ideas	Peer and tutor review and workshop of feature ideas	For Week 10: Write your feature pitch to present to class.
10	18 Sep	Feedback on feature pitches. Research plans.	Discussion of feature pitches and research plans	**Assessment 3** **Feature pitch, due midnight Sunday, 10%** For week 11, write a draft of your feature
		Mid Term Break		
		Mid Term Break		
11	9 Oct	Introduction to Shorthand. Recording audio and video	Peer and tutor review of draft features	**Assessment 3** **Feature (text) due midnight Sunday, 20%**
12	16 Oct	Digital storytelling	Peer and tutor review of digital story (audio, video, text, digital elements)	
13	23 Oct	*No tutorial*		**Assessment 3** **Feature (digital) due midnight Sunday (20%).**

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 3 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Assessment 1 Film review	Week 4 Review (20%) Week 7 Rewrite review (5%)	Individual	25%	1, 2
2	Assessment 2 Profile	Week 6 Pitch (5%) Week 8 Profile (20%)	Individual	25%	1, 2
3	Assessment 3 Long-form feature	Week 10 Pitch (10%) Week 11 Text-only story (20%) Week 13 Digital story (20%)	Individual	50%	1, 2, 3

Late Submissions   The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 – Film Review – 25%

Assessment Type   Professional Task
Description   You will write a 600-word review of a new release film chosen by the course coordinator; you will have a choice of films, announced in Week 3. The film review will follow the conventions of film reviewing (discussed in class in week 3). The task is divided into two parts: your film review (25%) and your rewritten film review following marking and feedback (5%).
Weighting   25% (20% + 5%)
Length   600 words
Due Date   Week 4 (film review) and Week 7 (rewritten film review)
Submission Method   Online
      Via Canvas
Assessment Criteria   See Canvas
Return Method   Online
Feedback Provided   Online

Assessment 2 – Personal Profile – 25%

Assessment Type   Professional Task
Description   You will write an 800-word personal profile of an individual who is newsworthy. You will choose the subject of your profile in consultation with your tutor. The profile will be written according to the conventions of profile writing (discussed in class in Week 5). You will include a photograph you have taken of your subject, appropriate to the theme of the article. The task is divided into two parts: a profile pitch (5%) and a completed profile (20%).
Weighting   25% (5% + 20%)
Length   Pitch is 300 words, completed profile is 800 words
Due Date   Week 6 (pitch) and Week 8 (completed profile)
Submission Method   Online
      Via Canvas
Assessment Criteria   See Canvas
Return Method   Online
Feedback Provided   Online

Assessment 3 – Long-form Feature – 50%

Assessment Type	Professional Task
Description	You will produce a 1500-word digital feature story comprising text, audio/video components and images on a subject to be decided in consultation with your tutor and your peers. This task has three parts: a pitch (10%), a text-only story (20%) and a digital feature produced on the Shorthand platform (20%).
Weighting	50% (10% + 20% + 20%)
Length	Pitch 300 words, text story 1500 words
Due Date	Week 10 (pitch), Week 11 (text story) and Week 13 (digital story)
Submission Method	Online
via Canvas and Shorthand
Assessment Criteria	See Canvas
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Attendance
Attendance/participation will be recorded in the following components:
- Tutorial (Method of recording: Marked roll)

WH&S Requirements
Due to COVID-19 safety restrictions, it is the student's responsibility to sanitise their work/computer space prior to any face to face lessons in this course. They must be mindful of current social distancing rules during their face to face lessons.

Communication Methods
Communication methods used in this course include:
- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.

- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.
- Face to Face: Communication will be provided via face to face meetings or supervision.

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the Oral Examination Guidelines. In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the Student Conduct Rule.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the Oral Examination (viva) Procedure. In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the Student Conduct Rule.

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:
1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.
Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:
https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236

Important Policy Information

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/no-room-for/policies-and-procedures that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.