



School of English, Journalism
& European Languages

Unit Outline

HEJ505
Investigative Journalism
Semester 1, 2007
<http://www.utas.edu.au/journalism/>

Convenor:	Ms Verica Rupar Room: HUM 561 Phone: 6226 2365 Email: Verica.Rupar@utas.edu.au
Consultation Hours:	Thursday 9am – 11am
Unit Description:	Students are introduced to the theory, practice and principles of investigative journalism. Topics covered will provide a framework for critical discussion, comparative analysis, study and research in investigative journalism. Students are expected to reflect on the process of developing and producing an investigative feature and to assess a range of investigative tools such as gathering and verifying relevant information, interpreting financial records, and using freedom of information legislation.
Unit Aims and Objectives:	The objective of this unit is to enable students to engage critically with contemporary journalism practice and to acquire the skills necessary to conceptualise and produce a competent piece of investigative journalism.
Learning Outcomes:	At the end of this unit, students should be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explore the function and the ethics of investigative journalism2. Critically examine the practice of investigative journalism3. Develop ideas for investigative stories4. Conduct journalistic research5. Critically assess ideas/angles in light of research6. Produce an investigative story
Vista site	You can access the HEJ505 website through the Learning Online login page: www.utas.edu.au/courseoutline/ This page provides links to documents, lecture presentations, online readings and discussion groups, and many other resources which will be useful for you. It will be updated throughout semester, so visit regularly.

	<p>Contact the Service desk if you have problems using Vista:</p> <p>Website: http://www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk Telephone: 6226 1818; 1300 304 903 (local call from within TAS; mobile excepted) Email: servicedesk@utas.edu.au</p> <p>Contact the Unit Convenor if you have a problem related to course content or assessment.</p> <p>For those requiring further help with webCT Vista and other software, IT Training Online offer the following free online training resources for students at http://www.utas.edu.au/it_training</p>
<p>Required Texts:</p>	<p>Tanner, Stephen, ed. <i>Journalism, Investigation and Research</i>. London: Longman, 2002.</p> <p>This class will feature a combination of lecture and discussion but the emphasis will be on discussion. It is expected that students will keep up with current events and get in the daily habit of reading several newspapers including, but not limited to the <i>New York Times</i>, the <i>Guardian</i>, the <i>Australian</i> and the <i>Mercury</i>.</p>
<p>Recommended Texts:</p>	<p>(On Reserve in the Morris Miller Library)</p> <p>Keeble, Richard, ed. <i>Print journalism: A Critical introduction</i>. London: Routledge, 2005</p> <p>Allan, Stuart. <i>News culture</i>. Buckingham: Open University Press, 2004.</p> <p>Bromley, Michael and O'Malley, Tom (Eds.), <i>A journalism reader</i>, London: Routledge, 1997.</p> <p>Burg de, Hugo, <i>Investigative journalism: Context and practice</i>, London: Routledge, 2000.</p>
<p>When Taught:</p>	<p>Semester 1 2007 Fri 9am – 10.50am, SB.SocSci322</p>
<p>Assessment:</p>	<p><i>Assignment One:</i> Write an essay, 2000 words, due end Week 5, Friday 30 March, 5pm (20%);</p> <p>Your task is to critically examine the practice, function and ethics of investigative journalism. The assignment will assess learning outcomes 1 and 2.</p> <p><i>Assignment Two:</i> Write a media watch column, 2000 words, due end Week 9, Friday 4 May, 5pm (30%);</p> <p>You are expected to produce a commentary that will discuss the role of news media in representing, interpreting and constructing reality. The assignment will assess learning outcomes 3 and 4.</p> <p><i>Assignment Three:</i> a) Write an investigative feature article 3,000 words (40%) plus</p>

b) Write 1000 words analysis of news story topics in media (10%).

Due end Week 13, Friday 1 June, 5pm

The purpose of this assignment is to produce a competent piece of investigative journalism and reflect on news media agendas. The assignment will assess learning outcomes 4, 5 and 6.

Assignment sheets will be handed out in seminars and will be available on the JMC website.

Further assignment/workshopping information:

All assignments/drafts should be on A4 pages and double-spaced.

For workshopping, students will need to provide copies of drafts for all workshop participants.

When including interview material in stories, students will need to attach a signed interview consent form, which will be provided in seminars and is available on the JMC website.

All journalistic writing in this unit should follow the JMC Program Style Guide, which will also be provided to you in seminars. The essays should follow MLA style.

LECTURE/SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Lecturer
Week 1 2 Mar	Introduction. What is investigative journalism? No readings	Verica Rupar
Week 2 9 Mar	The making of the investigative reporter Readings: Tanner, Stephen. ed <i>Journalism, Investigation and Research</i> . London: Longman, 2002, 2-22 Work of the Pulitzer Prize Winner for Investigative Reporting 2006 (available at http://www.pulitzer.org)	Verica Rupar
Week 3 16 Mar	Understanding the tools Readings: Tanner, 55-129 Pulitzer Winner 2004 (available at http://www.pulitzer.org)	Verica Rupar
Week 4 23 Mar	Finding the stories: Ideas, preliminary research and pitches Readings: Tanner, 134-192 Walkley Finalists 2006 (available at: http://www.walkleys.com)	Verica Rupar
Week 5 30 Mar	Pursuing inquiries : presenting pitches Readings: Tanner 278-298 Pulitzer Winner 2003 (available at http://www.pulitzer.org)	Verica Rupar
6 April – Easter Vacation – no class		
Week 6 13 April	How to understand financial and policy documents Readings: Tanner 196-240 Walkley Award for Investigative Journalism 2006 (http://www.walkleys.com)	Verica Rupar
Week 7 20 April	Legal issues and how to use the Freedom of Information Act Readings: Tanner, 298-327 Walkley Award for Investigative Journalism 2006 (http://www.walkleys.com)	Rick Snell
Week 8 27 April	Interviewing and writing: preparation, techniques, tools Readings: Tanner, 258-278 Keeble, Richard, ed. <i>Print journalism: A Critical introduction</i> . London: Routledge, 2005, 53-83	Verica Rupar
Week 9 4 May	What has happened afterwards: Journalist vs. former journalist	Verica Rupar

Week 10 11 May	What is missing: Journalist vs. editor	Verica Rupar
Week 11 18 May	Where is the public interest: Journalist vs. reader	Verica Rupar
Week 12 25 May	What went wrong: Journalist vs. student	Verica Rupar
Week 13 1 Jun	Wrapping up: What is investigative journalism for?	Verica Rupar
	Study Period: June 4 – June 8	
	Examination Period: June 9 – June 26	

Attendance requirements

Regular tutorial attendance is required and an attendance roll will be taken. If you fail to satisfy the attendance requirements and/or complete all assessments you may be deemed ineligible to sit the exam or be required to submit additional work.

ASSIGNMENTS

The assessment for this unit is ongoing. This means that the weekly seminars will be used as a platform for discussing current affairs stories and developing and clarifying ideas, issues and questions related to all your assignment projects. This intensive workshopping of news stories will bring the 'real' newsroom atmosphere to the class and help you to build up a critical understanding of the theory and practice of investigative journalism.

The assessment has three interlinked segments. You are asked to write an academic essay, a media watch column and a feature article. Details are provided below. The first task is to choose one Tasmanian daily newspaper as your case study. It can be the *Mercury*, the *Examiner*, or the *Advocate*. Your selected newspaper will serve as an object of study in the first two assignments and as a newspaper where you would like to publish your third assignment.

It is recommended that you read about the assessment tasks before choosing the newspaper that will serve as your case study.

Assignment One: Academic essay

Length: 2000 words

Due: end Week 5, Friday 30 March, 5pm

Worth: 20%

Task: Please write a 2000 word essay that critically examines the practice, function and ethics of investigative journalism in one Tasmanian daily newspaper: the *Mercury*, the *Examiner*, or the *Advocate*.

Your task is to identify, discuss and define concepts relevant to contemporary investigative journalism and evaluate these concepts in relation to the practice of the selected newspaper. Your essay will require you to carry out original research applying different methods of inquiry. It includes an overview of academic literature, library research, and a content analysis of the newspaper articles.

Assignment criteria: preparation, use of concepts, evidence of applied research techniques and quality and depth of analysis.

Assignment Two:

Length: 2000 words

Due: end Week 9, Friday 4 May, 5pm

Worth: 30%

Task: Please write a media watch column that discusses the role of news media in discovering, interpreting and constructing issues of public concern. Your case study should be an example of investigative journalism published in your selected Tasmanian daily (the *Mercury*, the *Examiner*, or the *Advocate*). The story should have been published between 1995 and 2005.

Your task is to do some archival research, to select and critically examine a piece of investigative reporting, to provide evidence and reasons for your assessment of the journalist's work and to signal ideas for further development of the news story. These ideas will be the starting point for your Assignment Three.

Assignment criteria: newsworthiness of the selected example, argument, structure, demonstrated reading and research, and written expression.

Assignment Three:

a) Feature article

Length: 3000 words

Due: Friday, 1 June, 5pm

Worth: 40%

Task: Produce a feature story that is a competent piece of investigative journalism.

Your Assignment Three is a continuation of Assignment One and Assignment Two. You have to develop the investigative story from Assignment Two, a story published in one of the three Tasmanian dailies in the past (1995-2005), do some research and write a feature article that answers the question 'What happened afterwards?'

Your feature should be based on

- an investigation of documents in the public domain (archives, libraries, local offices)
- interviews with people who know something about your case study.

You are strongly encouraged to start preparing your Assignment Three from Week 1. There will be a class discussion about the projects each week.

Assessment criteria: research, breadth of investigation, structure, presentation and written expression.

b) Analysis of topics in media

Length: 1000- words

Due: Friday, 1 June, 5pm

Worth: 10%

Task: One of the requirements of this unit is to keep up with current events and get into the daily habit of reading newspapers. Each seminar will start with an in-class quiz "Have you been paying attention to the news?" from which an overview of the week in news will be made. You are required to participate in these exercises and by the end of the unit submit a short analysis of the topics that dominated the press from February to June 2007. Your analyses should focus on the presence and absence of investigative stories in the news.

Assignment criteria: Evidence of applying criteria for evaluating material provided in the class.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Submission of Assignments

Students are required to submit a signed cover sheet with every assignment. This includes a declaration that all material submitted is their own work except where there is clear acknowledgement or reference to the work of others and that they have read the University statement on Academic Misconduct (Plagiarism) on the University website at www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism or in the Student Information Handbook. Assignment cover sheets are available from the School office or the School website. **Assignments submitted without a signed cover sheet will not be marked.** Students who submit assignments without a signed cover sheet will be contacted once via their UTAS email address; in such instances the cover sheet must be completed within two weeks of the due date.

All assignments must be submitted in hard-copy (not by email) and placed in the essay box at the School office on or before 5pm on the due date. Students are required to keep copies of all submitted assignments. Assignments submitted on time will be returned within three weeks of the due date; once on time assignments have been returned no further late assignments will be accepted. All marked assignments will be returned in tutorials unless otherwise advised.

Late Assignments

Late submissions will be penalized as follows: 10% of the available marks per day for the first five (5) working days and 50% on the following day. Late work will be accepted without penalty if accompanied by a medical certificate for the relevant period or a letter from a counsellor in the case of a serious non-medical reason.

Difficulties with your Studies

If you are experiencing difficulties with your studies or assignments, have personal or life planning issues, disability or illness which may affect your course of study, you should raise these with your lecturer and/or one of the following Student Services staff as soon as possible:

- Learning Skills Adviser
- Disability Adviser
- Careers Adviser
- Student Counsellor

University Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

"Plagiarism is a form of cheating. It is taking and using someone else's thoughts, writings or inventions and representing them as your own; for example, using an author's words without putting them in quotation marks and citing the source, using an author's ideas without proper acknowledgment and citation, copying another student's work.

If you have any doubts about how to refer to the work of others in your assignments, please consult your lecturer or tutor for relevant referencing guidelines, and the academic integrity resources on the web at <http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/supporting/academicintegrity/index.html>.

The intentional copying of someone else's work as one's own is a serious offence punishable by penalties that may range from a fine or deduction/cancellation of marks and, in the most serious of cases, to exclusion from a unit, a course or the University. Details of penalties that can be imposed are available in the Ordinance of Student Discipline – Part 3 Academic Misconduct, see <http://www.utas.edu.au/universitycouncil/legislation/>."

The University and any persons authorised by the University may submit your assessable works to a plagiarism checking service, to obtain a report on possible instances of plagiarism. Assessable works may also be included in a reference database. It is a condition of this arrangement that the original author's permission is required before a work within the database can be viewed.

Assignment Presentation

The Journalism, Media and Communications discipline uses MLA Style, which is characterized by in-text referencing and a list of works cited. See the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 6th ed. Ed. Joseph Gibaldi (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003). For a brief introduction, please go to <http://www.utas.edu.au/journalism>. For journalistic writing, refer to the JMC Style Guide, also available at <http://www.utas.edu.au/journalism>.

Marking Scale

The following distribution of marks and grades is applied in assessing your work:

- High Distinction (HD)—80-100%
- Distinction (DN)—70-79%
- Credit (CR)—60-69%
- Pass (PP)—50-59%
- Fail (NN)—0-49%

All marks are subject to moderation.

IT Support

Learning online—for online learning and Vista support – <http://www.utas.edu.au/coursesonline/>
Information Technology Services—for general IT Support (includes link to UTAS download website)

<http://www.utas.edu.au/servicedesk/student/index.html>

Library Services—for information literacy support – <http://www.utas.edu.au/library/>
Help Desk (email HelpDesk@utas.edu.au or 6226 1818, within University 1818)