Course Title: Digital Communications I/Journalism One
CTE Pathway Sequence: Digital Communications - Arts, Media, and Entertainment Sector
School: Los Altos High School
UC/CSU requirement: yes/yes (g)
MVLA Graduation requirement: Practical Art
Textbook and/or other learning resources: 1:1 device. eSubscriptions to various daily publications will be provided, News Literacy Project checkology, and Adobe Creative Suite

Course Description/Student Learning Outcomes:

Journalism One introduces students to the core media literacy skills required to become critical consumers and active creators of the media that influences our collective understanding of the world. Key skills include:
- Reading and viewing both historically relevant and recently-published journalistic works, and engaging with the concepts of authorship, format, audience, content and purpose as the five pillars of media literacy.
- Creating your own text and non-text media, evaluating them according to the news literacy skills and against the standards set by professional journalists.
- Learning to conduct journalistic research.
- Understanding theoretical aspects of journalism like press law, data reporting.
- Viewing and producing non-print sources like podcasts and video packages.
- Improving and clarifying your journalistic writing style.

Course Outline/Units of Study/CTE Industry Standards(If applicable to your course):

UNIT ONE: READING THE NEWS

Objectives. Students will read journalism extensively, from varying time periods, styles and formats in order to:

- Understand the historical importance of journalism in our democracy.
- Understand the development of current events as they read a professional newspaper daily.
- Understand the five pillars of media literacy, and use them to evaluate and analyze sample text and non-text media.
- Reflect on their own consumption of media, and evaluate and analyze that consumption using the five pillars of media literacy.
- Analyze the structure of both hard and soft news.
- Study and report on a Pulitzer Prize winning package of news coverage.

CTE AME Standards

- Anchor Standard 1.0: Academics - Examine history, including pioneers, innovators, and icons from diverse genres, cultures, backgrounds, and experiences.
- Anchor Standard 5.0: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving - Analyze and interpret information received from various sources to assess bias and discern the credibility, quality and value of information collected online and credibility.
- Anchor Standard 11.0: Research and Media Literacy - Demonstrate media literacy through critical inquiry, analysis, and reflection.

UNIT TWO: WRITING JOURNALISTICALLY

Objectives. Students will read and write soft news features in order to:

- Understand the research required to brainstorm story pitches and to prepare for interviews.
- Learn to document their research by taking notes, pictures and audio/video recordings.

- Watch and listen to a variety of professional interviewers (i.e. Terry Gross), and develop the listening and speaking skills required to conduct interesting interviews.
- Determine an angle, marrying their research with the interests of their identified audience.
- Understand the importance of style guides, both as a way to maintain consistency across a publication and as a way to ensure that a newspaper's language reflects the politics of a changing world.
- Further their understanding of article structure.
- Learn to select key quotes.
- Act as editors for each other's work, and engage in a fact-checking process.

CTE AME Standards

- Anchor Standard 2.0: Communication - Speak extemporaneously and professionally when interviewing and/or presenting creative work.
- Anchor Standard 11.0: Research and Media Literacy - Gather information and develop perspective through research, interviews, observation, and experience.
- Interdisciplinary Standard 15.0: Media Content Creation - Clearly communicate a story using different industry-specific methods (i.e., outline, script, rundown, treatment, synopsis, etc.) prior to capturing or creating content.

UNIT THREE: VIDEO PRODUCTION

Objectives. Students will watch and create video and audio packages in order to:

- Understand the necessary components of both video and audio packages, such as B-roll, establishing shots, nat sound, etc.
- Learn about and engage in the drafting process for video packages, producing detailed scripts and storyboards.
- Begin to learn best practices for using Adobe Premiere, including how to problem solve issues and use online tutorials to teach themselves what they need to know.
- Critique one another's work in both draft and final form.

CTE AME Standards

- Anchor Standard 4.0: Technology - Use job-specific hardware/software for workflows and delivery of content to various platforms.
- Anchor Standard 5.0: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving - Explore different approaches to solving creative problems and evaluate what makes each approach effective.
- Anchor Standard 7.0: Leadership and Community Engagement - Provide, accept, and integrate constructive feedback at various stages of a project.
- Digital Communications 18.0: Process and Practice - Review, manipulate, and enhance digital content to tell a clear story, using industry software.

UNIT FOUR: REPORTING THE NEWS

Objectives. Students will read and write hard news pieces in order to:

- Develop the ability to determine newsworthiness and decide on an angle.
- Gain proficiency in the basic variety of research tools available to - and required of - reporters. This includes a discussion of internet research, interviews with primary and secondary sources and observation.
- Understand the importance of note-taking in a digital age, and refine their own note-taking strategies.
- Learn to properly quote sources and attribute those quotations.
- Understand how a real-world newsroom operates, including studies of beat systems, writer / editor relationships, and typical work flows.

CTE AME Standards

- Anchor Standard 4.0: Technology - Practice internet safety, identify malicious activity (i.e., phishing, malware, etc.), discern and avoid misinformation, and keep personal information private.
- Anchor Standard 11.0: Research and Media Literacy - Gather information and develop perspective through research, interviews, observation, and experience.
- Anchor Standard 14.0: Legal Responsibility - Appropriately cite proprietary information.

● Digital Communications 17.0: Skill Building - Select content based on community interests, audience preference and/or requests from the public.

UNIT FIVE: ADVANCED REPORTING TECHNIQUES

Objectives. At home, students will continue to read current journalism and produce work to be published through one of the school's existing publications. In class, they will master the following skills theoretically:

● Gain proficiency in a wider variety of research tools available to - and required of - reporters. This includes a discussion of open records laws and FOIA requests.
● Understand local governance, and study the hierarchical structures of our school district and of the towns it serves: Los Altos and Mountain View, CA.
● Learn to manage, clean and analyze data sets using Google sheets or Microsoft Excel.
● Learn to evaluate polling data, and how to write and conduct their own polls.

CTE AME Standards

● Anchor Standard 1.0: Academics - Build mathematical skills for application in industry-specific settings (i.e., applied geometry, linear algebra, matrix math operations, etc.)
● Anchor Standard 4.0: Technology - Use standard business software to create documents and presentations, share files and connect with collaborators and clients.
● Anchor Standard 12.0: Audience and Behavior - Examine the role of audience and market research in marketing and distribution of creative works.
● Anchor Standard 14.0: Legal Responsibility - Examine how copyright laws impact content creation, derivative works, performance, and publishing across various platforms.
● Digital Communications 18.0: Process and Practice - Apply techniques to record content for various platforms, including camera and/or microphone selection and placement.

UNIT SIX: LEGAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES/CAREER APPLICATIONS

Objectives. As students continue to read and produce current journalism for homework, in class through lectures and group activities they will:

● Understand the first amendment, CA. Ed. Code 48907, 48950 and relevant Supreme Court cases.
● Understand libel laws, and how careful reporting can prevent allegations of libel.
● Understand copyright law, and how careful use can prevent allegations of copyright violation.
● Understand journalistic ethics, and examine a variety of journalistic ethical codes and scenarios.

CTE AME Standards

● Anchor Standard 8.0: Ethics and Social Responsibility - Demonstrate personal integrity and ethical behavior in the workplace.
● Anchor Standard 14.0: Legal Responsibility - Examine how copyright laws impact content creation, derivative works, performance, and publishing across various platforms.
    ○ Adhere to terms of use, including copyright laws and regulations
● Digital Communications 19.0: Career Exploration:
    ○ Explore career pathways for content creators and editors in marketing, branding, and other commercial and web-based environments.

UNIT SEVEN: RADICAL WRITING

Objectives. As students continue to read and produce current journalism for homework, in class lectures and group activities will improve their own writing by teaching them to:

● Be concise, eliminating needless or repetitive words and phrases and avoiding the passive voice
● Be engaging, by thinking of their audience first and making choices in response to their needs
● Feature human interest stories, and apply those techniques to other types of reporting by refining their angles.
● Be descriptive, by learning to focus on sensory details when reporting

CTE AME Standards

- Anchor Standard 2.0: Communication - Demonstrate proficiency in various writing styles (i.e., reflective, narrative, informational, persuasive, and copywriting) and write industry-specific reports in a clear and concise manner.
- Anchor Standard 5.0: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving - Use reflection and feedback to iterate when solving problems and exploring ideas for creative development
- Anchor Standard 10.0: Creative Process - Use research, imagery, and creative inspiration to generate a mood board or concept document to develop ideas.
  - Solve industry-specific creative challenges, accept critique, and apply feedback to improve skills.
- Anchor Standard 12.0: Audience and Behavior - Study and engage with an intended audience by observing perspectives, environments, behaviors, and needs.
- Digital Communications 18.0: Process and Practice - Generate and/or integrate images, effects, graphics, captions, and/or animation into final content.

Assessment and Grading (BP 5121 / AR 5121**):** To ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning, the course instructors implement aligned grading practices and common assessments with the same frequency.

1. **Grading categories and their percentage weights:**

   Major Assignments   75%
   Reading the News   15%
   Weekly Classwork Assignments   10%

2. **Achievement evidence collected within each grading category:**
   Students will be informed of the aligned quantity, weight, and due dates of assignment/assessments in each grading category as much in advance as possible.

3. **Grading scales:**
A+	99-100	A	93-98	A-	90-92		
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82		
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72		
D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62	F	50-59

4. **Homework/outside of class practices (AR 6154):**
   Homework typically includes "reading the paper," which in the 21st Century requires you to immerse yourself in a wide variety of journalism, print and non-print, from various sources. Class time will be provided to work on major assignments, but most will require outside-of-class time for you to conduct interviews, attend events or do research.

5. **Excused absence make up practices (Education Code 48205(b)):**
   Attendance may affect a student's grade. Do not cut class. You cannot make up work missed for unexcused absences, including quizzes and presentations. If you have an excused absence, check with a reliable classmate for what you missed. It is your responsibility to find out about make up work. In general, you have one day to make up missed assignments, quizzes, tests, etc. for every day of excused absence, unless otherwise arranged with your teacher.

6. **Academic integrity violation practices (LAHS Academic Integrity Policy:**
   Honesty, trust and integrity are vital components of the education process. The Governing Board believes that academic honesty and personal integrity are fundamental components of a student's education and character development. The Board expects that students will not cheat, lie, plagiarize or commit other acts of academic dishonesty. Students and families should understand and act upon the values of academic integrity and should encourage the highest standards of academic behavior from themselves and their peers. It is expected that all work completed for a class is original work created for that class, for a specific assignment.

Students who commit a violation of academic or journalistic integrity may not be eligible to participate in the *Talon*.

Students are reminded that any use of AI (Chat GPT and others) without the specific permission of the instructor is a violation of the academic integrity policy.

7. **Late work practices:**
Late major assignments will be marked down 10%. Extensions are happily granted to all students who ask well in advance, or who can show significant progress toward completing an assignment.

8. **Revision practices:**
Students may revise any major assignment. Students must meet with the instructor prior to revising.

9. **Extra credit practices:**
No extra credit is available.

10. **Additional grading practices:** N/A

11. **LMS Used:** Google Classroom

Instructors' email address:

jodi.hwang@mvla.net

Additional information:
This class is taught by a Career Technical Education certified teacher in Arts, Media, and Entertainment.