

Journalism

Overview

American River College provides a strong introduction to both general studies and a journalism or mass communication major. You can begin with a course in news writing and reporting, and an introduction to the mass media. Both these courses are accepted by the California State University campuses which offer a bachelor's degree in journalism.

The campus newspaper, The Current offers valuable experience in writing, editing, photography, design and desktop publishing. Your portfolio can help you earn scholarships and internships--powerful assets to starting a career.

ARC also offers an associate in arts degree in journalism. This program is designed to prepare students for entry-level work in community journalism and for successful transfer to a university.

Roadmaps

Road maps lay out all of the courses you need to take for a given degree or certificate.

[Get a Road map! Explore Ways to Complete These Programs \(/academics/arc-program-road-maps\)](#)

Division Dean [Douglas Herndon \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/doug-herndon\)](#)
 Department Chair [Rachel Leibrock \(/arc-404-page\)](#)
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Associate Degrees for Transfer

A.A.-T. in Journalism and Mass Communications

The Associate in Arts in Journalism for Transfer provides students with a major that fulfills the general requirements of the California State University for transfer. Students with this degree will receive priority admission with junior status to the California State University system.

The Associate in Arts in Journalism for Transfer (A.A.-T.) may be obtained by the completion of 60 transferable, semester units with a minimum of a 2.0 GPA, including (a) the major or area of emphasis described in the Required Program outlined below (earning a C or better in these courses), and (b) either the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) or the California State University General Education Breadth Requirements.

Students interested in transferring to a CSU campus to pursue a bachelor's degree in Journalism should meet with a counselor to confirm the courses required for lower division preparation in the major.

Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

Degree Requirements

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
JOUR 300	Newswriting and Reporting	3
JOUR 310	Mass Media and Society	3
JOUR 410	College Media Production I	3
A minimum of 3 units from the following:		3
JOUR 301	Advanced Newswriting and Reporting (3)	
JOUR 351	Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques (3)	
JOUR 360	Photojournalism (3)	
JOUR 361	Multimedia Journalism (3)	
JOUR 411	College Media Production II (3)	
A minimum of 6 units from the following:		6
ARTPH 300	Basic Art Photography (3)	
ECON 304	Principles of Microeconomics (3)	
or ECON 302	Principles of Macroeconomics (3)	
ENGWR 482	Honors Advanced Composition and Critical Thinking (3)	
or ENGWR 302	Advanced Composition and Critical Thinking (3)	
JOUR 320	Race and Gender in the Media (3)	
JOUR 350	Writing for Broadcasting/Podcasting (3)	
POLS 301	Introduction to Government: United States (3)	
or POLS 481	Introduction to Government: United States - Honors (3)	
PSYC 330	Introductory Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences (3)	
SPEECH 311	Argumentation and Debate (3)	
SPEECH 361	The Communication Experience (3)	
STAT 300	Introduction to Probability and Statistics (4)	
or STAT 305	Statway, Part II (6)	
Total Units:		18

The Associate in Arts in Journalism and Mass Communications for Transfer (AA-T) degree may be obtained by completion of 60 transferable, semester units with a minimum 2.0 GPA, including (a) the major or area of emphasis described in the Required Program, and (b) either the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) or the California State University General Education-Breadth Requirements.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, the student will be able to:

- analyze content of newspapers, magazines, and online media.
- demonstrate an understanding of basic news, feature writing, and reporting in print and on-line media.
- critique his or her own journalistic work and the work of others.
- apply knowledge of grammar and AP style to create mass media products that conform to journalistic conventions.
- produce news and feature articles and/or news and feature photographs for publication in a newspaper or on-line publication.
- apply principles of audience and journalistic ethics to writing and photography, especially as the student's journalistic work relates to gender, ethnicities, and culture.
- demonstrate understanding of the fundamentals of mass media theories, concepts, and practices as they relate to gender, ethnicity, and cultural constructs.

Career Information

The Journalism AA-T degree prepares students for careers in print, broadcast, and online news media.

Associate Degrees

A.A. in Journalism and Mass Communication

This program offers comprehensive training for careers in journalism and communications. Students learn how to create journalistic content for a variety of media platforms, including print, broadcast and online. The program covers news writing and reporting, public relations writing and techniques, photojournalism, and multimedia journalism. It also offers instruction in design and production for both print and online media products.

Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

Degree Requirements

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
JOUR 300	Newswriting and Reporting	3
JOUR 310	Mass Media and Society	3
JOUR 320	Race and Gender in the Media	3
JOUR 351	Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques	3
JOUR 361	Multimedia Journalism	3
JOUR 404	Editing and Production	3
JOUR 410	College Media Production I	3
JOUR 411	College Media Production II	3
JOUR 412	College Media Production III	3
A minimum of 2 units from the following:		2
JOUR 420	College Media Production Lab I (0.5 - 3)	
JOUR 421	College Media Production Lab II (0.5 - 3)	
Total Units:		29

The Journalism and Mass Communication Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree may be obtained by completion of the required program, plus general education requirements, plus sufficient electives to meet a 60-unit total. See ARC graduation requirements.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, the student will be able to:

- write and edit news, features, editorials, and press releases that adhere to professional journalistic standards for a variety of outlets.
- conduct research and evaluate information using appropriate methods.
- analyze and evaluate media materials for credibility, fairness, accuracy, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- apply journalism ethics and law appropriate to professional practice.
- complete journalistic assignments on deadline.
- create multimedia to accompany text news and feature stories in a variety of formats.
- design, develop and lay out pages for different types of publications using a variety of software programs and applying visual design principles.
- identify and explain the processes, elements, history, theory, and effects of journalism and modern mass media in society.

Career Information

This program is designed to train students for entry-level positions as reporters, writers, editors, producers, photographers, designers, copy editors, and fact checkers for newspapers, magazines, broadcast outlets, websites and other media platforms. It also trains them for entry-level communications/public relations positions that include writing, editing, photography, and/or page layout and design duties. Some career options may require more than two years of college study. This program prepares journalism/mass communications students who plan to transfer to four-year institutions.

Journalism (JOUR) Courses

JOUR 299 Experimental Offering in Journalism

Units: 0.5 - 4
Prerequisite: None.
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

JOUR 300 Newswriting and Reporting

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.
Transferable:	CSU
General Education:	AA/AS Area II(b)
C-ID:	C-ID JOUR 110
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course covers evaluating, gathering, and writing news in accepted journalistic style for different types of media under newsroom conditions. Topics include personal interviews, along with coverage of speeches, meetings, and other events. In addition, the role of the reporter and the legal and ethical issues related to reporting are examined.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- apply the processes of news gathering.
- describe the traditional roles of journalists in society.
- analyze information related to observed events to determine its significance to particular audiences.
- demonstrate interpersonal communication skills by conducting informative interviews.
- compose text using grammar and style in accordance with Associated Press style (when using an AP Stylebook).
- compose a variety of news stories, including coverage of events and meetings, feature stories, and personality profiles.
- compose and revise a simple news story with a compelling lede, adequate sourcing and context, clear transitions, and a minimal number of technical writing errors.
- organize and write news stories in a timely manner for both print and website publications.
- discuss and apply broad libel, privacy, and ethical guidelines to common reporting situations.

JOUR 301 Advanced Newswriting and Reporting

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	JOUR 300 with a grade of "C" or better
Transferable:	CSU
C-ID:	C-ID JOUR 210
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course covers the development of advanced skills of reporting, interviewing, and writing in the range of work handled by a general assignment reporter. It emphasizes in-depth research, critical analysis, and story format. It also introduces feature and editorial writing.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- identify the major components of local and state government and describe their interrelationships.
- use public records as a newsgathering source.
- explain state and federal laws pertaining to information access.
- describe the essential processes of the judicial system.
- prepare and conduct interviews that produce substantive discussion.
- write news stories that explain complex process and/or relationships.
- write feature stories that explore personalities and explain conditions.
- utilize the Internet as a newsgathering source.
- collect and confirm information essential to substantive reporting.
- research and produce in-depth news and feature stories and news and feature packages that include sidebars, fact boxes, and statistical charts.

JOUR 310 Mass Media and Society

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(b); CSU Area D7; IGETC Area 4
C-ID:	C-ID JOUR 100
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

The course is a survey of the mass media. It covers the history, philosophy, structure, and trends of mass media, as well as the theories that help to explain its effects on social institutions. It includes an exploration of economics, technology, law, ethics, and social issues, including cultural and ethnic diversity.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- analyze the essential and structural processes of mass communication
- analyze theories that have been developed to understand the effects of mass communication on the behavior of individuals, groups, and on social change
- explain major terms and trends in media studies
- describe legal and ethical issues that affect the relationship of the media and society
- utilize his/her understanding of the history, economics, and structure of the media to analyze and appraise media products and current controversies
- explain how the media affect our culture, attitudes, and beliefs
- perform a simple content analysis of a media product
- describe the role, influence, and impact of new and emerging media formats and the practical, legal, and ethical issues associated with them

JOUR 320 Race and Gender in the Media

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(b); AA/AS Area VI; CSU Area D3; CSU Area D4; CSU Area D7; IGETC Area 4C
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course examines the roles of gender, ethnicity, and social class as represented and documented in the mass media. These issues are analyzed within the context of media content, development, policy, and ownership, including stereotypes and the role of alternative and community media. Critical thinking is emphasized through the review of mass media, focusing on the contributions of diverse groups to mass media and mass communication as an agent and documenter of social change.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- differentiate among the various approaches of media.
- describe the structure of print, broadcast, and digital media.
- identify media's role as documenter of history and perpetrator of mainstream culture.
- analyze key research and theory on attitudinal, behavioral, and social effects of mass media with emphases on literature that examines social groups and ethnic minorities.
- critically analyze the presentation of social groups and classes in various media.
- evaluate the bias and balance in each form of mass media.
- identify the role minority-owned and alternative media play in building communities and reaching audiences.
- discuss how minority groups can further social change using the education, enculturation, and social mobilization functions of the mass media.
- define how ethnocentrism, prejudice, and racism have shaped the American experience, media content, policy, ownership, and distribution.

JOUR 340 Writing for Publication

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligibility for ENGWR 300 or ESLW 340
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course introduces writing non-fiction for publication. Emphasis is on analyzing magazines; finding ideas; writing a query letter; developing a saleable magazine idea and article; researching and interviewing; as well as organizing, writing and marketing an article. Field trips may be required.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- propose, write, and edit saleable magazine articles.
- formulate and plan magazine article ideas and identify the most appropriate places to sell them.
- critically analyze and identify niche publications, readership, and demographics and propose freelance opportunities.
- plan story ideas and focus and target them to particular publications.
- collect research and successfully execute interviews.
- tailor a story for different markets and publications.
- apply First Amendment law and libel restrictions in professional practice.

JOUR 350 Writing for Broadcasting/Podcasting

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course introduces the theory and technique of writing for the broadcast media. It includes reporting for radio and television news, writing and storyboarding commercials and public service programming, and an introduction to production techniques. It is recommended for students as preparation for work in broadcasting, instructional media, and related fields.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- write, edit, and produce news and feature stories for television, radio, and web-based news sources.
- describe the basic structure of radio and television journalism.
- analyze audiences of electronic media.
- develop sources and conduct interviews for produced stories.

JOUR 351 Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.
Transferable:	CSU
C-ID:	C-ID JOUR 150

Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

This course is a study of public relations (PR), including planning PR campaigns, preparing client messages for newspapers, magazines, radio, broadcast and online outlets, and working with reporters to position stories. It examines public relations techniques in business, education, entertainment, social service, and other fields. It also covers crisis PR.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- evaluate and assess the role of the PR practitioner in PR firms, corporations, and public information offices.
- research, plan, design, and generate a public relations campaign.
- analyze the use of mass media for PR.
- generate researched and targeted media messages for clients.
- produce researched and targeted press releases, brochures, newsletters, and press kits.
- analyze and apply the legal and ethical limits of PR.

JOUR 360 Photojournalism

Units: 3
Hours: 36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite: None.
Transferable: CSU
C-ID: C-ID JOUR 160
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

This course is an introduction to the theory and technique of telling stories with pictures. The role of the photojournalist in the media, pertinent ethical and legal issues, and professional standards are emphasized. Topics include digital still camera operation, composition and lighting, digital image processing, news judgment, and accuracy. Also covered are environmental portraits, photo stories, and feature, sports, and breaking news photography.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- use digital still photography equipment
- explain terms and procedures typically used in photojournalism
- analyze ethical and legal issues pertinent to photojournalism
- explain the role of the photojournalist in the media
- capture, process, and caption digital still images
- select images appropriate for use with specific stories
- assemble a portfolio of digital still images that can be used to obtain career advancement in the professional world

JOUR 361 Multimedia Journalism

Units: 3
Hours: 36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite: JOUR 360 with a grade of "C" or better
Transferable: CSU
C-ID: C-ID JOUR 120
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

This course is an introduction to the theory and technique of combining still images, audio, and video to create multimedia photojournalism content for distribution via the Internet. It provides practical experience in capturing and editing still images, audio, and video with software such as Adobe Photoshop, Audacity, Soundslides Pro, and Apple's iMovie and Final Cut Pro. A digital, still or video camera is required.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- use digital still photography, audio, and video equipment to create a multimedia project
- edit a multimedia project using digital still photography, audio, and video software
- explain terms and procedures typically used in multimedia production
- explain multimedia editing principles
- select images, audio, and video content appropriate for use with specific stories
- assemble a 3-minute multimedia project that can be used to obtain career advancement in the professional world

JOUR 404 Editing and Production

Units: 3
Hours: 54 hours LEC
Prerequisite: None.
Advisory: JOUR 300
Transferable: CSU
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

This course provides instruction and practice in editing and design, including page makeup, copy editing, photo editing, legal/ethical issues and production methods for newspapers, magazines, and other publications. It also includes preparing, planning, and organizing publications.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- describe editing and production processes
- design and lay out a variety of publications

- demonstrate and coordinate the elements contained in each type of publication
- convey design principles
- compare and contrast techniques in photo editing
- assess the target audience
- develop a design to convey the correct message
- evaluate publications for their efficacy, strengths, and weaknesses
- analyze the legal and ethical issues journalists, photographers, and designers experience

JOUR 410 College Media Production I

Units:	3
Hours:	36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	JOUR 300 with a grade of "C" or better
Transferable:	CSU
C-ID:	C-ID JOUR 130
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course offers hands-on experience in reporting, writing, photography, layout, and online production skills. This course provides preparation for transfer work in journalism or entry-level jobs in the field.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- produce beginner-level work suitable for publication in print and/or online.
- apply the basic principles of news judgment to assignments.
- explain the role of the student press as a member of the campus community.
- utilize production processes while working under deadline pressure in the college newsroom.
- apply the principles of the First Amendment and other laws appropriate to professional practice.
- apply basic ethical principles in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- evaluate work for accuracy, fairness, appropriate style, and grammatical correctness.
- develop an electronic portfolio of at least 10 writing, design, photo, or multimedia stories published in the student publications.
- write and report stories that are free of libel.
- publish photos that take into account copyright regulations.

JOUR 411 College Media Production II

Units:	3
Hours:	36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	JOUR 410 with a grade of "C" or better
Transferable:	CSU
C-ID:	C-ID JOUR 131
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course builds on experience gained in JOUR 410. It focuses on intermediate writing and production skills, using the school newspaper The American River Current and its online companion www.arcurent.com, as a practical laboratory. The course provides the opportunity to work in at least two of the following areas: researching, writing, and editing articles for the two publications; taking photographs and creating graphic illustrations; developing multimedia stories; or designing pages. Ethical and legal aspects of communication are also covered.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- produce intermediate work suitable for publication in print and/or online.
- apply basic and advanced principles of news judgment to assignments.
- utilize the production processes while working under deadline pressure in the college newsroom.
- apply the principles of the First Amendment and other laws appropriate to professional practice.
- develop an intermediate electronic portfolio of 14 assignments that includes work in at least two of these areas: writing, editing, design, photo, or multimedia assignments published in student publications.
- write and report and/or edit stories that are free of libel.
- publish photos that take into account copyright regulations.
- apply basic and advanced ethical principles in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.

JOUR 412 College Media Production III

Units:	3
Hours:	36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	JOUR 411 with a grade of "C" or better
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course builds on the experience gained in JOUR 411. It focuses on advanced intermediate writing and production skills, using the school newspaper The American River Current and its online companion www.arcurent.com, as a practical laboratory. The course provides the opportunity to work in at least three of the following areas: researching, writing, and editing articles for the two publications; taking photographs and creating graphic illustrations; developing multimedia stories; or designing pages. Ethical and legal aspects of communication are also covered.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- produce advanced intermediate work suitable for publication in print and/or online.
- evaluate the work of others for accuracy, fairness, appropriate style, grammatical correctness, and news judgment.
- plan and execute a production process while working under deadline pressure in the college newsroom.

- apply the principles of the First Amendment and other laws appropriate to professional practice.
- adhere to ethical principles and adhere to professional standards while pursuing assignments and editing the works of others.
- develop an advanced intermediate electronic portfolio of 18 assignments that includes work in at least two of these areas: writing, editing, design, photo, or multimedia assignments published in student publications.
- write, report, and/or edit stories that are free of libel.
- publish photos with respect to copyright regulations.
- play a basic role in the management of the newsroom.

JOUR 413 College Media Production IV

Units:	3
Hours:	36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	JOUR 412 with a grade of "C" or better
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course builds on the experience gained in JOUR 412. It focuses on advanced writing and production skills, using the school newspaper The American River Current and its online companion www.arcurrent.com, as a practical laboratory. It provides the opportunity to produce work in each of the following areas: researching, writing, and editing advanced and in-depth articles for the two publications; taking photographs and creating graphic illustrations; developing multimedia stories; and designing pages. Ethical and legal aspects of communication and media leadership/management are also covered and students are expected to serve in leadership roles.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- produce advanced intermediate work suitable for publication in print and/or online.
- evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy, fairness, appropriate style, grammatical correctness, and news judgment.
- plan and execute a production process while working under deadline pressure in the college newsroom.
- develop an advanced intermediate electronic portfolio of 18 assignments that includes work in at least three of these areas: writing, editing, design, photo, or multimedia assignments published in student publications.
- play an active role in leadership of the news organization, including making decisions based on the professional and ethical standards of journalism.
- manage a newsroom.
- mentor new journalists.

JOUR 420 College Media Production Lab I

Units:	0.5 - 3
Hours:	27 - 162 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	None.
Corequisite:	JOUR 404 or 410
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This lab course provides inexperienced journalism students with hands-on instruction in writing, editing, photography, design and computer-based publication. This includes one-on-one and small-group instruction in publication software, such as Adobe Creative Suite programs, and Web content management systems.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- apply journalistic principles to hands-on assignments.
- report and write stories for publication using multiple sources.
- assess and apply the basic skills of layout and design.
- take and prepare photographs for publication for print and online.
- write basic headlines for print and online editions.
- develop a basic digital portfolio of up to ten writing, photo, editing, and/or design pieces published in student publications.

JOUR 421 College Media Production Lab II

Units:	0.5 - 3
Hours:	27 - 162 hours LAB
Prerequisite:	JOUR 420 with a grade of "C" or better
Corequisite:	JOUR 404 or 411
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This lab course provides experienced journalism students with hands-on instruction in writing, editing, photography, design and computer-based publication, as well as instruction in newsroom management and leadership. This includes advanced lessons in publication software, such as Adobe Creative Suite programs, and Web content management systems.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- apply intermediate journalistic principles to hands-on assignments.
- report and write in-depth or enterprise stories for publication using multiple sources.
- apply the intermediate skills of layout and design.
- take and prepare photographs and photo essays for publication for print and online.
- write advanced/complex headlines for print publications.
- write online headlines under search engine optimization guidelines.
- develop an intermediate digital portfolio of up to ten writing, photo, editing, and/or design pieces published in student publications.

JOUR 495 Independent Studies in Journalism

Units: 1 - 3
Hours: 54 - 162 hours LAB
Prerequisite: None.
Transferable: CSU
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

Independent Study is an opportunity for the student to extend classroom experience in journalism, while working independently of a formal classroom situation. Independent study is an extension of work offered in a specific class in the college catalog. To be eligible for independent study, students must have completed the basic regular catalog course at American River College. They must also discuss the study with a professor in journalism and secure approval. Only one independent study for each catalog course will be allowed.

JOUR 499 Experimental Offering in Journalism

Units: 0.5 - 4
Prerequisite: None.
Transferable: CSU
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

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The American River Current

The Current is a student-run newspaper produced by the students of Journalism 410, 411, 412 and 413 at American River College in Sacramento, California.

THE AMERICAN RIVER CURRENT ► ([HTTP://WWW.ARCURRENT.COM/](http://www.arc.current.com/))