



# CASCIA HALL

*A Catholic, Augustinian School*

## **Journalism: Fundamentals**

Cascia Hall Fall 2011

Teacher: Mr. Michael J. Loeffler  
Room: 203  
Voicemail: 746-2600 x2431

Website: <http://teacherweb.com/OK/CasciaHall/MichaelLoeffler>  
Email: [mloeffler@casciahall.org](mailto:mloeffler@casciahall.org) Email is my preferred method of communication, and I do check it from home in the evening and over weekends.

### Course Description

In this course, we will study the profession of journalism and learn to report in modern journalistic styles and with modern journalistic techniques. While an emphasis will be placed on print and online journalism, including layout and design, other media outlets (online, broadcast, etc.) will also be discussed. We will then apply these skills to the production of the student newspaper, the Cascian, and its website.

### Classroom Expectations

I hope that our class will quickly become a learning community, and as such I expect a high level of maturity from my students. Specific rules will be posted and/or discussed, but some of my basic expectations include being seated and ready to begin class when the bell rings, treating your classmates and me with courtesy and respect at all times, and following the school's academic integrity policy.

This last item is particularly important. As this policy indicates, any instance of cheating or intentional plagiarism will result, **at a minimum**, in receiving a zero for that quiz, exam, or assignment. Plagiarism might also preclude you from having future work published in the Cascian or on its website, which in turn might negatively impact your grade in the course. Please ask if you have any questions about academic integrity.

Journalism students are also be required to practice the various professional codes of journalism ethics that we will discuss in class. Violations of these codes will be treated in the same manner as academic integrity violations.

### Texts and Required Materials

textbook: Harrower, Tim. *Inside Reporting*. 2nd ed.  
supplies: reporter's notebooks (4" x 8")  
one three-ring binder for class notes, handouts, and returned assignments  
tab dividers for this binder  
filler/loose leaf paper for this binder (college ruled, 8½" x 11")  
standard blue or black pens

The textbook, *Inside Reporting*, is provided by and remains the property of the school, and you will be required to purchase it at the end of the semester if you return it damaged or if you do not return it at all. According to the school's policy, "Students should not draw or write in the numbered textbooks or on the paper edges of numbered textbooks." If you lose the textbook during the semester, you will be required to purchase replacements from the Cascia bookstore. Please contact Mrs. Amy Lambert ([alambert@casciahall.org](mailto:alambert@casciahall.org)) with any questions about school-provided texts.

Finally, you will need reliable access to a computer with Microsoft Word, a printer, and an internet connection. These are readily available in the school's computer lab and library. Computer problems will **not** excuse assignments turned in late. I will use my TeacherWeb site (see above) and your Cascia email address to make announcements and post documents. You **must** use your Cascia email account to send email to me. I will **only** reply to emails from students that are sent via the Cascia email system ([www.casciahall.org](http://www.casciahall.org) → Students & Families → E-Mail Access). Your grades are available online via Net Classroom ([www.casciahall.org](http://www.casciahall.org) → Students & Families → Net Classroom). We will discuss all of these valuable resources in class, but know that you are responsible for your own passwords to these systems. Password

problems encountered at home will **not** excuse assignments turned in late and will **not** constitute an exception to my email policy noted above.

### Quizzes and Exams

Classes may begin with a short, objective quiz covering the previous day's class or the reading due that day. Quizzes may be announced or unannounced. Exams may be given periodically. We will review the format and content of each exam at least several days in advance. English exams are regularly scheduled for Mondays.

### Late Work and Absences

Unless noted otherwise, assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date listed in each quarter's schedule (available on my TeacherWeb). An important part of learning the profession of journalism is learning the vital importance of timeliness. As such, **assignments submitted after the due date are still required but will receive a grade of zero.**

If you will have a **pre-arranged absence** (sporting events, scheduled appointments, vacations, etc.), you must submit any work that will be due during your absence on time or in advance, and you must be prepared to take any missed quizzes or exams on the day you return to school. Absences due to illness and other unforeseen circumstances will generally warrant one extra day per day of absence to submit missed work and make up missed quizzes and exams.

Per school policy, make-up quizzes will be scheduled at the teacher's discretion. Options include making these up in class, during the activities period, during a student's study hall, immediately after school, or before school at 7:00 a.m. To avoid unauthorized sharing of information, any quizzes or exams you miss may be different in format and/or content from the ones your classmates took.

### Assignments and Grades

This course uses the school's standard grading scale, and your grade in the course will be calculated on a total-points basis. The semester grade is calculated on a running total of all points earned in both quarters.

Each quarter's schedule will typically list the readings and assignments that are **due** each day, **not** homework to be completed that night. You may have some class time in the computer lab to work on assignments, and you must spend this time working on the current assignment—not on any other work. It is your responsibility to spend whatever extra time is necessary to finish.

Writing that is complete and follows directions earns a C. Writing that is complete, follows directions, and is of above-average quality earns a B. Writing that is complete, follows directions, and is of outstanding quality earns an A. Writing that is not complete or does not follow directions earns a D. Work that is not complete and does not follow directions receives an F. In other words, writing does **not** start at 100% and get "marked down." Instead, you work up to a B or an A by doing particularly good work.

### Use of Equipment

Some assignments will require the use of a digital still camera, digital video camera, or other equipment. You will check out this equipment from me personally, will check in this equipment to me personally, and will be personally responsible for it in the meantime. To be permitted to check out such equipment, you, along with a parent or guardian, will have to sign a statement of understanding regarding the rules of usage. This agreement will be discussed and distributed in class as a supplement to this syllabus.

### Accommodations

Students who are eligible for accommodations according to the Counseling Department must initiate contact with each of their teachers. If you might need accommodations in this class, please discuss this possibility with me as soon as possible. Accommodations for a particular assignment must be arranged in advance—**not** the day an essay is due or an exam is taken—and exams and quizzes may not be retaken unless this option is offered to all students.