Module: **Reporting and Editing (BAJH-RE)**
Allocation of Marks: **60% Continual Assessment**
40% Final Examination

Intended Module Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of this module, the learner will be able to:

1. Conceive, research, write and self-edit news reports and feature articles of an acceptable quality, with interviews.
2. Apply a practical grasp and critical awareness of 'news values'.
3. Successfully pitch stories to editors as a staffer or freelancer.
4. Demonstrate the ability to critically analyse the impact of digital technologies on the news media industry, concomitant trends and likely future developments as they relate to financially viable media products, graduate employment prospects, and the maintenance of democratic societies.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of clear, concise expression, using appropriate words with correct grammar and punctuation.
6. Demonstrate the ability to structure different types of stories as well as apply the use of good intros and accurate, impartial headlines.

Module Objectives

To enable learners to attain the practical skills required to initiate, plan, research, write and edit quality news reports and feature articles for specific audiences. To equip learners with a practical and theoretical understanding of interview skills, pitching stories, freelancing, 'news values' and spot news, such as the reporting of demonstrations. Further objectives include giving learners an understanding of the various aspects of editing and sub-editing for different types of journalistic writing. Additionally, to facilitate learners' grasping a theoretical analysis of the impact of the adoption of digital technologies on news reporting and feature writing and its current and likely future implications for their employment prospects and for democratic societies.

Module Curriculum

Indicative Syllabus

Good Writing is Good Thinking
Thinking & Planning News Reports & Feature Articles: Sources, features versus reports, finding the focus, target markets, follow-ups, clustering, outlines, trend stories. Features: Thinking visually, painting pictures with words; personal columns; reviews; profiles. Freelancing, pitching, and interview skills.

What is good English?
Clear, concise expression: avoiding packed sentences; using active verbs as far as possible; be aware of sentence type and variation to avid monotony.

Working with words
Short vs. long; simple vs. complex; concrete vs. abstract; prefixes and suffixes; using mainly nouns and verbs; care with adjectives and modifiers; care with prepositions. Lists

of wasteful use of words, redundant words and phrases, and clichés provided. Correct paragraphs and sentence length; using quotes and style sheets.

News intros
Importance of good intros; getting length and chronology right; avoiding source obsession, remembering relevance of readership; avoiding overloading. Three aids to good intros; special intro problems (quotes, tenses, wordiness, blending details or ideas, questions, abbreviations).

Structure of news stories
Action stories: most dramatic incident and human result; chronological development; background and assessment where appropriate. Statement-opinion stories: no set formula; only guidelines; news lead –
3 to 4 pars; substantiating news lead; not running ahead of reader's knowledge; reporting impartially.

 Writing Headlines
Accuracy, intelligibility, impartiality and vigour; purpose is to distil news. Guidelines: strong, active verbs; present or future tense; active rather than passive voice; looking for specifics; using locations; being positive as far as possible; giving single thoughts). Label, freestyle, sports and business headlines. Avoiding headlinese: the "seven deadly sins".

Reporting On Protests and Demonstrations
Studying the empirical evidence from academic journal articles as to why much media reportage of protests and demonstrations poorly reflects the actually event.

Usefulness and Limitations of News Values
Thinking Critically About Why Some Events Become News & Other Events Do Not: What is a 'news value'?, examples, using them for successful career; their limitations.

Citizen Journalism & The Public Sphere
Thinking Critically About Technology: applying the Habermassian concept of the public sphere to online journalism; is citizen journalism an opportunity or threat?

Convergence Journalism
Who Should Pay The Journalist In Democratic Societies?: new challenges, new business models and state assistance models.