

**Murrieta Valley Unified School District**  
**High School Course Outline**  
**April 2011**

**Department:** Visual and Performing Arts

**Course Title:** Newspaper Production

**Course Number:** 1865

**Grade Level:** 10-12

**Length of Course:** Year

**Prerequisite:** Grade of B or better in previous English class, teacher recommendation, application and interview, acceptance into class.

**Course Description:** This course meets district graduation requirements for Visual and Performing Arts or 1 year of elective credit. The newspaper is a laboratory for journalism students designed to serve the total school community. As a laboratory, the newspaper provides staff members with independent writing opportunities with individual evaluation. Writing is based on a wide variety of research for a broad and often critical audience. The experience demands responsibility and cooperation. Business skills are learned through the selling of advertising and sponsorships, and the process of remaining financially solvent. The outcome of this laboratory is the production of the MVHS/VMHS newspaper, The Talon/The Vista View. Students are directly involved in this process by writing stories, taking photos, generating assignments, providing editorial feedback, assisting in page layout, and selling advertisement and sponsorships. Responsible and accurate journalism is stressed. Class size is limited. This course may be repeated for credit in additional years.

**I. Goals**

The student will:

- A. Work cooperatively and collaboratively in developing a newspaper that represents the school community.
- B. Identify the steps necessary to produce a newspaper, including planning, reporting, writing, designing and producing camera ready pages.
- C. Understand, practice and learn skills necessary to finance the newspaper.
  1. Students will work in teams covering a pre-determined advertising territory and will sell advertising to local merchants.

2. Students will be issued an “ad kit” that contains advertising information, contracts and other materials necessary for working with the public in ad sales.
  3. Students may gain experience at creating advertising to specs provided by merchants, and follow-through required for placement of ad.
- D. Understand, practice and learn the skills necessary to cover the school’s activities, events, issues and individuals.
1. Demonstrate mastery of understanding of feature writing, news writing, editorial and commentary through practice assignments and examination of local and national print media.
  2. Demonstrate understanding of how stories may be handled most effectively, through a news, feature or opinion angle based on the inverted pyramid journalistic style.
  3. Demonstrate mastery of interview techniques through planning, practice, setting of appointments and follow-through, recording and transcription.
- E. Discover the effectiveness of a beat system in covering the school community.
- F. Understand, practice and learn the skills necessary to report and write for the newspaper.
1. Students will learn Associated Press writing style.
- G. Understand, practice and learn the skills necessary to write headlines and photograph captions (cutlines).
- H. Understand, practice and learn the skills necessary to plan and take newspaper photographs.
1. Students will be given an inservice on photojournalism, use of the camera, lighting techniques, angles, composition and bracketing to best achieve quality photos.
- I. Understand, practice and learn the skills necessary to design and lay out the newspaper.
1. Students will learn the Adobe InDesign software program, along with other programs within the Adobe Suite.
- J. Understand, practice and learn the skills necessary to prepare the newspaper for the printer.

- K. Understand, practice and learn the skills necessary to work with a student editorial board.
  - 1. Student editors will work closely with adviser to plan the newspaper, discuss editorial issues, plan layout and design and will critique each issue. Editors will also continue to develop leadership techniques and qualities through their work on the newspaper.
- L. Understand, practice and learn the time management skills necessary to work under a deadline system.
- M. Learn the publications style manual, and copy reading symbols.
- N. Learn and adhere to the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics.

## **II. Accountability Determinants**

- A. Participation in the production process through beat reports, stories written, advertising participation, and extra-curricular time devoted to finishing assigned tasks by deadline.
- B. "String book" portfolios for each issue published. Journalistic quality will be assessed as well as participation.

## **III. Required Text**

- A. *The Radical Write* by Bobby Hawthorne will be used for this course along with supplemental texts. In addition, all students will be given a staff manual containing information on style, proofreading, different types of writing, interview questioning techniques, ethics, publications policies, editorial position descriptions, etc. Students are required to know the material in the staff manual.