

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER: 2007/2008

TITLE OF PAPER: NEWS REPORTING

COURSE CODE: JMC 211

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Answer **four (4)** questions.
2. Question 1 is **compulsory**.
3. Write **legibly**, that is, **boldly** and **clearly**.
4. Evince the principles of **composition** and **grammar**.
5. **Distribute** your TIME appropriately, given the marks allocated to the questions.

THIS PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN  
GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

## JMC 211: NEWS REPORTING

1. Answer A or B. (30 marks)
  - A. News stories have several aspects which the news writer must understand in order to write a news story well. And to write a particular news story, the news writer must discern the facts that have been gathered about a given event very well.
    - (i) **Explain** the aspects of a news story. (10 marks)
    - (ii) **Peruse** Attachment 1 and **write** a news story of 50 - 60 words based on it. (10 marks)
    - (iii) Each of the following two sentences, which are extracts from news stories in Swazi newspapers, has at least one error. **Identify** the error(s) in EITHER of the sentences by its/their technical term; then, **rewrite** the sentence, correcting it and making it stronger or tighter. That is to say, deal with I OR II only. (10 marks)
      - I. "In what amounts for a piece of history, all top three finalists are Dlamini, which has never happened in the history of the national pageant."
      - II. "That the Police Commissioner or the Prime Minister have not denied the killing of Ngozo, should send a loud gun shot warning to all the armed and dangerous criminals out there that the police will fight fire with fire."
  - B: "Reporting involves only three basic means of gathering information about certain objects, but various techniques are associated with the three means."
    - (i) **Identify and describe** the "three basic means" involved in reporting. (5 marks)
    - (ii) **State** the principal phenomena that constitute the focal objects of reporting, the things that are captured/recorded with these means. (5 marks)
2. Based on different criteria, leads can be classified in various ways. **Identify** three kinds of lead; then, using the information in Attachment 1, **write** the three kinds of lead that you have identified. (10 marks)
3. **Explain** the *news process* and **comment** on the special relationship between *writing* and *reporting* the news. (10 marks)
4. To do their work well, reporters must have certain characteristics/qualities. **List** six qualities of reporters; then, **explain** each quality with regard to the nature of the work reporters do. (10 marks)

5. For every type of event that reporters cover, there are **specific elements of interest** to which they must pay attention, because such elements constitute the substance of the news stories that would ultimately be written. **List** the specific elements of interest in the following events: **(10 marks)**

- (iii) Speeches
- (iv) Accidents
- (v) Football matches

6. **Write** short notes on two of the following: **(10 marks)**

- (vi) Ethics of reporting
- (vii) The Reporter and the Law
- (viii) Sources and channels of information
- (ix) The Reportorial Kindred of **FID**
- (x) Hazards of reporting

## ATTACHMENT 1: Fact Sheet

1. After introducing the topic of his lecture, Professor Simelane pointed out that: “Contrary to popular belief, journalism is not an all-comers occupation. It is indeed a noble profession that seeks and defends the public interest by holding Government accountable to the people. And as a profession, its practitioners must be adequately equipped
- .2. The guest lecture lasted for 45 minutes and it was quite wide-ranging, covering a brief history the history of journalism in Swaziland, the issue of press in the country, the cultural constraints on the news media, the professional orientation of news media editors and administrators, and the peculiarities of the contents of Swazi newspapers and news broadcasts, with particular regards to adherence to professional and ethical standards.
- .3. Many journalists from all ranks of the profession were among the audience: reporters, columnists, news analysts, and editors, as well news media executives
4. The University of Swaziland’s auditorium was filled to capacity. It was a day the UNISWA Journalism Students’ Association (UJSA), especially, its executive, has been looking forward to. What’s more, the Vice-Chancellor has been kind enough to also grace the occasion. It was 6: 50 p.m., and he was already in the auditorium. The event was scheduled to start at 7:00 p.m.
5. In his welcome address, the President of UJSA, Bongani Mfofo, thanked the Vice Chancellor and the guest speaker for accepting the association’s invitation. “” As potential practitioners of journalism in the country,” he declared, “we have a stake in the profession. Our careers depend on what happens to the various news organisations in the country and mind-set of those who are already in the profession. We therefore see the problems of the profession as our own. And we believe that these problems need to be identified and exposed for the public to appreciate them. That is why we have found it proper to devote the inaugural lecture of our association to the subject, and to ask a distinguished scholar to address it. We believe that he will enlighten us and make all practitioners of journalism in the country rise to the challenges facing the profession.”
6. Professor Simelane finally deposed: “Our country Swaziland needs journalists whose education and training makes them professionals in every sense of the word. Given the state of journalism in our country, today, I cannot beat my chest and declare that we have the right stuff. But I can say that if we face the challenge of producing competent journalists, squarely, we can have the right stuff in the very near future. And I do believe that the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Swaziland, can be a pillar in the process, with you, the students, as the fruits of that process.”
7. The occasion was the first annual lecture of the USA. This inaugural lecture was titled, “The Challenge of Professionalising Journalism in Swaziland.” The guest lecturer is the Chairman of the Swaziland Press Council, Professor Bhekie Simelane. Simelane is a retired professor of journalism who has taught in the United States and South Africa, before he came back home to the University of Swaziland, where he ended his university career in 2005.