**Curriculum**

**Journalism**

**Course Overview**

This course is designed as an introduction to the field of Journalism and to the process of creating a school newspaper. Class topics will focus on critical thinking about journalism and about the purpose and responsibilities of the press, the various components of a newspaper, and how a newspaper is put together. Moving from the theoretical to the hands-on, students will create the TASIS Upper School newspaper, The Voice. In doing so, they will obtain experience in writing stories, interviewing subjects, taking photographs, designing and laying out the newspaper, and distributing the paper to their peers, faculty, and administration. The Voice will print at least at least once per quarter. *Revised 28/9/2015*

**Department Standards**

Students will:  
develop critical thinking skills that will encourage them to make connections between literature and both their own lives and other academic disciplines;  
develop an appreciation for literature through the comprehension and analysis of various genres;  
communicate their understanding and ideas effectively in a variety of written forms;  
articulate organized ideas through a variety of oral activities;  
expand and strengthen their vocabularies to enhance their ability to understand and communicate;  
and learn and apply the standard conventions of the English language in both speaking and writing.

**Benchmarks**:

Introduction to Journalism is a two-Quarter course, meeting first in Quarters 1 and 2 and then in Quarters 3 and 4. The major benchmark for each Quarter is the publication of The Voice, the Upper School newspaper that the class produces.

**Performance Indicators**

Introduction to the field of Journalism: Students will understand the role of journalism in informing the public and the role of a high school newspaper.

Research skills: Students will learn how to find information for their articles and how to distinguish good sources, and students will apply this knowledge to research for their own articles. (Technology Standard 3)

Ethics, standards, and plagiarism: Students will think critically about journalistic standards and ethics, and students will properly cite all references and sources in their articles.

Types of newspaper articles: Students will learn the different kinds of newspaper articles and use this knowledge to choose what type they will write. Students will synthesize their knowledge with the practical application of writing articles.

Writing skills: Students will learn and practice effective writing skills and conventions of grammar, including prepositions, relative pronouns, pronoun agreement, pronoun case, adjective vs. adverbs, consistent tenses, coordinating conjunctions, noun-number agreement, subject-verb agreement, action verbs/weak verbs, and comma splices.

Interview skills: Students will learn and practice interview skills, and students will participate in mock interviews so they may gather the necessary information for their articles.

Newspaper layout and design: Using their knowledge of design principles, students will layout their newspaper pages. (Technology Standard 1)

Editorial writing: Students will learn the different kinds of editorials and evaluate examples from current newspapers. Students will apply this knowledge to the writing of at least one editorial as part of an in-class editorial board.

Production of an Upper School newspaper: Students will produce at least one issue of The Voice in each quarter. (Technology Standard 2)

Sports writing: Students will learn how to write a compelling sports article, and they will evaluate examples from current newspapers.

Entertainment writing: Students will apply what they learn in this section by writing a movie review.

Photo Composition: Students will learn about the elements of photo composition, and they will produce at least one original photograph for each issue of The Voice.

*Revised 24/11/2015*

**Assessments**

Students are assessed on completion of the following: At least two articles for The Voice, original photographs and/or artwork for The Voice, layout and design of one’s newspaper pages, two additional assignments per quarter, demonstration of reading assignments, attendance and punctuality. Additionally, students receive an effort mark based upon their engagement in the class.

*Revised 28/9/2015.*

**Core Topics**

Introduction to journalism; effective research; ethics, standards, and plagiarism; types of newspaper articles; writing skills; conducting effective interviews; layout & design; editorial writing; and production of The Voice.

Sports writing; entertainment writing; photo composition; and production of The Voice.

*Revised 28/9/2015*

**Specific Content**

Introduction to the field of Journalism: Examination of the different kinds of journalism and news sources; relevance of printed news; student’ experience with journalism.

Research skills: How one goes about researching a newspaper article; primary and secondary sources; how to determine what makes for a quality source.

Ethics, standards, and plagiarism: What readers can rightly expect of journalists; proper citation of sources.

Types of newspaper articles: Elements of hard news and soft news articles; review and critique of hard news and feature stories; skills for writing both hard news and features.

Writing skills: How to write effectively for a newspaper, including using active voice, vivid and descriptive language, presenting a balanced perspective, proper introduction and citation of sources, conciseness. This section includes an examination of the types and design of headlines.

Interview skills: How to conduct an effective interview; preparation before the interview; interaction with the interview subject; follow-up; and using interview data to write the article.

Newspaper layout and design: Using Adobe InDesign software, the layout and design of visually appealing newspaper pages that include the headline, byline, article, blurbs, and photographs and/or artwork.

Editorial writing: The different types of editorials, elements of each, and the development of at least one editorial.

Production of an Upper School newspaper: Throughout the course, the start-to-finish process of creating a school newspaper, including brainstorming article ideas, choosing the most relevant, interesting, and timely articles, researching, writing and editing, designing and laying out pages, and distributing the newspaper to the TASIS community.

Sports writing: The elements one must take into account when writing a sports piece, including going beyond the mere reporting of scores to find the story behind the game. Included in this section is a review of headline writing as it relates to sports articles.

Entertainment writing: How to write a movie review that captures the reader’s attention, provides a summary without giving away too much, and expresses the writer’s opinion about the quality of the film.

Photo Composition: The effective use of photographs to tell the story and to complement the written word.

Production of an Upper School newspaper: Throughout the course, the start-to-finish process of creating a school newspaper, including brainstorming article ideas, choosing the most relevant, interesting, and timely articles, researching, writing and editing, designing and laying out pages, and distributing the newspaper to the TASIS community. *Revised 28/9/2015*

**Resources**

The course textbook, Scholastic Journalism, as well as daily international

newspapers such as The Independent and The New York Times.