

# **Columbia Scholastic Press Association**

## **Summer Journalism Workshop 2008**

### **Newspaper Reporting & Writing (section 2)**

Students often do not read high school newspapers because the newspapers are not written to be read. They're written to satisfy an out-dated formula, to satisfy the writer's ego or, even worse, to simply fill up space. The purpose of sequence is to help reporters produce timely, substantive, descriptive stories that tell readers something they don't already know, something they can't find any place other than the high school publication.

This course is designed to hone advanced reporting, writing and editing skills. Topics covered include interviewing; reporting, news writing, feature writing, opinion writing, proofing and editing. Considerable attention will be paid to use of literary devices such as anecdote, dialogue, simile, minor sentence and alliteration. Story packages will also be examined.

Again, the aim of this sequence is to take students past research papers, essays and computer-assisted plagiarism toward focused, in-depth human interest stories. Significant attention will be paid to second, third and fourth drafts of stories.

*Recommended:* Laptop computer and printer, digital tape recorder.

### **Sequence assignments:**

- The first assignment will be a mini-personality portrait.
- The second assignment is intended to reinforce the importance of humanizing news, organizing information in a logical order, and mastering crisp transitions.
- The third assignment is a sights-and-sounds descriptive feature in which students will observe and listen, then interpret and describe.
- The fourth assignment is an in-depth narrative feature and sidebar(s) about a timely and substantive topic, localized to a high school audience.
- Assorted style/grammar quizzes will be conducted throughout the week.
- Emphasis will be placed on the importance of working quickly and efficiently. Assignments turned in after deadline will not be considered toward honors or awards.

### **Sequence accomplishments:**

Class members will:

- review news elements and values
- discuss story and coverage possibilities
- learn narrative reporting techniques
- integrate literary devices into journalistic stories
- improve story flow and transition
- proof for style, grammar and spelling errors
- edit for substance and voice
- develop story packaging