

**RIALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CURRICULUM PROPOSAL**

<b>Name of Course:</b>	Journalism II - The Art of Blogging	<b>Grade Level(s):</b>	12
------------------------	-------------------------------------	------------------------	----

<b>Brief Course Description:</b>
<p>Given the changing journalism environment and the new ways readers expect to receive information, this course will focus on the techniques and strategies of successful blogging. To understand this form of journalism, students will look at the early stages of blogging and examine the evolving culture of blogging.</p> <p>Students will understand how blogs are revolutionizing the media, powering politics, and shaping culture, and how they are changing the way journalists write. To do this, students will track and analyze influential blogs in the categories of politics, business, art, lifestyle, and activism.</p> <p>Students will not only examine theory but will also apply this knowledge. Building on journalism and public relations concepts acquired in Journalism I, students will create a forum for strategic communication. They will learn the basics of successful blogging, design a basic blog template, identify a niche, define an audience, write online content, and utilize common blogging methods to promote engagement.</p> <p>Keeping in mind the broad definition of blogging, students will learn and engage in practices that continue to attend to traditional journalistic practices. As such, students will be expected to pitch story ideas, conduct research and interviews, write and publish blog stories, and engage in a regular critique of their work.</p> <p>Blog stories will be due twice a week and will be published to the student's blog on Edublog and the class blog on Edublog. This will allow students to apply the ideas of the course to a public blogging environment. Blog stories may also be used for publication in the print edition of the school's newspaper, the Medieval Times.</p>

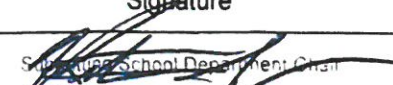
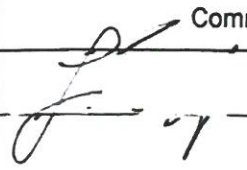

<b>Proposed By:</b>	Cassandra Rodriguez	<b>School:</b>	Rialto High School	<b>Date:</b>	2/14/20
---------------------	---------------------	----------------	--------------------	--------------	---------

<b>The Following is Proposed for this Course:</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Addition	<input type="checkbox"/> Revision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A - G	<input type="checkbox"/> Deletion
<input type="checkbox"/> Required Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Content	<input type="checkbox"/> Honors	<input type="checkbox"/> Name of Course
<input type="checkbox"/> Elective	<input type="checkbox"/> Name Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Vocational	

<b>The Following Maximum Credits are Proposed for this Course:</b>	
10 Units of Credit in (Subject Area):	College Prep Elective or in:

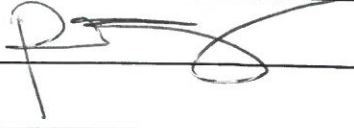
<b>The Following Schools will Offer this Course:</b>				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carter High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eisenhower High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rialto High	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Milor/Zupanic	<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Education

<b>The Proposed Course will have the Following Budget Implication:</b>	
Individual School Site:	
District Level:	
Total Estimated Cost:	

<b>Approval Signatures for the Proposed Course:</b>			
<b>Signature</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
 Superintendent/Department Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	2/27/20	
 Carter High School Principal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	2/20/20	



**RIALTO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CURRICULUM PROPOSAL**

Eisenhower High School Principal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	3/9/2020	
Rialto High School Principal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	2/18/2020	
Miler Zurbrugg High School Principal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	3/9/2020	
Adult Education Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
District Curriculum Committee Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	3/9/2020	
Curriculum Council Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
<b>Approved by the Rialto Unified School Board of Education on (date):</b>			06/10/20





Course

# Journalism II - The Art of Blogging

Grade

12

Length

Full Year

Environment



Subject

**G** College-Preparatory  
Elective

Discipline

English

Institution

Rialto Unified School District

## Course Overview

Given the changing journalism environment and the new ways readers expect to receive information, this course will focus on the techniques and strategies of successful blogging. To understand this form of journalism, students will look at the early stages of blogging and examine the evolving culture of blogging.

Students will understand how blogs are revolutionizing the media, powering politics, and shaping culture, and how they are changing the way journalists write. To do this, students will track and analyze influential blogs in the categories of politics, business, art, lifestyle, and activism.

Students will not only examine theory but will also apply this knowledge. Building on journalism and public relations concepts acquired in Journalism I, students will create a forum for strategic communication. They will learn the basics of successful blogging, design a basic blog template, identify a niche, define an audience, write online content, and utilize common blogging methods to promote engagement.

Keeping in mind the broad definition of blogging, students will learn and engage in practices that continue to attend to traditional journalistic practices. As such, students will be expected to pitch story ideas, conduct research and interviews, write and publish blog stories, and engage in a regular critique of their work.

Blog stories will be due twice a week and will be published to the student's blog on Edublog and the class blog on Edublog. This will allow students to apply the ideas of the course to a public blogging environment. Blog stories may also be used for publication in the print edition of the school's newspaper, the *Medieval Times*.

## Schools Offering Course

- Rialto High School (052629)

## Unit 1: What Is Blogging/Why Blog? ▾

— Collapse Units

In this unit, students will be introduced to the history of blogging through a series of lectures, independent online research, and visual learning resources. Students will also learn the characteristics of blogs, and how blogging differs from traditional journalistic forms. Finally, students will learn the technical vocabulary of blogging and will be able to identify various tools for communication that will be used during the class.

### Assignment Descriptions:

#### *Presentation:*

Students will read the blog story: "How To Tell A Journalist From A Blogger" by J. O'Dell. Then students will locate a print news article and a blog story covering the same news topic and identify the differences, if any, between blogging and journalistic writing. Students will present their findings to the class.

#### *Writing:*

Students will create a blog using Edublog and complete the About Me tab on the blog by adding a personal bio and any other introductory information they may want to include; this will serve to introduce them to the blogosphere.

## Unit 2: The Nuts and Bolts of Blogging ▾

In this unit, students learn how different blog sites have their own identities, and that the way a blog identifies itself informs the writing style and subjects covered on that site. Students will also learn how to review and critique blog stories, blog commenting etiquette and how to write blogs that promote engagement.

### Assignment Description:

#### *Writing:*

Students will select two blogs from a predetermined list and critique them based on the information learned in class. Each of these critiques will follow the guidelines discussed in class, such as voice and writing style, methods of generating interest, etc. and must include quotes from each blog post. Each critique will be 250 words in length.

Students will research the mission statements of several blog sites. Based on their research, students will collectively write a mission statement for the class blog. The mission statement should include, but should not be limited to the following: What is the *Medieval Times* blog about? What's the range of topics our blog will address? Why is our blog important now? What makes our blog site unique? What do we hope to accomplish with this blog?

#### *Activities:*

Students will go to the Los Angeles Times blog, read a news story off the front page, and be prepared to leave a comment at the end of the story. Before comments are posted, they will be critiqued as a class using knowledge of blog commenting etiquette.

### Unit 3: Blogging - How to Write Well ▾

In this unit, students will read different blogs in order to understand the different elements that go into telling a great blog story. They will also be able to identify the different writing styles utilized in sports, features, news, or entertainment stories. Using credible on-line blogs as an example, students will begin writing blog stories, practicing the fundamentals of storytelling and developing their own unique writing voice.

#### *Activities:*

Based on each students' niche, students will write their first blog post, between 300-500 words, and identify strengths and weaknesses. Students will also engage in peer review sessions in order to improve their writing skills and make stories ready for publication. In addition to posting to the individual student blog, students as a class will choose certain blog posts to be posted on the class blog.

### Unit 4: Why Blogs Matter and Where They Come From ▾

In this unit, student will continue to examine different types of blogs and identify what purposes they serve for readers. They will also learn about the real power of this forum of communication: 1) impact on culture, 2) costs and benefits of this type of expression, and 3) the need for a more expansive type of media literacy.

Students will continue to apply this knowledge in the writing of their own blog stories and to help the school's blog site evolve into a forum where meaningful exchange of information takes place.

#### *Writing:*

Students will review several political blog sites. In a 500 word essay, students will discuss the power this type of forum has in the political arena.

Students will conduct research and interviews and write a 650-900 word political blog story.

### Unit 5: The Art of Editing ▾

In this unit, students will understand the qualities of a good editor, will engage in activities to gain those qualities, and will learn how to edit blog stories. Editors may also have to come up with eye-catching and accurate headlines. Particularly in a blogging environment, the headline is what will determine whether a reader will *click* on the story or not. Editors must also pay great attention to detail because even with proofreaders and fact-checkers, the ultimate responsibility for accuracy falls to the editor. Finally, because online news publishing is very deadline-driven, editors must work well under pressure without compromising accuracy. In this unit, students will respectfully challenge and motivate each other to be better writers.

#### *Writing:*

Using work written for previous blog assignments, students will practice the editing process. In engaging in a thoughtful and comprehensive edit of another student's blog story, students will learn that an editor is not only a good writer, but has an excellent grasp of grammar.

Students will write their next blog post, paying particular attention to their writing voice and the rhythm of their writing. Students should also be working through the weaknesses identified in their blog edits.

### Unit 6: How Blogs are Changing Culture ▾

In this unit, students will learn how blogging is changing our culture. Through assigned readings, individual research, and discussion in class students will recognize the impact blogging has had on other traditional forms of mass communication such as newspapers, magazines, and visual media. Students will also examine the ways blogging has changed the way readers expect to receive information. Given the changes in reader expectation, students will continue to tailor their writing for a very different type of audience.

*Writing:*

Students will write a 700-900 word news story on a teen issue of their choice for the school's blog site.

Students will chronicle and analyze a cultural event or phenomenon that was sparked by a Blog or Twitter feed in their area of interest. For instance, students could examine "Why uprisings in the Arab world have been characterized as "Twitter revolutions;" or how literary blogs like, "How I Write" at DailyBeast.com is changing reader-author relationships; or how a Twitter feed from a sports fan changed the course of a game; or how a satirical Blog spoofing a candidate influenced a political race. Their analysis should be presented in a 700-900 word essay.

*Activities:*

Students will pick an online site that they participate in (something smaller than "Facebook" or "Twitter," e.g. a particular Facebook community, or a fan forum for a sports team) and they will identify if this is a "community" and explain why or why not? Students will engage in a class discussion and give a presentation on what they find.

## Unit 7: The Audience and the Importance of Blog Comments



In this unit, students will learn about target audiences and the ways to engage readers in both real and online discussions. Students will get a better sense of who reads particular blogs and what techniques are used to expand a blog's reading audience. Additionally, students will recognize the importance of engagement. Students will review different types of blog comments and will understand why they are important to blog stories, even if the comments are not favorable. They will also learn to distinguish constructive comments from others, and how to use them to improve individual writing and the blog site itself.

*Activities:*

Students will find a news article on a popular site like CNN.com or HuffingtonPost.com that deals with gender, race, sexuality, class, nationality, religion, or another aspect of identity. After reading the article, students will read and analyze the comments. What views are expressed? How do commenters respond to each other? Do you think this is different from face-to-face conversations? Why?

Students will read an article written by Judith Warner of the New York Times and the comments written by other readers. Students will then post their own response to the article in the comments section.

*Writing:*

Students will write a 700-900 word blog story on a controversial teen topic of their choice. Students will act as student editors to improve each other's stories and will engage in a class discussion of their finished work.

## Unit 8: Blogs and Politics





In this unit, students will take a closer look at political blog sites. Students will analyze and understand how audiences relate to these types of blogs and what makes them a powerful form of communication in the political arena.

*Writing:*

Students will write a blog post about American politics in the current year and will present their opinions on a current political issue in manifesto form. Students will be assessed not the substance of their opinion on politics, but on how each writer presents those opinions using the blogging techniques they have learned throughout the semester. These blogs will be shared with the class.

Students will write a 500-word paper on the current relationship between blogs and politics. Students will conduct independent research and use information from assigned readings and class discussions.

*Activity:*

Students will analyze the five political blogs followed for the course. Students will then discuss how blogs have changed, and perhaps even revolutionized, politics in the last decade.

## Unit 9: Blogs and Activism ▾

In this unit, students will have an understanding of how blogs help in the field of activism, in addition to understanding how blogging is bringing more social awareness to people all over the world and adding more global impact to issues that we have in our world.

Students will choose a current issue where activism is prevalent, research the issue and write a blog post, between 500-750 words, about the issue, paying close attention to the details behind the issue and what activists are hoping to change about the issue.

## Unit 10: The Vlog ▾

Blogs are often only as strong as the images that illustrate them. In this unit, students will examine the role of videos on blogs. By viewing a variety of vlogs, students will understand how a video component can enhance a blog and increase audience reach and engagement. Students will also create vlogs in an effort to gain greater marketability for themselves as more and more online papers and magazines, particularly those operating on a smaller budget, require their journalists to have this additional skill.

*Assignment:*

Students will view a variety of vlogs and engage in a discussion on the increasing integration of words, images, and video in the blogosphere. Has the Internet become a kind of television station with vlogs being just another form of reality TV? Students will also discuss the marriage of pictures and words in vlogs covering news and feature events.

*Activity:*

Students will make a vlog for the *Medieval Times*, using video to enhance their blog entries. Students will also supplement their vlogs with a brief post explaining and illuminating the use of video and images in a vlog post.



## Course Materials

### Other Materials

Authors	Date	Material Type	Title	Website
Andy Carvin	April 15, 2008	Article	What Exactly is a Blog, Anyway?	psydangel.blogspot.com (psydangel.blogspot.com)
Tarleton Gillespie	February 2003	Article	The Stories Digital Tools Tell	www.academia.edu (www.academia.edu)
Judith Warner	August 7, 2013	Article	The Opt-Out Generation Wants Back In	<a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/11/magazine/the-opt-out-generation-wants-back-in.html?_r=1">http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/11/magazine/the-opt-out-generation-wants-back-in.html?_r=1</a> ( <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/11/magazine/the-opt-out-generation-wants-back-in.html?_r=1">http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/11/magazine/the-opt-out-generation-wants-back-in.html?_r=1</a> )
Anne-Marie Slaughter	July/August 2012 ISSUE	Article	Why Women Still Can't Have It All	<a href="http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/">http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/</a> ( <a href="http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/">http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2012/07/why-women-still-cant-have-it-all/309020/</a> )
Jennifer Egan	June 4, 2012	Article	Black Box	<a href="http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/06/04/black-box-2">http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/06/04/black-box-2</a> ( <a href="http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/06/04/black-box-2">http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2012/06/04/black-box-2</a> )

### Textbooks

Authors	Edition	Primary?	Publisher	Title	Website
The editors of the Huffington Post	2008	No	Simon and Schuster	Huffington Post Complete Guide to Blogging	--
Mary Cross	1st edition (June 7, 2011)	No	Praeger	Bloggerati, Twitterati: How Blogs and Twitter Are Transforming Popular Culture	--
Scott Rosenberg	June 1, 2010	No	Broadway Books	Say Everything: How Blogging Began, What It's Becoming, and Why It Matters	--
Michael A. Banks	1st edition (December 10, 2007)	No	Wiley	Bloggging Heroes: Interviews with 30 of the World's Top Bloggers	--
Matt Bai	Reprint edition (July 29, 2008)	No	Penguin Books	The Argument: Inside the Battle to Remake Democratic Politics	--
Eric Boehlert	June 21, 2013	No	Political Book Summaries	Summary of Bloggers on the Bus: How the Internet Changed Politics and the Press	--

### Websites

Authors	Organization	Title	Url
Andrew Sullivan	none	The Dish: Biased and Balanced	<a href="http://dish.andrewsullivan.com">http://dish.andrewsullivan.com</a> ( <a href="http://dish.andrewsullivan.com">http://dish.andrewsullivan.com</a> )
various	none	ThinkProgress	<a href="http://thinkprogress.org">http://thinkprogress.org</a> ( <a href="http://thinkprogress.org">http://thinkprogress.org</a> )
James Fallows	The Atlantic Monthly Group, Inc.	The Atlantic	<a href="http://www.theatlantic.com">http://www.theatlantic.com</a> ( <a href="http://www.theatlantic.com">http://www.theatlantic.com</a> )

Authors	Organization	Title	Url
various	The Washington Post	The Washington Post - Wonkblog	<a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/">http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/</a> ( <a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/">http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/</a> )
Amy Davidson	Conde Nast	The New Yorker	<a href="http://www.newyorker.com/news/amy-davidson">http://www.newyorker.com/news/amy-davidson</a> ( <a href="http://www.newyorker.com/news/amy-davidson">http://www.newyorker.com/news/amy-davidson</a> )
various	The Los Angeles Times Media Group	The Los Angeles Times	<a href="http://www.latimes.com">http://www.latimes.com</a> ( <a href="http://www.latimes.com">http://www.latimes.com</a> )

©2018 Regents of  
the University of  
California