



UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

Journalism

The journalism program at University High School is based on learning by experience and self-discovery, appropriate for a school with its roots in the work of John Dewey. Students largely learn about journalism and mass media by being journalists producing student publications in print and online.

Students enrolled in Beginning Journalism focus on introductory units, and they gather news, report, and write copy for the student newspaper, the U-High Midway. Field trips, guest speakers, and assigned reading for enrichment enhance the journalistic writing experience.

Experiences in publishing — in the yearbook, in the newspaper, and online — are related in class to mass media. News media and current events become topics of class attention as developments dictate, and students make decisions for coverage of school and community events. Class discussions are devoted to media treatment of large or sensitive developments, to media personalities, and to issues such as equitable treatment, use of social media,

and ethics of news gathering. The news often determines class content.

Many students come to journalism—and stay with it—for the writing experience it offers, although journalism at University High School is not conceived of as a writing program but a communications program. The most intensive experience in learning-by-doing occurs in the area of writing as each student rewrites each story several times before it is published and as student editors coach the work of reporters. Students work together to develop stories and coverage, enriching the creative experience and making teachers of students. In journalism, many students who feel (or have been told) they are weak writers find new confidence and discover talents they did not know they had.

But journalism is more than writing. It is also the combination of text, images, video, and audio to present a story in print or online. It is the interaction of observation, emotion, the written word, and visual messages.

Courses in Journalism

- Beginning Journalism
- Advanced Journalism
- Beginning Yearbook Journalism
- Advanced Yearbook Journalism
- Photojournalism
- Advanced Photojournalism
- Multimedia Journalism
- Media Literacy and Analysis

The U-High Journalism program engages the world beyond the classroom—the school community and beyond—through wide distribution of the national award-winning printed newspaper and yearbook, a multimedia website, and a growing social media presence.

The future of journalism is not just coverage but engagement, not just reporting but understanding. Today's journalism requires advocating for the reader through transparency, fact checking, and verification. The future means returning to core values of seeking the truth and reporting it. With the development of terms such as “fake news” and “alternative facts,” reliable, objective news sources are more important now than ever. U-High journalists are trusted to convey information to the school community.

Opportunities for collaboration and empowerment

Finding solutions. In most classes, a student's performance is between the individual and teacher. In journalism, information is published on a deadline

even if the assigned student didn't do a story or take a photo. Working together, team members learn to communicate to solve problems on short deadlines and to evaluate to avoid repeating any problems.

Making choices. Determining page components and placement is a complicated process. Student teams collaborate to determine a story's angle and its presentation through selecting visuals and other elements. Editors and reporters collaborate to tell the story in layers for different types of readers. Editors make final approval based on fair representation of sources. Nuanced decisions about headlines involve finding precise language to summarize a story while avoiding bias.

Cultivating leadership. Students gain experience making decisions that affect the school community publicly. By engaging with adults in complex and mature ways, they gain an understanding for consequences.