

# READINESS PROFILE & COURSE EXPECTATIONS

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## JOURNALISM 2

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

- By creating the school's nationally acclaimed, award-winning newspaper, The Nexus, students learn to master a variety of practical and valuable life skills: writing, interviewing, photography, graphic design, all of which serve as assets as students move into college and the business world. Responsible and curious students who take the initiative to tackle their journalistic assignments with enthusiasm are invited to apply for Journalism 2. The Nexus welcomes team players who are flexible and willing to devote their time and efforts to upholding a tradition of greatness, one that has seen The Nexus earn dozens of national and local honors.
- In Journalism 2, a two-term/year-long course, students design and produce the school newspaper. They develop their news, feature, review, editorial and sports writing skills. They choose all content and design the pages. Students also familiarize themselves with the business aspects of newspaper production by handling advertising accounts. In addition to the writers and editors on staff, The Nexus offers positions to students whose primary responsibility is to take photographs and create artwork/editorial cartoons.
- Students in this course will officially meet as a class three days a week, with additional time required on-line and after school. Flexibility is a must, as additional mandatory class meetings will be called as needed. Students are off-roll during the class period on non-meeting days.
- Journalism 2 meets the UC/CSU "G-elective" requirement. (No more than two semesters of Journalism may apply for college admission).

### COURSE CONTENT AND EXPECTATIONS

- The main objective in Journalism 2 is to continue to produce one of the very best high school newspapers in the nation, one that rivals professional publications, and one that the staff members can be proud of as the student body reads and appreciates it.
- The primary expectation is that staff members meet their obligations. They are accountable not only to themselves but to the entire staff. They must commit to completing the work they take on in a timely fashion and do it to the highest quality they can. Unlike in a typical high school class, if a student doesn't do his work in Yearbook, he or she is not the only one affected. For every time someone doesn't follow through on their commitments, someone else has to pick up the pieces. On The Nexus staff, we strive to create a climate of shared expectations where everyone is accountable to everyone else.
- Given that most of the interviews and photos for the newspaper must be done outside of class, students should be able to manage their time and be available, at least some of the time, after school and/or during lunch. In some cases, students will need to attend events (e.g., sports games) outside of the school day.
- Pre-requisite: Students must apply and be accepted into Journalism 2 by the newspaper adviser.

### MAJOR UNITS OF STUDY

- The Nexus publishes 11 times per year. As such, the course is structured into 11 three-week publication cycles.
- New staff members are mentored through their first issue or two by veteran staffers.

**Please see syllabus for additional course rules and information**

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## STUDENT BACKGROUND

- Incoming staff members should already possess strong skills in at least one area of journalism (writing, photography, illustration, graphic design). Most important, however, are curiosity and initiative. The Nexus welcomes students who seek to understand the people and world around them and who take the initiative to do whatever must be done to make this paper great. As The Nexus operates as a team, staff members must also be able to work well with others.

## WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS

- Staff members work together to do everything necessary to create the newspaper. Typically, writers write anywhere from 2-4 articles per issue. They have anywhere from 2-3 days to more than a week to write these articles, depending on the piece's timeliness, subject matter, and length. Occasional long-term articles may take weeks to write. Editors have additional responsibilities.
- Staff members work under section editors and with partners to compile and edit pages.
- For each issue, the staff works until 9 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday nights of press weeks. This adds up to 22 press nights in a school year. While some staff members will be working throughout that time, others are free to leave for outside commitments (sports practices, tutoring, club participation, jobs, etc.) before returning to The Nexus room.
- The workload is very manageable, but it requires planning ahead and solid time-management skills.

**Please see syllabus for additional course rules and information**