

# Final Exam – Reporting Assignment

**Assignment:** To develop a story idea, collect information, write and review a news story. Length should be three to five pages. You must have at least three sources of information, with at least two of them being human sources. An “A” story may be published in The Orion online. All late work will be penalized 10 points per day. No work will be accepted more than seven days past deadline.

## **Part I, Story Ideas** (1.5 percent of course grade)

Develop two story ideas, with three sources for each. Please write one paragraph for each story, explaining the main topic, the news value, and the angle you will take, as well as a list of each story’s sources, including titles and phone numbers. This must be typed and will be collected and graded.

At least one of your sources for each story must be an authority on the issue. You **MAY NOT** interview friends, family, roommates or relatives for this story. **Story ideas are due in class on \_\_\_\_\_**. We will discuss them as a group and decide which story you actually will write.

### **What a story idea is NOT:**

1. It is not a routine announcement of an upcoming event, which any student can already read about by checking campus bulletin boards.
2. It is not a vast, vague, unfocused idea about some massive subject (e.g., “Greek life at CSU,” “Grading Standards of CSU Professors”). Find out what’s **NEW, LITTLE KNOWN, and/or EXCITING** about your subject. Find the **FRESH ANGLE**.

## **Part II, Progress Report** (1.5 percent of course grade)

Using the format on the following page, prepare a final story progress report and nut graf. Must be typed and will be collected and graded. **Bring progress reports to class on \_\_\_\_\_**. We will discuss them as a group.

## **Part III, Completed Story** (10 percent of course grade)

**Deadline:** \_\_\_\_\_ at the beginning of class.

The story must be double-spaced and typed. You will earn 0-10 points for each of the following:

1. Does the lead tell what the story is about? Does it work? Is it interesting?
2. Is the story well reported? Multisourced? Are the reader’s questions answered?
3. Are the direct quotes informative and of high quality?
4. Is the material organized in a logical fashion?
5. Is the writing clear and concise?
6. Does the story follow AP style?
7. Are spelling and facts correct?
8. Is the writing grammatically correct? Punctuation? Word usage?
9. Is the story written like a news story (precise nouns, strong verbs, active voice, correct tense, short sentences and graphs, balanced, objective, etc.)?
10. Does the story’s ending provide a note of finality?

Your instructor may award BONUS POINTS, 1 to 5, for each of the following: good transitions, pacing, good description, creativity, strong organization, completeness.

**Part IV, Revision** (2 percent of your course grade)

**Deadline: Finals week, at the exam final meeting time.**

You will meet with your instructor in conference by \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss your story (a sign-up sheet will be posted). After the conference you will revise your story. The emphasis will be on “rethinking” what you did. The goal is to improve both your reporting and writing, and the grade for this part will reflect your efforts in “rethinking.” Simply correcting the mechanical errors will not automatically improve your grade.

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**Format for Progress Report**

Name:

Date:

1. “Nut paragraph” of the story (two to four sentences)

**DO NOT tell what the story is “about”:**

“This is a story *about* drinking at Chico State’s fraternity rush parties.”

**Instead, summarize the main, most newsworthy point(s) your story will convey to readers.**

“Chico State fraternities claim that drinking at rush parties is a think of the past. However, heavy boozing is as much a part of rush as ever, Chico State officials say. And they’re worried that the continuing practice is a disaster waiting to happen.”

2. List of library/online sources being used for this story:
3. List of human sources interviewed so far (names and titles):
4. List of human sources still to be interviewed (names, titles and scheduled times and dates for remaining interviews):