

Committee Overview

Press Corps functions differently from the rest of the JHUMUNC committees. Delegates of Press Corps will be responsible for documenting and reporting on all the occurrences of JHUMUNC, both during committee sessions and after-hours, from the perspective of their publication.

A few delegates will represent one of four news agencies from all over the world. For JHUMUNC XXIII, delegates will be representing BBC, The New York Times, The Onion, and MercoPress. Delegates from each news agency will work together to produce JHUMUNC's daily news publication, which will include articles, editorials, and investigative reports that will be shared with delegates, staff, and supervisors participating in the conference. Delegates can also expect to produce content on social media platform(s).

Press Corps delegates will have access to nearly every function of JHUMUNC. They will get a chance to question delegates in standing and specialized committees. Additionally, delegates will work with JHUMUNC's Crisis Staff to produce press statements to crisis committees. Occasionally, Press Corps

delegates will be asked to attend press conferences held by other committees and get a chance to question other delegates.

The rest of this document highlights each news agencies' history, political inclinations, target audience, and writing styles. The description of each news agency ends with links to two example articles that the chair deems to best reflect the agency's overall purpose and values. The first example article for each news agency is an event-based report. Many of the articles that the delegates of Press Corps will be writing report on the events that take place during the conference; thus, the first example will be a good template to refer back to during the conference. Delegates are encouraged to read all event-based articles to identify distinct key features of their news agency.

The second links are example articles that report on controversial topics. These articles reflect a news agency's inclinations and tendencies. As the delegates' word choices are to reflect the political leanings of their news agency, it is encouraged that delegates refer back to the second example article to resolve questions regarding an agency's political stance. Firm knowledge of the assigned news agency biases should guide the delegates' diction.



Publications:

BBC

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is one of the world's oldest and largest international public service broadcasters, with over 23,000 staff members. It started as a radio broadcaster in 1922 that housed six telecommunications companies. Since then, it has developed multiple outlets of its own and is regarded as one news source which is relatively free of bias.

The mission of these programs, and of the BBC, is to be independent, impartial, and honest, in order to present news with no one but its audience in mind. In addition, BBC works to promote education, stimulate creativity, and represent the UK, but also, on a much wider scale, to represent the UK on an international level and deliver the benefit of emerging communications technologies to the global public (*Mission and Values*).

Target Audience

The BBC is one of the most widely viewed news agencies worldwide. In fact, it claims to have a weekly audience of about 74 million views across more than 200 countries, and its website has received 25 million views. They aim to serve as an alternative source of local news within the UK but also outside the UK, in regions where uncensored news is not always readily available.

Political Inclination

Like any news source, the BBC is susceptible to reflecting a degree of bias in

its writing. Former BBC news director Helen Boaden admitted in a 2013 interview that the corporation has “deep liberal bias,” especially on the issues of immigration and the European Union (Mason and Swinford). Language suggesting this may be apparent in local and investigative reports; however, this bias is not as overt in articles geared towards the BBC's global audience.

Tone

Since BBC caters to a large number of audience and covers a wide array of different topics from differing regions, minimal effort is wasted on sensationalist or opinionated writing. The tone of most of their articles is generally level and direct.

Syntax, Diction, and Structure

Sentences in an average BBC article are seldom ornate. By keeping its syntax and diction simple, the BBC is able to engage a wider range of audience. Paragraphs are relatively short with sentences of said style. Delegates of this news agency should expect to produce medium-length articles that are around 600 words with simple and concise words and sentence structures.

Sample Articles

The following is a link to an example of an event-based report:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49383803>

The following is a link to an example of an investigative and politically charged report:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending-48356351>

The New York Times

The New York Times – *The Times*, for short – was first published in 1851 by Henry Jarvis Raymond and George Jones, with a focus on avoiding sensationalism to increase objective, factual reporting. At a point close to a bankruptcy, it was salvaged by Wall Street investors. Adolph Simon Ochs, the ultimate purchaser of the news agency, increased their readership to the fame it holds today. In 1924, the paper grew further by acquiring *The New York Herald*. This expanded the ways in which information was gathered, developing interviewing as a reporting technique and working closely with foreign correspondents. It also increased the attention given to business, global affairs, and the arts. Like *The Times*, *The Herald* had always prided itself on remaining nonpartisan and objective and expanding its national and international readership.

Target Audience

Most articles in *The Times* are geared toward an educated, culturally involved upper-middle to upper class. However, *The New York Times* has been increasing its efforts to engage readers of younger age. In the past decade they have worked to increase their presence on various forms of social media to engage with a younger audience (*Standards and Ethics*).

Political Inclination

The Times' articles exhibit a political view that is slightly more liberal than a perfect middle ground. The Opinion Pages allow authors increased freedom to illustrate their political ideology than the more objective, factual reporting of the news and business sections would allow.

Tone

Though a slight liberal bias is apparent in its articles, *The Times'* mission statement is “to promote fairness, integrity, and truth in journalism” (*What We Do*). Thus, the tone in its articles is often fairly objective, refraining from using emotional or sensationalist language and only recounting the factually important information. However, in artistic, lifestyle, and opinion pieces, the tone is often much stronger and emotive.

Syntax, Diction, and Structure

While many newspapers focus on short sentences with simple syntax, *The Times* distinguishes itself with much longer sentences containing multiple clauses and clarifications. *The Times* is not as concerned with simplicity and understandability as it is with the literary quality of its writing.

Sample Articles

The following is a link to an example of an event-based article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/18/world/asia/kabul-wedding-bomb-isis.html>

The following is a link to an example of a report on a controversial topic or event:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/19/health/planned-parenthood-title-x.html?searchResultPosition=1>

The Onion

The Onion is an American news satire organization founded in 1988 by Tim Keck and Christopher Johnson, two college juniors at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2006, *The Onion* launched its YouTube channel, which currently has over 740,000 subscribers. In 2013, *The Onion* moved to an all-digital format, ceasing all print operations, and remains a thriving, well-regarded publication (*The Onion*).

The Onion parodies traditional news sources and releases articles that comment on international, national, and local news. It comments on important events through satire, often reporting on fictional events related to real issues. In addition to current events, *The Onion*, also writes articles on fictional “local” events, mundane, everyday happenings that are depicted as surreal, alarming, and dramatic, which in itself satirizes the media in its entirety, mocking traditional coverage. Overall, *The Onion* showcases how ridiculous the news can be (*The Onion: An Interview With 'America's Finest News Source'*).

Target Audience

The Onion is a humorous, sardonic, edgy publication started by college students and originally meant for their peers, who are other college-aged students. Thus, its main audience is young liberals from the age of 18 to 34. *The Onion* is unconventional and therefore not well suited for an older, more traditional audience.

Political Inclination

The Onion is politically left-leaning, satirizing current events and making occasional political statements. It takes current events and stories and puts an outrageous, fictional spin on them (for example: a series of articles on the fictional

adventures of Joe Biden, including “Biden Scores 800 Feet of Copper Wire”).

Tone

The Onion does not pretend to be a hard-hitting, serious news source. *The Onion* uses deadpan, dry humor to parody serious news organizations, writing outrageous, fictional stories to mock real ones (*The Onion: Funny site is no joke*). All articles are written in similar professional tones as articles from any other major news source but are humorous because of the article’s content and diction. Articles cover made-up events related to current news in a deadpan fashion, treating them seriously, as traditional news sources would. Its local news articles often take on a sensational tone and include excessive detail to further highlight the unremarkable nature of these events.

Syntax, Diction, and Structure

The Onion’s articles are written in the style of a traditional news piece. Sentences are complex and sophisticated with all information and quotations properly introduced. The syntax should remain formal and professional despite offbeat subject matter and casual language (Schillinger).

The Onion distinguishes itself with its use of contrasting word choices. Diction is sometimes sophisticated and traditional but can also be incredibly informal. Informal language should be used with intention, as a punch line, in contrast with formal language, or in quotations, for example, but should not be too heavy-handed (Fallon).

Articles are organized traditionally, divided into a number of small paragraphs. *The Onion* also frequently releases shorter, one-paragraph articles for headlines that have less expansive potential. These articles

are shorter because there are fewer angles from which to attack the story.

Sample Articles

The following is a link to an example of an event-based article:

<https://www.theonion.com/brazilian-government-equips-firefighters-with-flamethro-1837487135>

The following is a link to an example of an article that is shorter in length:

<https://politics.theonion.com/democrat-party-moving-left-vs-remaining-moderate-1837300836>

MercoPress

MercoPress is an online, independent news agency established in 1993 and based in Montevideo, Uruguay (*About MercoPress*). *MercoPress* focuses on news related to Mercosur (Mercado Comun del Sur/Common Market of the South) member countries, who form a political and trade bloc within South America, the South Atlantic, and other territories (*About MercoPress*). Presently, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay are members of the organization, with Peru, Colombia, Chile, Guyana and Suriname as associate members—Ecuador and Bolivia are in the process of joining the group (*About MercoPress*).

The bloc promotes free trade among member states, and has created a fixed common tariff which constitutes the bloc's external trade policy. Mercosur's reach in the global economy extends to the European Union, China, India, Egypt, Palestine, Israel, and other nations and organizations spanning across 5 continents (*About MercoPress*). Its stated goal is to promote "support of fundamental freedoms and of human rights, protection of the environment and sustainable development as well as a commitment to consolidating democracy, legal certainty, combating poverty and promoting economic and social development with equality" (*About MercoPress*).

Target Audience

Given that *MercoPress*'s focus is on economic policy in Latin America and its political implications, its reporting is targeted toward those who take interest in macroeconomic developments in Latin America put into easy-to-understand language. *MercoPress* states that the majority of its readers are from the United Kingdom,

followed by Argentina, United States, and Chile (*Advertise*).

Political Inclination

MercoPress's focus on Mercosur policy is not critical nor directly complimentary; rather, it sticks to a centrist stance (*MercoPress*). *MercoPress* uses very few emotional appeals or loaded language in its reporting. It is generally depicted as highly factual and has a low level of political bias.

Tone

MercoPress's tone is similar to that of any other news source that deals frankly with serious matters. Its tone can be characterized as objective, and the source argues to be informative rather than argumentative. *MercoPress* is considered to have little bias, and reports on issues in a restrained manner that tends not to reveal the author's political leanings.

Syntax, Diction, and Structure

MercoPress articles are generally written in concise, easily understood language. Sentences are short and to the point and lack excessive adjectives that could construe biases. Articles themselves are usually not much longer than 500 words. The source typically incorporates graphs to illustrate economic principles relating to an article's content. They may include relevant photos (with captions of one sentence or less) and other graphics throughout a piece.

Sample Articles

The following is a link to an example of an event-based article: <https://en.mercopress.com/2020/11/04/biden-urges-democrats-to-keep-the-faith->

[while-trump-announces-he-will-go-the-us-supreme-court](#)

The following is a link to an example of a report on a controversial topic:

<https://en.mercopress.com/2020/11/04/controversial-ruling-of-the-argentine-high-court-on-the-removal-and-relocation-of-magistrates>

Works Cited

"About MercoPress." *MercoPress*, en.mercopress.com/about-mercopress.

"Advertise." *MercoPress*, en.mercopress.com/advertise.

Fallon, Kevin. "Fooled by 'The Onion': 9 Most Embarrassing Fails." *The Daily Beast*, The Daily Beast Company, 27 Nov. 2012, www.thedailybeast.com/fooled-by-the-onion-9-most-embarrassing-fails.

Keighley, Geoff. "The Onion: Funny Site Is No Joke." *CNN*, Cable News Network, www.cnn.com/2003/TECH/ptech/08/28/bus2.feat.onion.site/index.html.

"MercoPress." 15 June 2020, mediabiasfactcheck.com/mercopress/.

"Mission and Values." *BBC*.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/corporate2/insidethebbc/whoweare/mission_and_values

Rowena Mason, Steven Swinford. "BBC Has Deep Liberal Bias, Executive Admits." *The Telegraph*, Telegraph Media Group, 3 July 2013, www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/bbc/10158679/BBC-has-deep-liberal-bias-executive-admits.html.

Schillinger, Liesl. "Award-Winning Local Journalists Reflect Own Self-Hatred Back on Nightmarish World*." *Wired*, Conde Nast, www.wired.com/1999/03/onion/.

"Standards and Ethics." *The New York Times Company*, www.nytc.com/company/standards-ethics/.

"The Onion." *Knowledge Base*. University of Wisconsin-Madison. Web. Oct. 2014.

"The Onion: An Interview With 'America's Finest News Source'." *Wikinews, the Free News Source*, Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., 25 Nov. 2007, en.wikinews.org/wiki/The_Onion:_An_interview_with_'America's_Finest_News_Source'.

"What We Do." *The New York Times Company*.