

THE ULTIMATE MEDIA CAREER GUIDE





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OVERVIEW

INDUSTRY 101

**PROSPECTIVE
HIGHLIGHTS**

FUTURE OF WORK

INDUSTRY 101

The media industry researches current events, creates reports, and distributes those reports to the public through different communication channels. These communication channels generally fall within one of three categories: print, broadcasting, and digital. Over the past decade, blogging and social media have grown in popularity and given rise to more options for media writing as a career. Where journalism is built on hard facts that are well-sourced and verifiable, media writing is covers broader types of content. A writer can work on advertising copy, press releases, proposals, direct mail, blogs, social journalism, cultural criticism, social commentary, and other areas.



There are nearly 50,000 writers and authors working in the U.S. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that employment for writers and authors is projected to grow 9% by 2030. However, work in traditional newsrooms has been steadily declining since 2008 due to increased reader preference for digital platforms and a bigger demand for freelance writers.

The U.S. journalism industry's annual revenue is \$24.65 billion, a decline from the \$49.4 billion revenue generated by the industry in 2005. The U.S. book industry — including self-published and commercially published titles — is worth about \$26 billion. Digital publishing revenue in the U.S. is on an upward trajectory and is expected to amount to around \$35 billion by 2025.



The average American spends about 17 minutes a day reading, down from a 20 minute peak in 2020— the highest this decade.

PROSPECTIVE HIGHLIGHTS



\$226 MILLION GLOBAL VALUE

The digital publishing market is expected to grow an average of 11% annually to over \$226 million by 2028.



\$300 BILLION

In 2022, ad revenue collected by media companies exceeded \$300 billion.



62% OF AMERICANS

62% of Americans think social media sites have too much control over news content.

FUTURE OF WORK

As print publications and news organizations continue to be bought out by larger conglomerates, the future of professional writing and reporting will largely be dictated by digital trends. Over the past few years, writers have shifted their focus to paid newsletter subscriptions, podcasting, and freelance opportunities. This change in approach may be attributed to an overflow of content on social media. Writers used to be required to hold degrees in communications or journalism to break through, but are now leveraging certificate courses and large social media followings to advance their careers.

The importance of social media has been met with criticism, but the break in traditionalism has increased visibility for BIPOC and female writers and content creators. Over 50% of all authors in the U.S. are now women. While the increase in audience access has been beneficial, there are still large deficits in the treatment of writers behind the scenes. In 2020, #PublishingPaidMe went viral on social media and highlighted large differences in pay among BIPOC, male, and female writers.



CAREER LIBRARY

Many careers can be pursued within the writing industry. The New School x Rolling Stone Media Writing Essentials and the NYU x Rolling Stone Modern Journalism online courses give a holistic understanding of the media industry, including the careers responsible for driving the market forward while understanding how to develop necessary skills. Below is a list of career possibilities for students, along with highlighted industry experts within the courses you could learn from.

INDUSTRY EXPERT HIGHLIGHT

EMILY LEIBERT

Staff Writer, Jezebel



CAREERS IN WRITING

Blogger

Reporter

Columnist

Proposal Writer

Critic

Journalist

Technical Writer

Associate Editor

Content Writer

Medical Writer

Speechwriter

Ghostwriter

Novelist

Screenwriter

Researcher

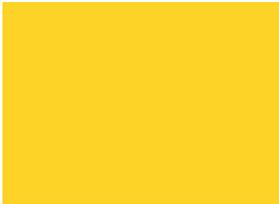
Freelance Writer

Features Writer

INDUSTRY EXPERT HIGHLIGHT

BRENNA EHRLICH

Chief Research Editor, Rolling Stone



CAREERS IN EDITING

Fact-Checker

Proofreader

Commissioning Editor

Developmental Editor

Copy Editor

Contributing Editor

Managing Editor

Assignment Editors

Editorial Assistant

Editor-at-Large

Editor-in-Chief

Book Editor

INDUSTRY EXPERT HIGHLIGHT

WILLIAM EARL
Editor, Variety



CAREERS IN PUBLISHING

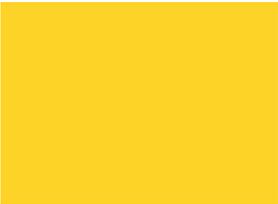
Literary Scout
Literary Agent
Acquisitions Manager
Technical Publications Manager
Publisher Assistant
Publishing Manager

Sales Manager
Distribution Coordinator
Print Buyer
Rights Coordinator
Contracts Manager

INDUSTRY EXPERT HIGHLIGHT

SHEILA MUNGUIA

Sr. Director of Global Communications,
Peloton



CAREERS IN MARKETING

Copywriter

Social Media Coordinator

Advertising Manager

Publicist

Content Strategist

Communications Officer

Director of Communications



CAREER PLANNING STRATEGY

- ◀ There is no set linear path to achieving your dreams within the writing industry. The following is a three-phase career planning guide that reflects industry experts' experiences and are tailored to novices, alumni, and experts who are either considering a career in media,
- ◀ navigating into the writing industry, or experiencing growth and leadership in their roles.

NOVICE

KNOWLEDGE

- Begin to understand your interests within the writing and media industries
- Explore job and freelance options within the media industry
- Determine when you want to enroll in the [Media Writing Essentials](#) or the [Modern Journalism](#) course, relevant programs, conferences, etc. to expand your knowledge

ENGAGEMENT

- Create a [LinkedIn](#) profile and reach out to potential mentors or industry experts that align with your area of interest
- Attend [Yellowbrick](#) webinars to learn more about the [Media Writing Essentials](#) or [Modern Journalism](#) course
- Follow [Yellowbrick](#) on [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#) to learn about expert workshops on topics related to the industry, networking, and job searching

STRATEGY

- Identify the career path(s) you're interested in pursuing
- Identify your interests, values, skills, and talents
- Enroll in programs, classes, and attend conferences that allow you to gain first-hand learning experience about the media industry
- Learn the timelines and experiences of potential mentors and industry experts you admire
- Understand recruiting timelines within the media industry

ALUMNI

KNOWLEDGE

- Have an expert understanding of how a story is formed — from an idea to published stage
- Complete templates, assignments, and work that apply to the media industry
- Upload work completed onto your portfolio, website, Substack, Medium, or [LinkedIn](#)
- Review job descriptions of positions within the writing industry that interest you

ENGAGEMENT

- Attend events to build a network
- Attend recruiting events and employer information sessions
- Connect with mentors, industry experts within your field of interest, and alumni to better position yourself for the job search

STRATEGY

- Assess what you've learned about yourself and the intersection between media career paths and the alignment with your skills and interests
- Seek an internship or entry-level opportunity within your field of interest in media
- Determine the gaps in your skillset and pursue opportunities to build those skills needed
- Revise and tailor your resume, sample work, and cover letter

EXPERT

KNOWLEDGE

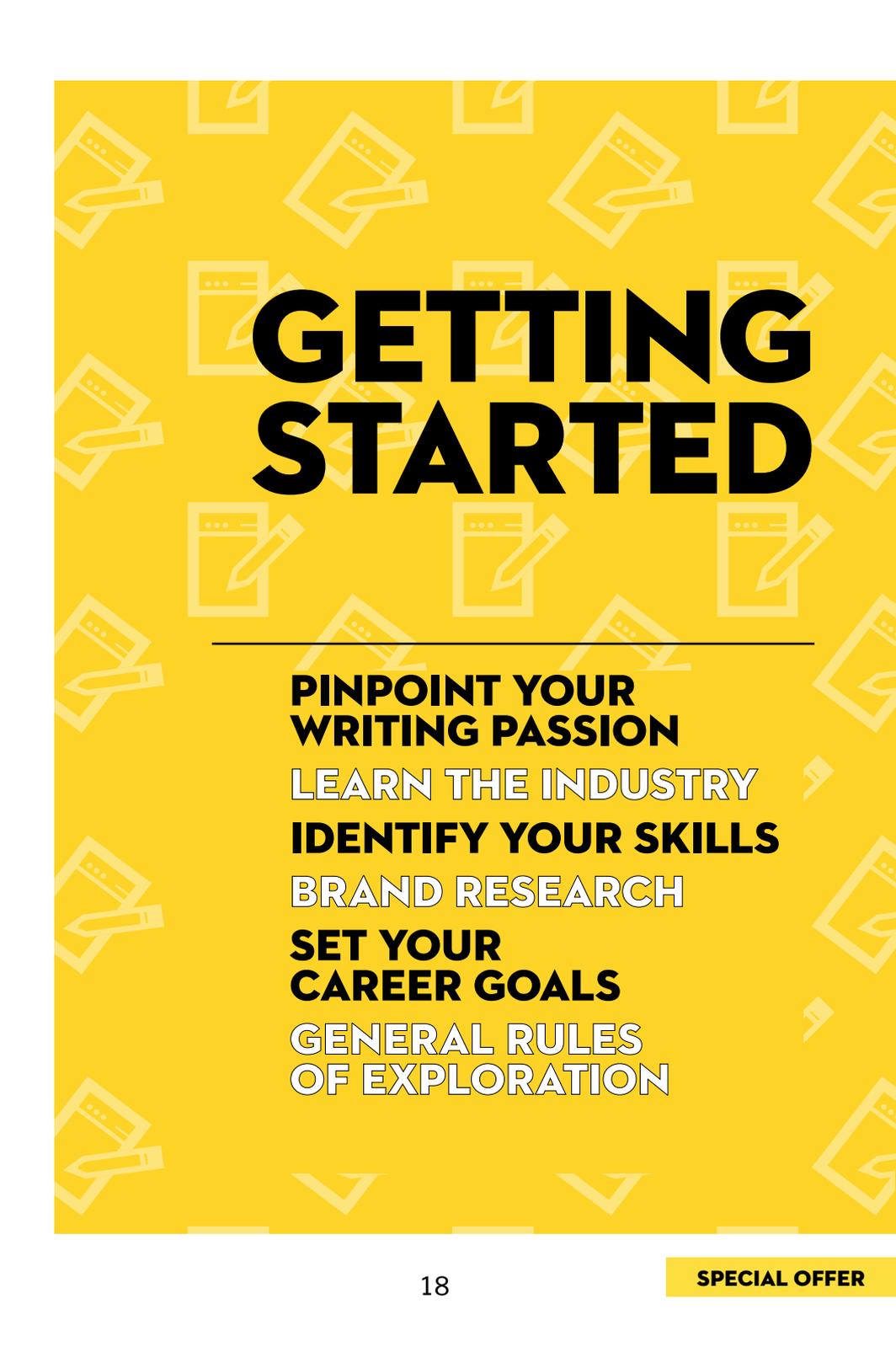
- In-depth, hands-on knowledge about specific careers within the media industry
- Master communication within your discipline and field
- Have your hand on the pulse with industry trends and topics

ENGAGEMENT

- Develop and maintain relationships with mentors and peers within the media industry
- Explore leadership, speaking engagements, and opportunities within the industry beyond your 9 to 5
- Collaborate with peers, companies, and/or organizations

STRATEGY

- Celebrate your accomplishments, growth, and opportunities to learn
- Give yourself permission to pursue and grow out of your comfort zone
- Ensure your professional online presence is up to date: [LinkedIn](#), website, etc.
- Prepare field-specific application materials (resume, cover letter, samples/portfolio)



GETTING STARTED

**PINPOINT YOUR
WRITING PASSION**

LEARN THE INDUSTRY

IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS

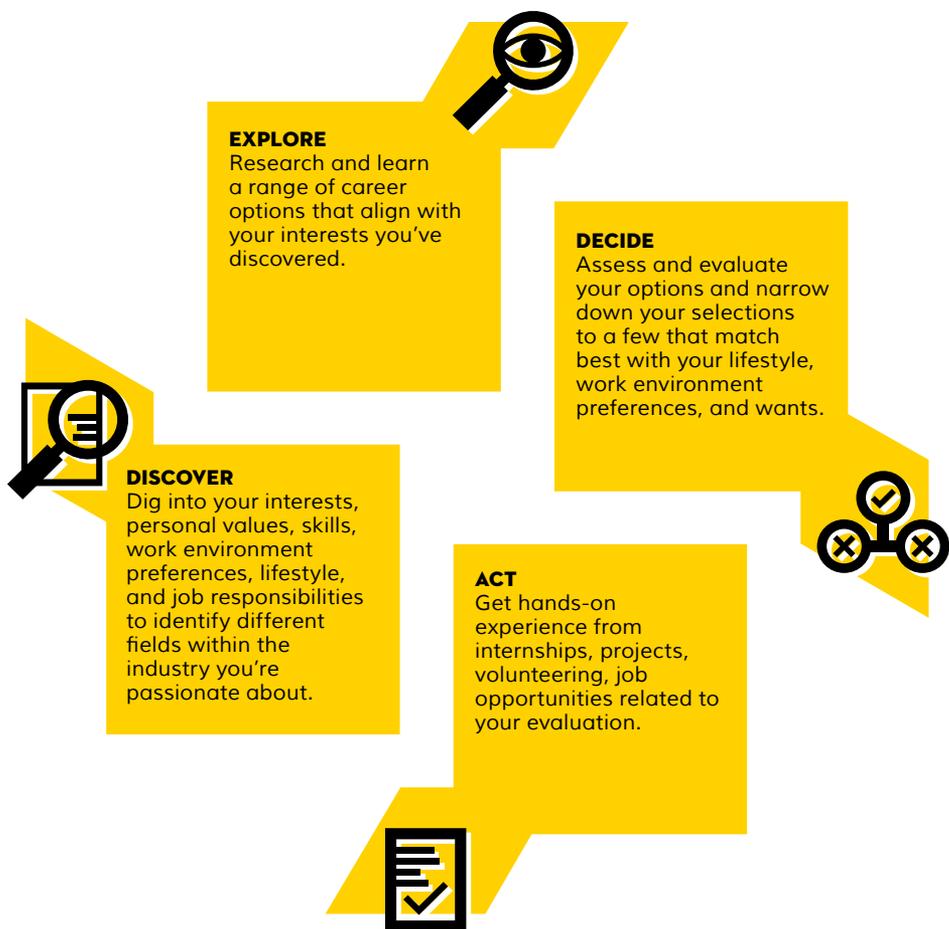
BRAND RESEARCH

**SET YOUR
CAREER GOALS**

**GENERAL RULES
OF EXPLORATION**

GETTING STARTED ON YOUR NEXT STEPS

The media industry is made up of an ecosystem of careers ranging from production to distribution. The possibilities may feel vast, but you can follow a career planning process that will help you make informed decisions beyond completing the [New School x Rolling Stone Media Writing Essentials](#) or [NYU x Rolling Stone Modern Journalism](#) course. Figuring out what career you want to pursue and creating a plan to get there involves assessing your interests and skills, exploring your options, making decisions, and taking action to achieve your career goals. While each person's experience will be unique, these key points apply to everyone.



It's important to practice a growth mindset and be open to exploring your passions, interests, wants, and needs.

CAREER PREP

PINPOINT YOUR WRITING PASSION

The most important elements in figuring out your career path and next steps are understanding your passion and how your interests relate. This career prep exercise is your starter guide for exploring your passion and interests within writing and the media industry.

DIRECTIONS

Take a few minutes to reflect on the following topics. Come up with 3-5 answers to each. Once you are finished answering the questions, identify commonalities, and find themes in your answers.

1

During my free time, I...

2

I'm energized by...

3

Naturally, I'm good at...

4

I'm an expert at...

5

I like learning about...

6

I'm obsessed with writing because...

7

If I can learn anything about writing, it'd be...

OF your answers, what common theme(s) are you seeing related to these areas of interest within the writing industry?

WRITING

EDITING

PUBLISHING

MARKETING

ACTION STEP

From the common themes you've seen from your answers, who is one person you can talk to and learn more about your area of interest?



CAREER PREP

LEARN THE INDUSTRY

How well do you know the media business? Use this research exercise to learn more about key players in the media industry, your favorite publications or platforms and their competitors, and discover what type of publications or organizations you want to work for (or start!).

NAME OF KEY PLAYER

MEDIA INDUSTRY FIELD

JOB

LOCATION

PLATFORM | PUBLICATION

THEIR VISION

KNOWN FOR

WHAT THEY DO

FIRST START

WRITING INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTION

RECENT NEWS

INTERESTING FACTS

OTHER NOTES

NAME OF PUBLICATION

WRITERS/JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATED

LOCATION

COMPANY SIZE

KEY PLAYERS

THEIR MISSION

STATE OF GROWTH

KNOWN FOR

INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTION

TARGET AUDIENCE

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION INITIATIVES

NEWS

INTERESTING FACTS

OTHER NOTES

CAREER PREP

IDENTIFY YOUR WRITING SKILLS

As you understand your interests within the media industry, you must be aware of the skills you have developed and already acquired, especially when planning your career goals or beginning your job search.

Each box represents a skill and area of interest within the media industry. Within each box below: Place a "3" in the box if you are highly skilled
Place a "2" if you are moderately skilled
Place a "1" if there's room for improvement

WRITING

Creativity

Great written communication

Ability to take constructive criticism

Strong work ethic

Resilient

Revising and editing skills

Discipline

Research skills

Can work independently

Self-motivated

Each box represents a skill and area of interest within the media industry. Within each box below: Place a "3" in the box if you are highly skilled Place a "2" if you are moderately skilled Place a "1" if there's room for improvement

EDITING

Project management skills

Organized

Time management skills

Ability to work under pressure

Curiosity

Adaptability

Detail oriented

Knowledgeable of a broad range of topics

Language skills

Knowledge of story and/or article structure

Each box represents a skill and area of interest within the media industry. Within each box below: Place a "3" in the box if you are highly skilled Place a "2" if you are moderately skilled Place a "1" if there's room for improvement

PUBLISHING

Interpersonal skills

Can work as part of a team

Presentation skills

Effective Brainstormer

Strong decision-maker

Management skills

Committed

Critical observation

Assertiveness

Multitasking

Each box represents a skill and area of interest within the media industry. Within each box below: Place a "3" in the box if you are highly skilled Place a "2" if you are moderately skilled Place a "1" if there's room for improvement

MARKETING

Networking

Positive attitude

Willingness to learn

Honesty

Negotiation

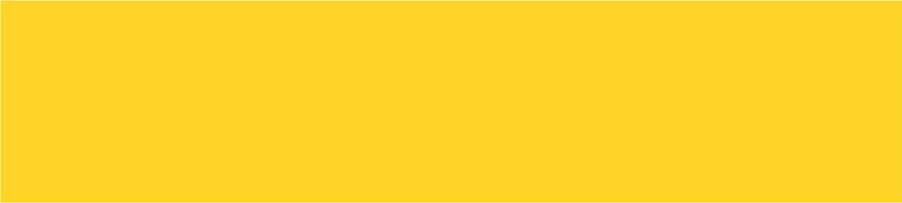
Sociability

Strategic thinking

Team building

Oral communication

Goal-oriented



BECOME AN EXPERT

These days, hiring managers are impressed with what you know and the skills you can bring to the table. Making time for yourself to become an expert is how you'll find your lane and make yourself stand out. This can appear in different ways: investing in your career with time, money, and knowledge. Constant exposure to new information can be overwhelming to figure out where to start and how to keep up. Begin with what you know and where your interests fall — by researching the publications you gravitate towards or competitors of the organizations you love.

TOP PUBLICATIONS TO GET YOU STARTED

ABC News
Architectural Digest
Allure
Art in America
ArtAsiaPacific
Artforum
The Artist's Magazine
The Arts Fuse
Associated Press
The Atlantic
BBC
Billboard
Bloomberg News
The Boulevard
CBS News
CNN
Comics Journal
Complex
Cosmopolitan
Dwell
The Economist
Elle
Entertainment Weekly
Essence
Esquire
Film Threat
Food & Wine
Forbes
Foreign Affairs
Fortune
Glamour
Gourmet
GQ
The Hollywood Reporter
IndieWire
InStyle
InTouch Weekly
Jezebel
Life & Style Weekly
Marie Claire
National Public Radio
(NPR)
NBC News
The New York Times
The New Yorker
The Pastel Journal
People
Photoplay
Politico
O: The Oprah Winfrey
Magazine
Out
Reuters
Rolling Stone

TOP PUBLICATIONS TO GET YOU STARTED

Sculptural Pursuit
Self
Shape
Shonen Jump
Soap Opera Digest
Soaps In Depth
Southwest Art
Sports Illustrated
TeRra Magazine
TIME Magazine
TV Guide
Us Weekly
USA Today
V
Vanity Fair
Variety
Video Watchdog
Visionaire
Vogue
Vox
The Wall Street Journal
The Washington Post
Women's Wear Daily

CAREER PREP

SETTING YOUR CAREER GOALS

You've narrowed in your passions and done some research into the media industry. Identifying your career goal and creating a plan around it will help you with your next steps.

Setting career goals requires planning. Identify academic requirements, experience, barriers, and other factors that will help you prepare for your career goals on the next page.



ACADEMICS



EXPERIENCE



BARRIERS



OTHER FACTORS



CAREER GOALS



GENERAL RULES OF CAREER EXPLORATION WITHIN THE MEDIA INDUSTRY

EXPLORE

Take time to explore how your interests and skills intersect with different career paths in the media industry. This will help you holistically understand the whole industry and communicate your value to future employers.

BUILD

Each opportunity you take on builds a foundation of applicable skills for the next opportunity.

START

Beginning allows you to build a wide range of experiences, explore various fields, and give you room to change your mind or pivot along the way.

READY TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE WRITING INDUSTRY AND ALL ASPECTS OF THE MEDIA INDUSTRY?

Check out the [New School x Rolling Stone Media Writing Essentials](#) and the [NYU x Rolling Stone Modern Journalism](#) by Yellowbrick.

THE NEW SCHOOL × *RollingStone*
MEDIA WRITING ESSENTIALS



NYU × *RollingStone*
MODERN JOURNALISM



STATISTA | US BOOK INDUSTRY

<https://www.statista.com/topics/1177/book-market/>

STATISTA | JOURNALISM

<https://www.statista.com/topics/2096/journalism/>

LETTER.LY | JOURNALISM STATS

<https://letter.ly/journalism-statistics/>

US BUREAU LABOR STATS | WRITERS & AUTHORS

<https://www.bls.gov/oooh/media-and-communication/writers-and-authors.htm>

PEW RESEARCH CENTER | FACT SHEET

<https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/fact-sheet/local-newspapers/>

MEDIA WRITING ESSENTIALS

The New School, alongside experts from Rolling Stone plus published authors and writers, helps you learn essential skills to write concise and compelling messages for new media and digital channels.

This 100% online course will build your media writing skills and expertise in key areas such as:

-  Writing for social media and commercial audiences
-  Optimizing your content for SEO
-  Interviewing: Preparation, Techniques & Ethics
-  Crafting Pitches & Book Proposals
-  Self-Publishing: Personal Websites, Blog Posts & Social Publishing Platforms

Learn more at ylearn.co/mediabook.

MODERN JOURNALISM

New York University (NYU) faculty, alongside award-winning experts from Rolling Stone and other leading journalists across the field, help you learn industry practices on the basic skills needed to practice journalism utilizing the written word, audio, visual, and digital mediums.

This 100% online course will build your journalism skills and expertise in key areas such as:

-  Writing clear, accurate, and engaging copy
-  Interviewing skills and ethics
-  How to pitch successfully
-  How to produce audio or visual stories
-  How to leverage social media platforms for storytelling

Learn more at ylearn.co/journalismbook.



YELLOWBRICK

EMPOWERING DREAMERS TO ACHIEVE THEIR CALLING

In partnership with top universities and brands, we create educational experiences that tap into interests and passions to spark success, fuel personal advancement, and open doors to fulfilling paths for our students.

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ylearn.co/pinterest