

Elements of Newsworthiness

- **Timeliness:** News is what's new; it just happened and people need/want to know
- **Proximity:** Things that happen nearby or will have effects in your area are newsworthy
- **Prominence:** Audiences are interested in things that happen to celebrities, politicians or other well-known people
- **Impact:** Something that had, has, or will have long-reaching or significant effect is newsworthy
- **Conflict:** Can be physical or emotional; open or unseen conflict; people vs. people; people vs. nature
- **Oddity:** People are always interested in the unusual – the person, place, time, event, or context involved is out of the ordinary
- **Human Interest:** Audiences identify with others' achievements, struggles and quirks – usually entertaining or amusing
- **Shock Value:** Stories involving death, scandal, and other lurid or bizarre elements

For Campus Quirk story:

- **Regardless of topic, doesn't have to be a freak show:**
 - Stories are most effective when readers can relate to the people involved in some way
- **What exactly is unusual about it?**
 - Be clear – draw contrasts between what is “normal” and what makes this story unique
- **What's your lead?**
 - Let your interview material and the direction of the story determine the best approach to writing a lead
- **Exactly how strange or absurd is your topic?**
 - The more bizarre the story subject, the more you may just want to get out of the way – let interviewees tell the story
- **Is the situation quirky or is the person quirky?**
 - If the situation is unusual and the people in it aren't, their reactions to it may be the most interesting aspect of the story
- **What is known and what is unknown about topic?**
 - Comparisons to “normal” vs. speculation