

**Media Writing**

JOUR 1700-501

Fall 2013

T/TR 2:40-4:05 p.m.

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Office hours: 9 a.m. – Noon on Monday-Thursday

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS****CATALOGUE/COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Social background, scope, functions and organization of modern communication media, attention to all major mass communication media; philosophy and goals of modern journalism; impact on governmental, social and economic systems.

**PREREQUISITE:** none

**TEXTBOOKS:**

Mass Communication: Living in a Media World, third edition, Ralph E. Hanson. CQ Press; ISBN 978-1-60426-600-9

**COURSE WEBSITE ADDRESS:**

1. Go to the University of Memphis home page: <http://www.memphis.edu>
2. Click on the “MyMemphis” link at the bottom of the left column menu
3. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
4. Click on the “ecampus resources” tab.
5. In the center column of the page, click on the blue U of M eCourseware link

NOTE: We will NOT use the internal ecourseware email system on the course web page. Use your regular email and correspond with the professor at her regular UM address noted at the top of this syllabus.

This course is an introduction to all professional areas falling under the umbrella of journalism. We will read about and discuss the history, purpose, role, function and future of newspapers, magazines, publishing, radio, television, advertising, public relations and other related industries and activities. Students participate in one of more outside activities (attend Freedom of Information event, interview media profession, visit a media organization) at the discretion of the instructor.

The course covers how primary research, including focus groups and surveys, determine target audience selection for certain products/services. It covers the role that media play in audience consumption behavior and media use. For example, students learn about secondary media sources (Nielsen, MediaMark) and which media (television, Internet, newspaper, etc.) a target audience uses and how much of a product/service a target audience consumes. The course also demonstrates how students should critically analyze and determine how their use of mass media, including advertising and public relations techniques, impacts their lives.

This covers the techniques of computer-assisted reporting (CAR): developing a research question, gathering primary information (interviews) and secondary data (public records), analyzing data

sets using Excel or Access software, and writing a professional investigative reporting project. It covers the ongoing government regulation of the U.S. media as well as the constitutional principles that guide it. Additionally, the course covers how new technology, including the increase of social media, affects consumers.

Meeting deadlines is essential for media professionals. Regular attendance is vital in class. **When you miss a class you cannot make up the work regardless of the reason.** Please do not email the instructor to ask what work was covered during your absence. Instead, check with a classmate.

Coming to class well prepared is equally important. This means reading the assigned chapters in the textbook and staying informed about current events.

The basic requirements for this course include five elements:

1. Complete the Writing Diagnostic Test;
2. Complete assigned readings from the textbook each week
3. Complete any quizzes or in-class assignments on deadline;
4. Pass class exams;
5. Be respectful of classmates and professor at all times.

**GRADING:**

Chapter exams =70%

Quizzes/Assignments=30%

**OTHER ISSUES:**

No extra credit is available.

Any written assignments will be checked for plagiarism.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE BY WEEK:**

August 26	Introduction/Review of Syllabus
August 28	Read Ch. 1 & Writing Diagnostic Test 1
September 2	NO CLASS: Labor Day Holiday
September 4	Lecture: Chapter 1 / Read Ch. 2
September 9	Finish Lecture: Chapter 1
September 11	Lecture: Chapter 2 / Read Chapter 3
September 16	Lecture: Chapter 3
September 18	<b>TEST 1</b> (chapters 1-3) / Read Chapter 4
September 23	Lecture: Chapter 4
September 25	Finish Lecture: Ch. 4 / Read Ch. 5
September 30	Lecture: Chapter 5
October 2	Finish Lecture: Chapter 5 / Read Ch. 6
October 7	Lecture: Chapter 6
October 9	<b>TEST 2</b> (chapters 4-6) / Read Ch. 7
October 14	NO CLASS: October 12-15 Fall Break
October 16	Lecture: Chapter 7 / Read Ch. 8
October 21	Lecture: Chapter 8 / Read Ch.9
October 23	Lecture: Chapter 9 / Read Ch. 10
October 28	Lecture: Chapter 10
October 30	Study for Test 3 (chapters 7-10)
November 4	<b>TEST 3</b> / Read Chapter 11
November 6	Lecture: Chapter 11
November 11	Finish Lecture: Chapter 11 / Read Ch.12
November 13	Lecture: Chapter 12
November 18	Finish Lecture: Chapter 12 / Read Ch. 13
November 20	Lecture: Chapter 13
November 25	Finish Lecture: Chapter 13 / Read Ch. 14
November 27	Lecture: Chapter 14
December 2	Review for Final Exam (chapters 11-14)
December 4	Last Day of Classes
December 9	FINAL EXAM

## ASSESSMENT

### **PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR SURVEY OF MASS COMMUNICATION:**

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

### **HOW PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES WILL BE MET:**

#### **Cognitive Objectives To Be Mastered (Ability To Explain, Analyze, Understand, Think Critically):**

- Recognize the role of media in influencing the political and cultural dynamics on the global stage.
- Develop a strong historical sense of how mass communication technologies originated and developed.
- Understand the variety of relationships between media and their audiences, including diverse audiences.
- Be sensitive to the needs of diverse and under-represented groups in programming and creating messages.
- Understand the ongoing government regulation of the U.S. Media as well as the constitutional principles that guide it.
- Recognize the ethical and philosophical issues that arise in media culture and understand the range of viewpoints regarding these issues.
- Understand the behind-the-scenes operations and decision-making processes of major mass communication industries.
- Understand how new technology affects the media and communication.
- Understand what's involved in preparing for and advancing a career in the changing media.
- Understand the allied fields of advertising and public relations and their relationship to media systems.
- Understand mass communication theories and their application to media professions.

**Performance Standards To Be Met (Demonstrable Skills, Abilities, Techniques, Applied Competencies):**

- Earn a passing score on periodic tests and/or exams.
- Participate in one or more outside activities (e.g., attend FOI lecture, interview media professional, visit media organization, participate in applied research) at the discretion of the instructor.

**HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET FOR SURVEY OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS:**

*Awareness:*

- Lecture , discussion on First Amendment and basics of media law
- Text readings, guest speakers and lectures by professor will address all the major divisions of mass media, including newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, Internet , books, movies, public relations and advertising.
- Diversity will be discussed as it applies to all areas of mass communication
- Ethical decision making is discussed throughout the semester as it applies to each media profession.
- Discussion questions will be posed in class to stimulate critical thinking. Independent thinking is encouraged.

*Application:*

- Each student will interview a media professional and write an informal paper on what you learned. This is not a writing class, so you will not be graded on writing proficiency. Content and student's obeying the rules set for the assignment will determine the grade.
- There will be five smaller media assignments. Specifics to be announced throughout the semester.

**PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOURNALISM PROGRAM:**

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be to

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications.
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- think critically, creatively and independently;
- conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;

- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

#### **ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING FOR JOURNALISM PROGRAM:**

The Council seeks to promote student learning and encourages experimentation and innovation. Assessment is a system of evaluation of student learning at the course or unit level (as opposed to grading at the individual level). Three criteria should guide assessment of student learning:

- Awareness: familiarity with specific information, including facts, concepts, theories, laws and regulations, processes and effects.
- Understanding: assimilation and comprehension of information, concepts, theories and ideas.
- Application: competence in relating and applying skills, information, concepts, theories and ideas to the accomplishment of tasks.

### **DEPARTMENT POLICIES**

#### **EMAIL:**

You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UM email. **You are required to check your email daily.** You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

#### **CELLPHONES:**

You must turn them off during class and zip them up in a backpack, purse or pocket.

#### **ATTENDANCE:**

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence due to illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

**CHEATING:**

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.

“Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com’s restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.” (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

**ONLINE SETEs:**

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray “Student” tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

**DISABILITY:**

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Services at (901) 678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.