

## **TV News Writing and Reporting**

Jour 4629-001

Spring 2016

9:40-11:40, T-TH, MJ212

Prof. Dominic Chase

Office: MJ320

Office Hours: T-TH, 11:45-12:30; and by appointment

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### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

Gathering, writing and presentation of news for television. Students will shoot, write, edit, and voice packages for use in both the reporting and producing classes.

#### **PREREQUISITE:**

JOUR 3526, 4120

#### **WHAT TO EXPECT:**

This course will be split between the theoretical and practical aspects of electronic newsgathering. We will review area newscasts to stimulate discussion about the hows and whys of deciding on, gathering, and presenting news stories in broadcast form. There's a lot of emphasis on both the content and the production of your stories.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Student ability (1) to plan and execute video productions from concept to finished product; (2) to improve videography with emphasis on composition, lighting, and technique; (3) to understand the principles and practice of editing and other post-production issues; (4) to understand elements of producing for both studio and remote field production; (5) to improve those basic production skills necessary to achieve the above goals; (6) to practice good grammar and solid writing skills with strict attention to accuracy, detail, and industry standards.

#### **TEXTBOOK:**

*Broadcast News Handbook: Writing, Reporting and Producing in the Age of Social Media*, 5th Edition, McGraw-Hill, 2014.

#### **EQUIPMENT**

An external hard drive on which to keep your stories.

#### **CLASSROOM FORMAT:**

Lecture/Lab

## **GRADING:**

Classroom discussion is important and will count toward your grade for the course. Class time isn't the time to schedule shooting or editing sessions—unless allowed by the schedule (see below). During the term, there will be weekly quizzes, one (1) exam and six (6) projects. You will also have to update the online portfolio you developed in previous classes. Your grade will be determined according to the following criteria:

Attendance	5%
Quizzes	5%
Online Portfolio	10%
Projects 1 and 2	5% each
Projects 3 and 4	10% each
Project 5	15%
Project 6 (=Final Project)	20%
Midterm	15%

You are allowed to ask for help from one classmate on the projects (i.e. two people may work as a team to turn in two different projects, one for each, and you will be graded individually)

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism. 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.

To allow for illness and other unforeseeable misfortunes, you are permitted two absences in the semester. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to get in touch with me and/or your peers to ask about course content and possible assignments. Any lateness of more than 5 minutes counts as half an absence.

Everyone starts with a grade of 100/100. From the third absence on, I will deduct 10 points for each class you miss from your attendance grade (5 points if you're late). You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival.

## **QUIZZES**

You will have a quiz every week about AP-style, course material and the news (pay particular attention to local media, the NYT World News and CNN World News). **There will be no make-up on quizzes.** There are 12 quizzes, worth 10 points each. Your two lowest grades will be dropped. You are choosing to go into an extremely competitive industry; there is no excuse for not knowing current affairs, both domestic and international. Questions will always be based on the current news and knowledge, and are not particularly in-depth, they simply require a desire to read the news headlines frequently.

Quizzes will be on computers and timed, so it is for your benefit to turn up to class on time to give yourself the best chance to complete the quiz, as well as get your points for attendance.

## **PROJECTS**

The first two projects will be voice-overs (VOs), projects three and four will be voice over to sound on tape (VO/SOTs), & the final two projects will be full reporter packages (PKGS). The sixth and final project must be “evergreen” content. Each package must include at least two (2) sources and a standup. Additionally, each project will be graded out of 100 and judged on the following criteria:

- a. Reporting enterprise and depth (news value)
- b. Diction, enunciation and other elements of delivery (pkgs. only)
- c. Steadiness, composition, and aesthetic quality of video
- d. Editing proficiency
- e. Quality of writing and how well video matches audio (SWAP)

### **Projects:**

One (1) and two (2) will be :30 pieces,

Three (3) and four (4) should be :45 to :50 in length, (Either 3 or 4 must be a VO/SOT/VO) and;

Five (5) and six (6) should run between 1:30 and 1:45 in length (tape time).

For **every** project, you should submit a link to your video, and also submit a script to me. **Both** of these elements must be submitted by the deadline given.

Points will be deducted from your grades for going over/under the specified time limits. It is at my discretion through the semester to deduct points for errors in work. Typically, this includes: Shaky camera work, poor sound levels, poor grammar, bad framing, poor journalism. These errors are things we will discuss in class and are easily avoidable.

### **LATE WORK:**

I'll accept regular projects for up to 24 hours (to the minute) after their due date, but will deduct 20 late points.

However, there is absolutely **no latitude on the sixth and final project**. You're responsible for turning in all projects on the dates they're due. If you cannot make it to class that day, upload your project online and send me a link. In this day and age, there is no excuse.

### **TENTATIVE TIMETABLE:**

*(Subject to change by my discretion or if needed due to inclement weather events. Where possible, project deadlines provided here will remain the same).*

**Jan. 19:** Review syllabus. Discuss course objectives. Realize the importance of AP Style and Appendix A of your textbook for your success in this course.

*For next class:* Watch and log the first block of one local and one network newscast this day. Notice similarities and differences. Write brief summary.

**Jan. 21:** Discuss broadcast story forms and what you watched. Equipment review. Shooting and editing refresher. Assignment submission procedures.

*For next class:* Read Chapters 1 and 2 of textbook.

**Jan. 26:** Review readings. Discuss framing, sequencing and production aspects of television news. Discuss possible story topics.

*For next class:* Read Chapters 3 and 4 of textbook.

**Jan. 28:** [Quiz no. 1] Review readings. Lead exercises and VO writing drill. Review in class.

*For next class:* Read chapter 7 of textbook. Find a story for Project 1 and shoot.

**Feb. 2:** Work on Project 1.

*For next class:* Finish Project 1.

**Feb. 4:** [Quiz no. 2] Project 1 due at the beginning of class. Review/critique project. Discuss possible stories for project 2.

*For next class:* Read chapter 5.

**Feb. 9:** Continue review/critique of Project 1 if needed. Review assigned reading.

*For next class:* Shoot for project 2.

**Feb. 11:** [Quiz no. 3] Project 2 due at the end of class.

*For next class:* Enjoy the weekend, you get a small break.

**Feb. 16:** Review/critique Project 2.

*For next class:* Skim chapter 5 and class notes for reminder. Read chapter 8.

**Feb. 18:** [Quiz no. 4] Continue review/critique of Project 2 if needed. Voice over to sound (VO/SOT) writing drill. Review in class.

*For next class:* VO/SOT script with real interview (you may record audio or even shoot video for practice but this exercise focuses on the writing)

**Feb. 23:** [Quiz no. 5] Review homework. Diamond Structure and television news. Brainstorm story ideas and development for Project 3.

*For next class:*

**Feb. 25:** Field day for Project 3. I will be in the classroom during class time if you want to discuss anything.

*For next class:* Finish Project 3.

**Mar. 1:** Project 3 due at the beginning of class. Review/critique Project 3.

*For next class:* Read chapter 9.

**Mar. 3:** [Quiz no. 6] Package writing drill. Hand in script at the end of class.

*For next class:* Watch for my email with my feedback of your package writing drill. Do not delete it. Make sure you bring it to our next meeting. Enjoy Spring break!

**Mar. 8: Spring Break**

**Mar. 10: Spring Break**

**Mar. 15:** [Quiz no. 7] Re-write your package drill based on my feedback. Brainstorm story ideas and development for Project 4. Review for midterm.

*For next class:* Study for midterm.

**Mar. 17: Midterm.**

*For next class:* Shoot for Project 4.

**Mar. 22:** Project 4 due at the end of class.

*For next class:*

**Mar. 24:** [Quiz no. 8] Review/critique project 4. Brainstorm Project 5 and choose topic for project 5.

*For next class:* Read Chapters 11, 12, and Appendix C

**Mar. 29:** [Quiz no. 9] Discuss assigned readings and student newscast at UofM.

*For next class:* Watch student newscast, take notes and bring notes to class.

**Mar. 31:** Work on project 5.

*For next class:* Shoot for project 5.

**Apr. 5:** Work on Project 5 submission at end of class.

*For next class:* Project 5 due on April 5 at 11:40 a.m.

**Apr. 7:** [Quiz no. 10] Review/critique Project 5. Brainstorm story ideas for sixth and final project.

*For next class:* Read Chapter 13 and Appendix B.

**Apr. 12:** Discuss assigned readings.

*For next class:* Read Chapters 14 and 15.

**Apr. 14:** [Quiz no. 11] Discuss assigned readings and talk about your online presence.

*For next class:* What could you do better online?

**Apr. 19:** [Quiz no. 12] Online presence and portfolio session. (*cont.*).

*For next class:* Get ready to shoot for your Final Project.

**Apr. 21:** Field day for Project 6. I will be in the classroom during class time if you want to discuss anything.

Your final project is due at 11:40 a.m. on Tuesday, April 26 and there will be **no leniency** for this deadline.

**Apr. 26:** Final Project due at the end of class.

Apr. 28 – Study day.

### **FIVE PILLARS OF JOUR 4629**

*Professionalism:* Students learn the professional skills and attitudes necessary to work in today's broadcast news industry by regularly generating content for a TV newscast. They learn to contribute story ideas, write, report, shoot and edit video, and work with a producer and/or editor under deadline pressure.

*Writing:* JOUR 4629 teaches students to write stories for broadcast; to edit; to write teases, opens and closes; to compose copy for anchors reading a teleprompter.

*Multimedia:* Students generate broadcast-caliber content that makes use of audio, video, graphics and the Internet.

*Critical Thinking:* Students develop skills to give (and receive) criticism by their peers when stories are reviewed collectively in class. They also learn how to cultivate an audience with particular news-making decisions and strategies.

*Media Literacy:* Students learn industry terms, trends, and controversies.

### **ASSESSMENT**

#### **PROFESSIONAL VALUES AND COMPETENCIES FOR JOUR 4629:**

- Understand the concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- 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;
- 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):**

- Gain familiarity with ethical issues in reporter neutrality and objectivity in coverage of controversial issues;

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

- Recognize the importance of relating stories to intended audience;
- Think critically regarding story sources and information gathering;
- Demonstrate an ability to prepare reports on controversial issues, feature stories, sports events, and meeting stories.
- Acquire ability to conduct interviews, gather information in person, by phone, and digitally, as well as conceptualize a story.
- Demonstrate basic video shooting and editing skills

## **HOW ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING WILL BE MET FOR JOUR4629:**

The class is design to equip students with knowledge necessary to plan, shoot, and edit broadcast news stories.

### *Awareness:*

- Become aware of the professional protocol such as story meetings and reporter responsibilities.

### *Understanding:*

- Understand the ethical and professional challenges facing a broadcast journalist today.

### *Application:*

- Developing story ideas, setting up interviews, selecting appropriate sources for stories, determining best video to use, writing news stories in various formats, digital editing.
- Creating an online portfolio to present resume reel, as well as other journalistic/multimedia skills.

## **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**

### **PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT:**

All Department of Journalism undergraduate students are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Students are to begin the portfolio in JOUR 2121 and contribute to it during every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from courses and/or professional experience and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final review while students are enrolled in the capstone course for their concentrations.

### **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 <http://iam.memphis.edu> 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.

### **MOBILE PHONES AND LAPTOPS:**

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone to be used during class or to complete class assignments. Others do not allow them. Your instructor will set the policy for her/her specific class.



**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. Students are permitted three total unexcused absences without penalty. After three absences, the student's final grade will be deducted one letter grade for each absence. After seven unexcused absences, the student will fail the course. Absences for illness and other catastrophic emergencies, such as a death in the family, must be documented (e.g. doctor's note or obituary) to be excused from the total absence count. Students with excessive unexcused absences are encouraged to withdraw from the course prior to the drop deadline.

**DEADLINES:**

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and mass communications. Assignments turned in late will NOT be graded. Late work is not accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Students are NOT permitted to make up assignments, quizzes, tests, etc. that occurred during an unexcused absence. Students who will miss class and/or a deadline because of an excused absence are expected to notify the instructor immediately upon knowing the absence will occur; exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances. Students who are absent during the final exam are not permitted to make up the exam and will earn a grade of 0, which might result in failure of the course.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

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, a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, and violations of copyright law as acts of academic dishonesty punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Penalties might include grade reductions or 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)

**Intellectual property and copyright guidelines**

1. Ideas cannot be copyrighted, but the way they are described can.
2. Anything set down in a tangible form, i.e., written, is by law copyrighted.
3. If, in a paraphrase, your work is “substantially similar” to a copyrighted work, you are guilty of copyright infringement.
4. A citation indicates where you got material. However, that portion you do not show as a direct quote must be “substantially original” to you. In other words, you can't just paste in something from another's work, put a citation at the bottom and call it your own. You need a full rewrite in your own words and syntax so the unquoted material is “substantially original” to you.

**Plagiarism: From UM Student Handbook:** The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full or clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

**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 me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**DIVERSITY:**

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Mass communications reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

**WEATHER POLICY:**

Check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the university is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day’s work.

**AP STYLE AND GRAMMAR:**

All written work in this class should follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. If you don’t know the style for a particular phrase, look it up or ask your classmates or the instructor.