

Journalism Syllabus

Spring 2014

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Com*K121

F: 2-4:45 p.m.

Room E114

Course description: This course is designed to give students an introduction to news writing. Students receive practice in writing hard news, feature stories, and editorials, as well as editorial decision-making. Word processing instruction is included. No previous experience necessary. COM* K121 meets the computer literacy requirement

Course outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an awareness and ability to discuss current events.
2. Demonstrate ability to exercise news judgment.
3. Write a publishable, basic news story that includes a strong lead, nut graph, proper attribution, diverse sources, and good use of quotes, among other aspects.

Course objectives:

Students will be exposed to various storytelling techniques that have universal, practical applications across multiple platforms even in this time of revolutionary change in news presentation. Students should seek to achieve/learn the following objectives:

1. Learn to brainstorm strong, interesting story ideas.
2. Develop note-taking, interviewing and reporting skills.
3. Develop news writing skills that includes special attention to accuracy.
4. Learn to thoroughly self-edit.

Concepts to remember during entire course:

- Do NOT write in first person
- One or two sentences per paragraph
- Tell-a-friend technique
- Show don't tell
- Two basic kinds of leads
- Attribution creates authority/credibility.
- Each class: present current events

Jan. 23	<u>Introduction/ truth with responsibility</u> In-class: Overview, basic story discussion Assignment: Read Chpts. 1&2	
Jan. 30	<u>Story ideas; story qualities</u> In-class: Newsroom, elements of news. Assignment: Read Chpt. 3. Current events.	
Feb. 6	<u>Newswriting basics: leads/nut graphs</u> In-class: Interview each other: cell phone exercise Assignment: Read Chpt. 4&5, Profile community leader.	Quiz 1
Feb. 13	<u>Story Structure</u> In-class: Crime story Assignment: Read Chpt. 6&7, Piers Morgan.	
Feb. 20	<u>Interviewing/note-taking/quotes</u> In-class: Interview students part 1 Assignment: Read Chpt. 8, Write interview story.	Quiz 2

Feb. 27	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Interviewing/note-taking/quotes</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">In-class: Interview students part 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assignment: Read Chpt. 9 Write interview story.</p>	
March 6	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Beats</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">In-class: Mechanics, on assignment (SD)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assignment: Read Chpt. 10, Beat Ideas.</p>	
March 13	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>On assignment:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">In class: observation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assignment: Current events.</p>	Quiz 3
March 20	<p style="text-align: center;">NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK</p>	
March 27	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Group Project:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">In-class: Two teams, one idea each, prioritize</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assignment: Justify, explain story idea</p>	
April 3	<p style="text-align: center;">SPRING RECESS</p>	
April 10	<p style="text-align: center;">Open Topic:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assignment: Budget for final story, list of six sources with contact numbers</p>	
April 17	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Film study 1: Perspective</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">In-class: Watch Control Room</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assignment: Read Chpts. 20&21, Write reaction to movie.</p>	
April 24	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Final story:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">In-class: Discuss final story ideas.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Assignment: First draft final story.</p>	

May 1

Current events I:

In class: Interview guest or live assignment

Assignment:

May 8

Current events II:

In class: Interview guest of live assignment, Final story due

May 15

Recap

In class: Reflection paper

Required Text: *Inside Reporting*, by Tim Harrower.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Three unexcused absences will result in the loss of a letter grade on your final grade.

Grades: Assignments are due the following week. There is no mid-term or final exam. Your grade: Of your grade, five quizzes are 25 percent, in-class assignments and class participation are 25 percent, 10 out-of-class assignments are 25 percent, and a 3-5 page final story, including draft and story budget, is 25 percent.

Journalism: Grading Standards

“A” No fact errors; a first-rate lead; acceptable structure; no major mechanical errors; thorough coverage; excellent writing.

“B” No serious fact errors; a good lead; acceptable structure; very few mechanical errors; thorough coverage; clear, concise writing.

“C” No serious fact errors; an acceptable lead; acceptable structure; few mechanical errors; adequate coverage; writing needs considerable revising.

“D” No serious fact errors; weak lead; poor structure; errors in style, spelling, grammar; inadequate coverage; unclear writing.

“F” Major fact errors including misspelled names; unacceptable lead; unacceptable structure; omission of important information; numerous errors in style, spelling, grammar; missed deadlines; plagiarism.

(Mechanical errors are errors in style, spelling, grammar, sentence or paragraph structure, as well as typing errors. Copy must be typed, double-spaced, copy-edited with a pencil, and include proper set-up and designation on each page: name/ slug/ page number/ end mark.)

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
F	Below 63

Misc: No eating or drinking in class. Assignments must be typed and double spaced. I do not have office hours, but e-mail or call for help, or request help on class days. If there is a cancellation, I will e-mail the class.

DISABILITIES POLICY

If you have a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please meet with a Disability Service Provider (DSP) as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations cannot be

provided until you provide written authorization from a DSP.

TRCC Disabilities Service Providers

Counseling & Advising Office

Room A-119

Matt Liscum: (860) 215-9265

- Physical Disabilities
- Sensory Disabilities
- Medical Disabilities
- Mental Health Disabilities

Chris Scarborough: (860) 215-9289

- Learning Disabilities
- ADD/ADHD
- Autism Spectrum

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is essential to a useful education. Failure to act with academic integrity severely limits a person's ability to succeed in the classroom and beyond. Furthermore, academic dishonesty erodes the legitimacy of every degree awarded by the College. In this class and in the course of your academic career, present only your own best work; clearly document the sources of the material you use from others; and act at all times with honor.

PLAGIARISM:

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's work or ideas in your writing. It is often known as copying word for word. However, even paraphrasing without acknowledgement or using the ideas of peers garnered from class discussion or study groups is considered plagiarism. Whether it is conscious or unconscious, plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Your writing for this course, and any other course at TRCC, is expected to be original, the product of your own thinking. A student who has plagiarized will receive a ZERO on that assignment, and will be reported to both the academic dean and student services dean where disciplinary action may be taken.

Sign up for MyCommNet Alert!

myCommNet Alert is a system that sends text messages and emails to anyone signed up in the event of a campus emergency. Additionally, TRCC sends messages when the college is delayed or closed due to weather. A tutorial is available on the Educational Technology and Distance Learning Students page of the web site.

http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/div_it/educationaltechnology/Tutorials/myCommNetAlert/MIR3.html

DIGICATION:

As a student, you will maintain an online learning portfolio using a TRCC designed template. Through this electronic tool, you can see your own growth in college-wide learning. It may even help you to find the major that is a match to you. You can keep this Digication account after graduation, too. A Three Rivers General Education Assessment Team will select random works and review them so that we can improve the college experience for all. Your name will not be attached to any of the assessment work; it is private. This tool will also be a “place” where you can connect your learning from the classroom, school, and life. Sometimes when you look at all of the work you have done and think about it, you learn something else. In Digication, you will be able to make other portfolios, too. It’s like a file cabinet with the ability to have multiple but separate files. What is exciting about the electronic tool is when you look inside you will see you are developing in new ways! Look at your class outline to see what assignments to post into the TRCC Template; you may post your own choices, too. Have fun in learning! Please designate one of your assignments as a General Education artifact and submit the Blue Form online at www.threerivers.edu/blueform.

The Writing Center/TASC:

Room: C117 (next to the Library).

Phone: 860-215-9082.

Email: TRWritingcenter@trcc.commnet.edu.

Online tutoring: <http://www.etutoring.org/>

Weather Cancellations:

Call 860-215-9000 or go online to: www.trcc.commnet.edu.