JMC/EP/VC 125-1
Writing for Mass Media
Whitworth University
Fall 2017
Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:50-2:10 p.m.
Hawthorne Hall, 106

Instructor & Contact Information:
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E-Mail Addresses: nbogarosh@whitworth.edu (*Best way to reach me.)
Phone: (509) 777-3511
Office Room #: Lindaman, 106
Office Hours: 2-5 p.m. Mondays & Wednesdays & BY APPOINTMENT

Course Description: Introduction to media writing — newspapers, magazines, electronic/broadcast, online, public relations and organizational writing, advertising and content for multimedia distribution in a converged media environment. Emphasis on basic news writing skills and on the different writing styles required for different media. This course focuses on basic journalistic skills, organization, critical thinking and clear, concise writing. It also has a heavy emphasis on grammar and punctuation.

Course Goals
While the course will advance your learning in several areas defined in the Communication Studies Department’s goals (listed below), the following two are most immediately addressed:

Demonstrate writing skills required to excel in an entry-level communications-related job and/or graduate school.
Students will be able to gather information and present it clearly, concisely, accurately, coherently and creatively to specific audiences. Students will present information both to more formal academic and to mass audiences. Students will demonstrate careful, honest and imaginative work at each stage of the writing process: in generating ideas, gathering and organizing information, and revising their work.

Demonstrate critical thinking skills required to excel in the intellectual, professional and personal dimensions of life.
Students will be able to apply higher level thinking skills to human communication situations. Higher level thinking skills include: application of communication principles in the classroom and beyond; analysis of the parts, organization, arrangement, relationships and principles of communication; synthesis of parts of communication to produce unique communication messages; and evaluation of communication by making appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative judgments of communication; practice defining, resolving and defending sound ethical decisions.
Communication Departmental Goals:

1. **Be aware of the relationships between the theory and practice of journalism or speech communication and the student's faith or worldview.** Students will be able to articulate the relationships between their faith or worldviews and communication theories and practices. Students will explain how their values, beliefs, and attitudes inform their approach to human communication. Students will explain how their understanding of human communication theory and practice informs their faith or worldview.

2. **Demonstrate writing skills required to excel in an entry-level communications-related job and/or graduate school.** Students will be able to gather information and present it clearly, concisely, accurately, coherently and creatively to a target audience. Students will present information both to more formal academic and to mass audiences. Students will demonstrate careful, honest and imaginative work at each stage of the writing process: in generating ideas, gathering and organizing information, and revising their work.

3. **Demonstrate public speaking and presentation skills required to excel in an entry-level communications-related job and/or graduate school.** Students will be able to gather information and present it to culturally-diverse audiences. Students will be comfortable and confident in delivering successful oral presentations that inform or persuade their listeners. Students will be able to represent themselves and their own viewpoints, as well as the viewpoints of others. Students will demonstrate preparation at each stage of the speaking process: in generating ideas, gathering information, focusing their thoughts coherently and logically, preparing a draft, rehearsing delivery, utilizing language, visual aids, and presentation technologies effectively, and critiquing presentations.

4. **Demonstrate interpersonal skills required to excel in relational, cultural, and technological contexts.** Students will be able to accurately analyze interpersonal communication situations, and to make appropriate communication decisions based on those assessments. Students will demonstrate appropriate skills in human perception, verbal and nonverbal communication, listening, self-presentation, conflict management, and relationship development.

5. **Demonstrate critical thinking skills required to excel in the intellectual, professional and personal dimensions of life.** Students will be able to apply higher level thinking skills to human communication situations. Higher level thinking skills include: application of communication principles in the classroom and beyond; analysis of the parts, organization, arrangement, relationships and principles of communication; synthesis of parts of communication to produce unique communication messages; and evaluation of communication by making appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative judgments of communication; practice defining, resolving and defending sound ethical decisions.
6. **Understand fundamental historical, theoretical, sociological, and legal concepts underlying communication.**
Students will be able to assess and explain the significant of primary historical and contemporary influences shaping communication. Students will be able to critically examine and analyze the effects of technological developments. Students will be able to articulate the value of free expression for communication professionals and for our democratic society.

**By the end of the semester, you should have learned:**
- CG1. The qualities of good journalistic writing
- CG2. The grammar and punctuation skills that characterize strong journalistic writing
- CG3. An understanding of newsworthiness, and its components
- CG4. How to identify news elements
- CG5. The nature and importance of leads
- CG6. The ability to write basic straight news and feature leads
- CG7. How to prioritize information in a story, according to its newsworthiness
- CG8. How to conduct interviews
- CG9. How to select and attribute quotations
- CG10. How to conduct traditional library and electronic research
- CG11. An introduction to the most commonly used items in AP style
- CG12. An introduction to writing in public relations and broadcasting
- CG13. An introduction to online reporting
- CG14. An introduction to media law and journalistic ethics

This course meets the **University’s General Education requirement for Written Communication**; the skills just listed speak directly to meeting this requirement. Courses in Written Communication equip students to create, organize, and share and receive clear written messages. Upon completion, students should be able to:
- GE1. Gather and analyze written information
- GE2. Have the ability to communicate that information in a clear and concise form
- GE3. Adapt their writing styles effectively to situational needs
- GE4. Conduct research and report that information in appropriate form
- GE5. Write using correct grammatical forms

**Required Text:**

Any recent version of the *AP Stylebook*. (The 2016 version is available in the bookstore.)

*Some additional articles may be posted on Blackboard during the semester.

**Attendance:** This class is very interactive; your attendance is vital. You are allowed four absences for the semester before having points automatically deducted from your final grade. Please note that this is in addition to participation points which you earn through participation.
and in-class assignments; these points cannot be earned if you are not in class! (Documented school excused absences do not count towards your four allowed absences.)

Additional absences beyond the allotted amount will result in a five (5) point deduction from your overall point total for each occurrence. You can be tardy up to three times without being penalized. Three unexcused tardies are equivalent to one unexcused absence. A tardy is defined as arriving after 2:30 p.m. If you are absent/tardy for any reason, you are responsible for the material covered and any announcements made.

**Participation:**
This is not a lecture class. You will be producing work in class throughout the semester. These activities/assignments are vital to your learning. You may earn up to five points per class period for active participation. Included in this assessment is active participation in discussions when we have guest speakers. A student can lose participation points for, among other things, behaviors that are disruptive to the class. Such behaviors include (but are not limited to): reading newspapers, magazines or other materials not related to an in-class assignment; surfing the Web for non-class related reasons; talking; sleeping; text messaging, etc.; and general unresponsiveness during class.

**Late Assignments:** Just like in a news organization, late assignments are **NOT** accepted. If you are absent from class on the day an assignment is due, you may submit the assignment via email directly to your instructor by the start of class. Please pay close attention to the due dates outlined at the end of the syllabus. You **MUST** be in class during our final exam time, as you will be presenting a group project at that time.

**Electronics:** Laptops and tablets are permitted for note-taking and in group activities (when appropriate). They are not to be used for any other reason in class. If you are caught surfing the Web, checking Facebook, Twitter, etc., or doing any other non-authorized activity you will lose your participation points for the day. Cell phones and any other electronic objects that make noise are to remain on silent or off throughout the entire class period. Unless specifically stated/authorized, cell phones and other devices must be put away; they are not to be out on the desk and you should not be checking these devices. I promise we can all make it less than an hour without checking our messages!

**Safety:** Whitworth University cares about your welfare in the event of an emergency. During the first week of this course, please familiarize yourself with safety information posted in this classroom.

**Non-Discrimination & Special Needs:**

Whitworth University is committed to providing its students access to education. If you have a documented physical or mental/psychological impairment that impacts your ability to learn and perform to your potential in the classroom, contact the Office of Educational Support Services (ESS) in Student Life to identify accommodations that can help mitigate barriers to your success. Students must contact ESS each term in order for faculty/staff to be notified of your accommodations. Services are not retroactive.
Whitworth University is committed to delivering a mission-driven educational program that cultivates in students the capacity to engage effectively across myriad dimensions of diversity. Whitworth University is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all students in its educational programs and activities. The University does not discriminate against students based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, or disability and complies with all applicable federal or state non-discrimination laws in its instructional programs.

Whitworth University professors strive to treat all students fairly and equally, applying the same rigorous standards and expectations to each of our students and working to invite students from all backgrounds into the challenges and rewards of our academic disciplines. Students who have concerns about classroom fairness should contact Associate Provost Brooke Kiener, McEachran Hall 220, 509.777.4657, bkiener@whitworth.edu.

**Sexual Harassment/Assault/Discrimination:** Whitworth University faculty members are committed to the well-being of each student. It is common for students to discuss non-course related issues with faculty and, when possible, faculty will keep such conversations strictly confidential. However, because federal law views faculty members as mandated reporters of any incidents of sexual misconduct, if a student informs a faculty member of an issue of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or discrimination, the faculty member is required by federal law to bring it to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator, bring it to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator, Rhosetta Rhodes. The Title IX Coordinator will make the student aware of all options and resources available to them under Whitworth University policies and under the law.

There are Whitworth University employees whom federal law does not view as mandatory reporters, to whom a student could speak without the conversation being reported to the Title IX Coordinator. These include counselors in Counseling Services, Health Center staff, and any of the university chaplains on the staff of Campus Ministries.

**Contact Information:**
Rhosetta Rhodes, Title IX Coordinator, Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students
Phone: 509.777.4536 Email: titleixcoordinator@whitworth.edu
Counseling Center: 509-777-3259; Schumacher Hall
Campus Ministries: 509-777-4345; Seeley G. Mudd Chapel

**Visitors to Class:** It is against university policy for anyone, including children, to attend a class without having registered for the class. Exceptions are made only for assistants permitted through ADA and approved by the Office of Student Affairs. No animals are permitted except for approved service animals.
**Academic Honesty:** (I assume you already know this.) All work submitted under your name in this course is pledged as being your own work. This applies not only to quizzes and tests, but also to your homework assignments. You may choose to study in groups, but your written work should reflect your own understanding. A student involved in cheating (or helping another student to cheat) will receive no credit for that assignment, and will have a reduction of at least one full grade for their final course grade.

Please note that I take seriously the university’s policy on the need for academic honesty in all your work. *I refer you to the Whitworth Catalog, and the current Student Handbook, where guidelines on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are spelled out.* Any form of dishonesty in an assignment will lead to a zero on the assignment, and I reserve the right to give a grade of F for the course as well. In addition, instances of plagiarism can either be reported directly to the associate provost of instruction or submitted through an Early Alert form.

**Expectations for Students:**
- Please arrive to class on time and come prepared.
- Ask questions and carefully consider feedback given on all assignments!
- If you need to discuss any issues outside of class or need to inform the instructor that you will not be in class, due to an unexpected emergency, please email ASAP. Additionally, if you are involved in a school sponsored activity that requires you to miss class, please be sure to discuss this with your professor ahead of time. I will work with you as much as possible to assist.

**Grading:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Component</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation:</td>
<td>130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Homework Assignments:</td>
<td>120</td>
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<td>Quizzes:</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Print News Package:</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Media Campaign Package:</td>
<td>100</td>
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500 TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE
Grade Scale:

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
D- = 60-62
F = 0-59

Assignments:

**In-Class Assignments/Participation:** Although there will be some short “lectures” in class, the best way to learn how to write for the media is to write! Thus, you will be expected to work on mini assignments in class – both as an individual and in groups. Your participation points come from these activities, as well as your general engagement in class. You will also receive feedback on in-class assignments that are vital to your success on weekly homework assignments and your midterm and final projects. In general, each class you can earn up to five points.

**Weekly Homework Assignments:** Each week you will be assigned one 10-point homework assignment based on what was covered in class that week. It will be due the next week in class on Tuesday (in hard copy form), unless otherwise noted by your professor.

**Quizzes:** Throughout the semester you will have pop quizzes that may cover AP style or anything covered in your book or lectures. These are designed to be check-ins to make sure you are paying attention and retaining content and replace any formal exams in this course.

**Print News Package:** Your midterm assignment is due Tuesday, 10/24 in class (in hard copy). You will be submitting a basic news story, an interview, an alternative story, and a story of your choice - worth 25 points each – together. Think of this as sort of a mini writing portfolio showcasing what you have learned up to that point in the course. More information will be available in Blackboard under Content and will be discussed in class.

**Media Campaign Project:** Your final major project for this class will consist of the submission of a media campaign for a local non-profit. As part of this campaign, you will submit a series of social media entries, a press release, a speech outline, and an ad (print or video commercial). These pieces are due on Thursday, 12/07. You will then present your work to the class during our final on Tuesday, 12/12. More information will be available in Blackboard under Content and will be discussed in class.

*Extra Credit:* The opportunity may arise for some extra credit in this class. Stay tuned!
**Please see full assignment descriptions, prompts, and grading rubrics posted in Blackboard for further details and needed instructions on assignments.**

**Class Schedule:**

*NOTE: All readings should be completed by the first class in the week they are listed. *The professor reserves the right to make adjustment to this schedule. Any minor changes will be announced in class in a timely manner.*

**WEEK ONE 9/07: Introduction/Syllabus Review**

**WEEK TWO 9/12 & 9/14: Theory & Values/The Lead**
- Read: Chapters 1-2

**WEEK THREE 9/19 & 9/21: Legal and Ethical Considerations**
- Read: Chapters 3-4 Zeisler

**WEEK FOUR 9/26 & 9/28: Basics of News Writing**
- Read: Chapter 5-6

**WEEK FIVE 10/03 & 10/05: Interviewing**
- Read: Chapter 7

**WEEK SIX 10/10 & 10/12: Research/Quotes and Sources**
- Read: Chapters 8-9
  - **CLASS WILL NOT MEET IN-PERSON ON THURSDAY, 10/12. YOU WILL HAVE AN ONLINE ASSIGNMENT DUE THAT DAY. DETAILS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLASS.**

**WEEK SEVEN 10/17 & 10/19: Alternative Stories**
- Read Chapter 10
WEEK EIGHT 10/24 & 10/26: New Media

- Read Chapter 13
- DUE 10/24: Print news package

**The evening of Wednesday, 10/25 you are required to attend a staged press conference at 6:00 p.m. (Location to be announced.) This should not be a long activity, but please allot an hour for the event. You will have an assignment relating to the press conference, and it is mandatory. (If you have a scheduling conflict, please contact your professor ASAP.)

WEEK NINE 10/31 & 11/02: News Releases

- Read Chapter 14

WEEK TEN 11/07 & 11/09: Organizational Media

- Read Chapter 15

WEEK ELEVEN: 11/14 & 11/16: Speechwriting

- Read Chapter 16
  - CLASS WILL NOT MEET IN-PERSON ON THURSDAY, 11/16. YOU WILL HAVE AN ONLINE ASSIGNMENT DUE THAT DAY. DETAILS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLASS.

WEEK TWELVE: 11/21 & 11/23: Advertising Copywriting

- Read Chapter 17
  - NO CLASS THURSDAY, 11/23: THANKSGIVING BREAK


WEEK FOURTEEN 12/05 & 12/07: Broadcast

- Read Chapters 11-12
  - DUE 12/07: Media Campaign Package

WEEK FIFTEEN: FINAL EXAM

12/12/17 (Mon.): FINAL EXAM 1-3 P.M. *You will be presenting your media campaign during this time.