

COMM 5301 – Literature of Journalism
Syllabus – Fall 2016

I. Faculty Information

A. Dr. Marsha Little Matthews

1. HPR 265
2. Office Hours: Tuesday 3-4 p.m., Wednesday 11-Noon & 2-3 p.m.,
and by appointment
3. Phone: 903-566-7099
4. E-mail: MMatthews@uttyler.edu
5. Twitter: @MCommProf

II. Course Description

- A. A survey of the literature of literary journalism. Students will read general and specialized literature as a basis for group discussion.

III. Student Learning Objectives

A. Students will be able to

1. Explain communication from a variety of communication theoretical perspectives. (Program Student Learning Objective – Theoretical Knowledge)
 - a) Evaluate mass communication from a variety of theoretical perspectives.
2. Evaluate the communication rules, norms, listening skills, and rhetorical strategies used by people. (Program Student Learning Objective – Communication Assessment)
 - a) Demonstrate understanding of the history, criticism, and writing of literary journalism from many sources through writing reading reaction abstracts.
 - b) Understand the storytelling role of journalism through readings, discussions, and writing exercises.
 - c) Identify and understand the techniques that comprise and define the genre of literary journalism.
 - d) Develop his/her individual writing style using the techniques of literary journalism.
3. Conduct original research using a method appropriate to the research question. (Program Student Learning Objective – Research)
 - a) Write and present a conference ready research paper on the topic of literary journalism.

IV. Course Requirements

A. Texts

(AOF – abbreviation)

Kerrane, K., & Yagoda, B. (eds.). (1997). *The art of fact: A Historical anthology of literary journalism*. New York: Touchstone/Simon & Schuster. (ISBN: 978-0-684-846630-9)

(OWW – abbreviation)

Zinnser, W. (2006). *On writing well: The classic guide to writing nonfiction*. New York: Collins. (ISBN: 978-0-06-089154-1)

Book 1 - Hersey, J. (Feb. 1989). *Hiroshima*. New York: First Vintage Books Edition February, 1989. (ISBN: 978-0-679-72103-1)

Book 2 - Truman, C. (1994). *In cold blood*. New York: First Vintage Books Edition February 1994). (ISBN: 978-0-679-74558-7)

Book 3: Any ONE of these books:

- [*The Bottom of the Harbor*](#) by Joseph Mitchell
- [*Dispatches*](#) by Michael Herr
- [*Hells Angels*](#) by Hunter S. Thompson
- [*Slouching Towards Bethlehem*](#) by Joan Didion
- [*The Year of Magical Thinking*](#) by Joan Didion
- [*The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*](#) by Tom Wolfe
- [*The Right Stuff*](#) by Tom Wolfe
- [*The Armies of the Night*](#) By Norman Mailer
- [*Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*](#) by James Agee
- [*Somebody Told Me: The Newspaper Stories of Rick Bragg*](#) by Rick Bragg
- [*Reporting Notes on Journalism*](#) by Lillian Ross
- [*Picture*](#) by Lillian Ross
- [*A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*](#) by David Eggers (“a quasi-fictional memoir)
- [*Any book by John McPhee*](#) (just let me know which one you choose)

Book 4:

- A contemporary memoir – your choice. Let me know asap whom it might be.

Other selected readings to be handed out or posted on Blackboard.

The Narrative Digest - <http://www.niemanstoryboard.org/category/essays-on-craft/> - good examples of contemporary literary journalism & essays on the craft.

Not Required – Recommended – great tips and information from 50 well-known writers

- Kramer, M. & Call, W. (Eds.) (2007). *Telling true stories: A nonfiction writers’ guide from the Nieman Foundation at Harvard University*. New York: PLUME, Penguin Group. (ISBN: 978-0-452-28755-6)

- B. **Blackboard** - Check Blackboard OFTEN. We will work on assignments in and out of class through Blackboard. Also check your PATRIOTS EMAIL OFTEN. This is the only email address I will use to communicate with you. I also send emails of any and all announcements that I post on Blackboard to you through your Patriots email account.
- C. Seminar Discussions/Participation/Attendance/Other Writing Assignments
- D. Reading Reaction Abstracts
- E. Short Writing Assignments
- F. Research Paper
- G. Readings

V. Evaluation and Grade Calculation

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| Research Paper | 40% |
| Includes grades on first 3 stages of the paper & presentation) | |
| Reading Reactions | 25% |
| Short Writing Assignments | 25% |
| Discussion/Participation/Other Writing Assignments/Attendance | <u>10%</u> |
| Total | 100% |

VI. Miscellaneous

- A. **Electronic Devices: TURN THEM OFF.** Keep these devices in your backpack during class.
- B. **Use of Computers in Class:** Do not use computers during class for reading/writing e-mail, surfing the Web, playing games, working on assignments for other classes, or writing letters. You may use a laptop computer for taking class notes and other items as related to the class discussion. If you use your laptop for any other purpose, I will require you to immediately close the computer.
- C. **Assignment Policy:**
 1. Written Assignments/Presentations
 - a) All work must be prepared as a Microsoft Word file.
 - b) Submit all work as attachments and name them properly to receive credit.
 - (1) Name your files using your LAST name followed by an underscore () and the exercise slug.
 - (2) Example for Reading Reactions Abstracts:
Matthews_Abstract_for_WK2
 - (3) Example for Short Writing Assignments:
Matthews_You_the_Reporter
 2. Assignments will be given throughout the semester. Students are responsible for all course materials, including, but not limited to, class lectures, handouts, workbook and textbook reading assignments.

3. Assignments and due dates may be changed at the instructor's discretion with fair notice to students.
- D. **Late Assignments:** Late assignments will not be accepted. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the date specified.
 - E. **Attendance and Tardiness Policy:** This is a graduate course. You are expected to attend class. See the current UT Tyler catalog for the university's policy on student responsibility for missed classes and assignments. Be familiar with the university's drop policy. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to religious observance or university-sponsored activities should inform the instructor by the second class meeting.
 - F. **Academic Honesty Policy:** Students will adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Anyone caught cheating will earn a "0" for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Plagiarism (the use of written and oral words or ideas of another person, including another student, without the expressed acknowledgment of the speaker's or writer's indebtedness to that person) will not be tolerated. This includes the use of papers or other materials previously submitted to instructors in other classes, as well as video and audio recordings. Students caught plagiarizing will fail this class and be subject to academic and disciplinary action.
 - G. **Course Withdrawal:** The last date to withdraw from classes without penalty is **October 31, 2016.**
 - H. **Final Examination Date: Thursday, December 15, 2016.**
 - I. **The U-T Tyler Writing Center** provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning, as you will be asked to discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix, repair, or operate on your paper. Location: BUS 202. Appointments: 903-565-5995.
 - J. **Students Rights and Responsibilities:** To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www2.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>
 - K. **Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies:** Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.
 1. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two

grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

2. The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:
 - a) Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
 - b) Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
 - c) Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
 - d) Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
 - e) Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

L. State-Mandated Course Drop Policy:

1. Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).
2. Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

M. Disability Services: In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, PTSD or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to dstaples@uttyler.edu

N. Student Absence due to Religious Observance: Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

- O. **Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities:** If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.
- P. **Social Security and FERPA Statement:** It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.
- Q. **Emergency Exits and Evacuation:** Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.
- R. **Open Carry Statement:** "We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>."
- S. **UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University:**
1. All forms of tobacco will **not** be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors.
 2. Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products.
 3. There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.