COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog: Techniques of information gathering and writing for various audiences. Practice in interviewing, objective observation, document research including the internet and analysis. Emphasis is on integration of emerging media. Must be taken in the first nine hours for communications majors.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES

Effective writing is clean, clear and cohesive. Outstanding writing is all of that and compelling.

Students will be able to:

-- Write correctly and clearly using formats and styles appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism for the audiences and purposes required.

-- Produce accurate news/feature stories in appropriate format when given sets of facts.

-- Produce web, strategic communications materials in appropriate format when given sets of facts.

-- Demonstrate proficiency in grammar and word use; writing concisely and accurately; and use of the Associated Press guidelines.

-- Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of fairness, verification and attribution in mass media industries.

-- Recognize what constitutes libel, appropriation, intrusion, false light, and publicity about private facts.

-- Recognize areas of ethical concerns in writing for the media or strategic communications.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS
Associated Press Stylebook. Also available online at www.apstylebook.org. (I would recommend ordering it online. Make sure it is no older than 2015.

RECOMMENDED


Magazines: Texas Monthly, Time, Atlantic Monthly, National Geographic

Viewing: PBS Newshour, CNN, Fox News, MSNBC

Online: Politico.com, bbc.com, TexasTribune.org, Probulica.org, Poynter.org

Radio: KERA radio

GRADING

There are 1,000 points to earn in a semester. The final grade is based on the percentage of overall points earned. A: 900-1000  B: 800-899  C: 700-799  D: 600-699  F: 0-599  I: Incomplete

Graded Assignments (late assignments are not accepted; and receive a 0)

- Applying News Value - 20 pts., 2%
- Using the AP Stylebook - 50 pts., 5%
- AP Style: The Essentials - 50 pts., 5%
- Eliminating Words - 20 pts., 2%
- Sit Down And Write - 20 pts., 2%
- Observation - 30 pts., 3%
- Writing Leads - 20 pts., 2%
- Writing News (from prompt) - 50 pts., 5%
- Writing News -100 pts., 10%
- Planning a Digital Package - 20 pts., 2%
- Writing for Radio/TV (Reader) - 50 pts., 5%
- Working With A News Release - 40 pts., 4%
- Applying Media Law - 30 pts., 3%

500 pts.  50% of grade

Quizzes (most quizzes or 10 questions worth 2 points each)

- Professional Standards - 20 pts., 2%
• Sins of Journalism - 20 pts., 2%
• Writing Concisely - 20 pts., 2%
• Gathering Information - 20 pts., 2%
• Using Quotes - 20 pts., 2%
• The Inverted Pyramid - 20 pts., 2%
• Narrative Techniques - 20 pts., 2%
• Digital Media - 20 pts., 2%
• Writing for Broadcast - 20 pts., 2%
• Strategic Communications - 10 pts., 1%
• 0 – Ethics - 10 pts., 1%

200 pts. 20%

Major Exams

• Midterm - 150 pts; 15%
• final - 150 pts.; 5%

300 pts. 30%

Grading rubrics and scores: Assignments come with a rubric to explain how the grade is determined. The vast majority of graded work is done in or submitted through Canvas. All work is assigned a point value.

COURSE UNITS

For each unit, students will receive a study guide emphasizing key concepts to master. Units typically include a lecture based on a PowerPoint and skills-building exercise. Most units will end with a quiz.

• PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
• SINS OF JOURNALISM
• WRITING TOOLS
• AP STYLE
• WRITING CONCISELY
• GATHERING INFORMATION
• USING QUOTES
• MID-TERM TEST
• STORY STRUCTURES
• INVERTED PYRAMID
• NARRATIVE TECHNIQUES
• WRITING PROJECT
• DIGITAL MEDIA
• WRITING FOR BROADCAST
• STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION (PR, Advertising, Marketing)
• ETHICS
• MEDIA LAW
• FINALS TEST

ATTENDANCE

I cannot teach you unless you are in class. This is a lecture class.
-- Students who miss class for school-sponsored activities or for medical reason must notify me PRIOR to the absence in order to make up work. **Texting me is the best way to do this.**

-- Students who believe they have a compelling reason for missing class should speak to me.

-- Quizzes will be given within the first few minutes of class. Those who are tardy will not be given extra time to take the quiz.

**CLASS POLICIES**

-- **No cellphone use during class.** No calls. No texting. Set your phones on vibrate.

-- The class is held in a writing lab with a computer on every desk.

-- Drinks and snacks are not allowed.

-- Robust discussion is encouraged. Everyone must be respectful of differing opinions. Personal “attacks” on others will not be tolerated.

-- You cannot listen to audio via head phones in class.

-- Cheating is not be tolerated. See academic honesty.

**Access to Technology:**

I use Canvas to post announcements and grades and give and receive graded work.

**Academic Honesty:**

-- Practice academic integrity and accept responsibility for your actions.

-- Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, unattributed use of others’ work (including test and paper “banks”), disruption of class, and discourtesy to, or harassment of, other students or your instructor.

-- Anyone caught cheating will earn a “0” for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action.

-- **PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.** This includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit. Students caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment, may fail this class and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action.
THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER

WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center provides 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. 903-565-5995.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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

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 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. 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. The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
• Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
• Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy: Texas law prohibits a student 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). 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.

Disability/Accessibility Services - Current as 2017: In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Tyler at Texas offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities.

If you have a disability, including non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler and fill out the New Student application.

The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices, the SAR office located in the University Center, #3150 or call 903.566.7079.

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.

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.
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.

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.