

MCOM 4325—Multimedia Writing/Storytelling -- Fall 2018

Instructor: Lorri Allen

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Course Overview

Multimedia Writing/Storytelling teaches basic skills to create multimedia journalism projects. Multimedia stories will incorporate text, images, audio, video and data visualizations. You will apply standards of journalistic reporting and writing to your work throughout the semester.

Whether you plan to work at a newspaper, television station, radio station, production studio or PR/advertising agency, you need to be able to produce content for multiple platforms in multiple ways. Multimedia Writing and Storytelling provides you those skills. This course has a specific emphasis on writing for broadcast and the web.

Pre-requisites: JOUR/MCOM 3303 or JOUR/MCOM 3395.

Student Learning Objectives – Upon completion of the course, you will be able to:

Competency: Writing/Storytelling:

- Write correctly and clearly using formats and styles appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism for the audiences and purposes required.
 - Demonstrate an understanding of digital medium requirements through written assignments, including research, scripts and projects.
 - Demonstrate the ability to develop news stories for different media.

Competency: Analysis and Systematic Inquiry:

- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism professions.
 - Analyze writing practices, strategies and procedures for multiple forms of news production.
 - Demonstrate an understanding of and ability to apply the First Amendment and other legal principles for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism.
 - Show an understanding of professional ethical principles and issues for public relations/integrated communication and/or multimedia journalism.
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of telling journalistic stories with different media and apply those skills to analyzing and developing your own content.

Competency: Mediated Presentation:

- Apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information using tools and technologies appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or mediated journalism.
 - Demonstrate an understanding of and proficiency with the skills needed to make practical producing decisions.
 - Demonstrate skills using multiple software and hardware for creating multimedia stories.

Competency: Argument:

- Construct a persuasive message, adapted to the audience, purpose and context of the situation.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- Christian, Darrell, et.al (2018). *2018 Associated Press Stylebook*. New York: Associated Press.
- Tomkins, Al (2017). *Aim for the Heart: Write, Shoot, Report and Produce for TV and Multimedia* (Third Edition). Thousand Oaks, California: CQ Press. ISBN-13: 978-1506315256
- Articles and tip sheets to be assigned.

Equipment used in this class is available for checkout (make sure you're aware of the equipment checkout policy at UT Tyler).

REQUIRED MEDIA CONSUMPTION:

To understand and complete assignments, you **MUST** watch and listen to news programs, promotional campaigns and podcasts. Immerse yourself in mass media.

Suggested sources:

- **Newspapers:** *The New York Times*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Washington Post*
- **Magazines:** *The New Yorker*, *Texas Monthly*, *Atlantic Monthly*
- **Viewing:** 60 Minutes, CBS Sunday Morning News
- **Online:** Politico.com, bbc.com, TexasTribune.org, <https://www.propublica.org>
- **Listening:** NPR (100.1) or streaming at NPR.org

WHAT TO KNOW:

Attendance: ALL CLASSES are *mandatory*. Since we only meet twice a week, each discussion and activity build toward the next. Attendance and *participation* are a part of your grade.

- Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance or

university-sponsored activities should inform me by the second class meeting.

- WORK is not an excused absence.
- You are responsible for turning in all assignments by deadline. You are also responsible for lecture materials, announcements and assignments made during any absence. But DON'T BE ABSENT.
- If you are 10 minutes late or leave early, you may be considered absent.
- No make-up tests will be allowed unless you must be absent the day of the exam for an excused reason and have notified me at least three days in advance. Any make-up test must be taken **before** the absence.
- Students late to class on test/quiz days will not be allowed to take the exam if students have already completed it and turned it in or left the room.
- To qualify for an excused sick absence, you must provide a doctor's note.
- You may be excused for a death in the family IF the person who died is your parent, grandparent, sibling, spouse or child. Bring the obituary or funeral program to prove your point.
- I will not ask for your doctor's note or funeral program. Unless you show the evidence to me, you simply lose your A and P points for the day.

Assignment Policy:

- Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due **before** the start of class.
- Assignments and due dates may change – in your favor - with fair notice.
- You must complete all assignments to pass the course. This does not mean, however, that merely completing all assignments guarantees a passing grade.
- To help teach you to follow directions, each assignment may require a different way of submitting or formatting, so read each rubric carefully.
- Following the parameters of Bloom's Taxonomy, the assignments will increase in difficulty and the grading will become stricter through the semester. Plus, students will be required to show both a mastery of understanding and skills.

Classroom Courtesies:

- No cellphone, tablet or other device use during class unless the assignment specifically calls for the use. No calls, no texts, no status update checks.

The first time you are using a device when you're not supposed to be, I will take it for the rest of the class period. The second time, you must pay \$5 to get it back, the third \$10 and so on. The money will be donated to a scholarship fund.

- No eating or drinking is allowed in this lab.
- Talk, debate, ask questions and challenge but stay on topic.

Access to Technology:

- I use Canvas to communicate, post assignments and readings, present feedback and provide a space for you to communicate with your classmates.
- My email policy: on weekdays, I will do my best to answer questions in 24 hours. On weekends, I will do my best to answer in 48 hours.

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.

GRADING: There are 1,000 points possible.

- **Attendance and Participation (100):** You are expected to prepare for and be at all classes. Any class you miss without an accepted excuse, subtract 4 points from 100.
- **News quizzes:** To encourage your required news consumption, we will have 10 current events quizzes over the semester for 10 points each. The questions may include sports, trending topics and even class content.
- **Video News Skills projects-assigned:** VO, Interview, SOT, Standup (25 points each for 100)
- **Video News Skills projects-your topic:** VO, Interview, SOT, Standup (25 points each for 100)
- **Mid-term Exam** (100 points)
- **Broadcast package** (100 points)
- **PR/Advertising spot** (100 points)
- **Semester Capstone project** (100 points for content, 100 points for execution/technical mastery, for 200 total)
- **Final Exam** (100 points)

Extra Credit: It's available! Ask!

Grades are based on the total number of points you earn.

A: 900-1,000 **B:** 800-899 **C:** 700-799 **D:** 600-699 **F:** 0-599

Grading rubrics: You will get a rubric to guide you in completing each assignment. However, the following applies to everything we do for this class:

- **Get it right in writing or digitally.** Your grade for each assignment will be reduced depending on how many grammar, spelling, punctuation or AP errors you have.
- **Facts are important.** Your grade for each assignment will be reduced depending on how many errors of fact you have.
- **Names are important.** If you misspell a name (including mine), you will get a zero for the assignment.
- **Plagiarism will not be tolerated.** Students caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment, may fail this class and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action.
- Go here for more:
<http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/scholasticdishonesty.php>

Capstone options

1. Analysis/Computer-Assisted Reporting – Lots of comparison and contrast can be done on a university campus, from energy usage to wasted expenses and from salary comparisons and recycling (or lack of it) to new technologies adopted. Word count: 1,000 – 1,500. Then, create a simple website incorporating photos, text, video, graphics and audio to illustrate your findings.

2. In-Depth – Take a campus issue that needs more examination, or one that needs an update and go deeper. Word count: 1,000 – 2,000. Also produce a reporter package (must include script with lead-in and tag, interviews, b-roll, standup) 1:15 to 2:30 that enhances your report.

3. Investigative – Examine a campus problem. Because FOIA documents may need to be requested, get the topic approved early in the semester. Word count: 1,500-4,000. Also, produce an Audio or Video Documentary (4-minute minimum, not to exceed 10 minutes)

4. PR Campaign – Find a nonprofit, university department or student organization/cause that needs publicity and is willing to be a client. Create a complete portfolio including new logos, stationery, business cards, social media accounts, website, news releases and five 60-second videos to attract interest.

****You must have my approval for your topic or project by Sept. 18.**

Note: The syllabus is for planning purposes. The instructor reserves the right to revise/change assignments to meet course objectives and enhance students' learning.

UT Tyler Honor Code

The UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: *Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.*

Educating students to take their place in the world engenders a serious responsibility for any educational institution. The University of Texas at Tyler recognizes the future decisions made by these citizens must be grounded in ethics as well as in academic knowledge if these decisions will protect and benefit society. For these reasons, the University takes a proactive stand and adopts an Honor code throughout the campus so students may be equipped with an ethical framework.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student, please follow this link: <http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

Campus Carry

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>

Tobacco-Free

All forms of tobacco are banned 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. 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. Cessation programs are available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines and group support. For more information on cessation programs, visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

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. 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 of which students need to be aware. 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 percent refunds for partial withdrawals. (No refund 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

CENSUS DATE is Sept. 10.

Last day to withdraw is Nov 5.

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy

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 dropped after the census 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 accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have questions.

Student Accessibility and Resources

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 (SAR) office and schedule an interview with the Accessibility Case Manager/ADA Coordinator, Cynthia Lowery Staples. If you are unsure if the above criteria apply to you, but have questions or concerns, contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment, visit the SAR office located in the UC 3150 or call 903.566.7079. You may also send an email to cstaples@uttyler.edu

Student Absence due to Religious Observance

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are asked to inform the instructor 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 UT Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so 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.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

"Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying from another student's test paper;
- Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- Failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- Possession during a test of materials, which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes;"

The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if the person administering the test has specifically prohibited them;

- Using, buying, stealing, transporting or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution or computer program;

- Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
- Discussing the contents of an exam with another student who will take it;
- Divulging the contents of an exam, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructor has designated that the exam is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
- Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test or any course-related assignment;
- Paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
- Falsifying research data, laboratory reports and/or other academic work offered for credit;
- Taking, keeping, misplacing or damaging the property of the University, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
- Misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

“Plagiarism” 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.

“Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

UT Tyler Resources for Students

- Writing Center (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
- Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
- Counseling Center (903.566.7254)