Convergence Reporting
Syllabus

MCM 305 — Fall 2018
Department of Mass Communication
12-12:50 MWF BO 209

Convergence Reporting is an intensive study of methods used in gathering and writing news beyond those considered in MCM 205. Prerequisite: MCM 205.

Instructor: Philip Anderson M.S.
Phone: (936) 468-1050
Email: andersonpb@sfasu.edu
Office: BO, Room 204
Office hours: 10:30-11:30 MWF 9:30-11:30 TTh

REQUIRED TEXT:
Writing and Editing for Digital Media (3rd Ed.) by Brian Carroll
ISBN: 978-1138636033

RECOMMENDED TEXT:
Associated Press Stylebook (2016 or later)

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Demonstrate appropriate writing and editing skills across diverse multimedia platforms.
2. Gather, analyze, organize and synthesize information on contemporary topics to develop a news story.
3. Demonstrate the application of contemporary technology, terminology and techniques in the news gathering process.
4. Understand effective visual language and how to apply it to convey messages and enhance the communication process.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. The student will learn to write news stories for both print and online applications, applying professional principles of fairness and balance, and utilizing effective grammar and syntax, including elements of Associated Press style.
2. The student will learn to identify hard and soft news opportunities on campus.
3. The student will develop packages of campus news that incorporate both written and visual components and that are appropriate for a variety of media applications.
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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Quizzes and Participation</td>
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<td>Journal</td>
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<td>Mid Term Exam</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Writing Assignments (7):</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<td>Photo Story (5%)</td>
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<td>Audio Script (3%)</td>
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<td>Audio Story (7%)</td>
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<td>Video Story (7%)</td>
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<td>Infographic Writing Assignment (5%)</td>
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<td>Final Project (20%)</td>
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<td>Final Portfolio</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
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**BOYNTON LAB SCHEDULE:**
The Boynton Lab will be available for weekly use. The lab schedule will be posted by the second week of the semester.

**LAB FACILITY, COMPUTERS AND PRINTERS:**
Food and/or drinks are not allowed in the lab. Printing unrelated to your registered class (which uses Boynton 202 or 209 Labs) may revoke ALL printing privileges. Printing to the color printer requires approval and must be for specific class assignments. Lab assistants are available for general assistance. If you experience a problem with computer equipment, please note the problem in detail and the computer used and report this information to the lab assistant.

**ASSIGNMENTS**
Writing assignments will be graded based on both quantity and quality. All writing assignments are expected to provide substantive content and should reflect elements such as timeliness, relevance, innovation, style usage, spelling, grammar, general writing, coverage of topic, fairness, accuracy, use of quotes and attribution, reporting abilities, clarity, lively writing, objectivity and story development.

You will lose points for each misspelled word in a news story. Misspelled names also will result in an automatic deduction on the grade for that story. You will be expected to edit your work according to AP style BEFORE you submit the draft in lab.

Deadlines are a major responsibility in the communication industry, and they will be respected in this course. No exceptions.

Lab time provides an opportunity for one-on-one help with your writing. The instructor will be available to help you during each lab period. During the course of the semester, you may use the lab period to plan and write your converged news stories.

**WRITING JOURNALS**
You can’t be a good journalist if you are not a good media consumer This assignment is designed to enhance your news judgement and ability to critic others in the media. Students are required to keep an online journal of news articles consumed along with a brief written critique of the article. The student may consume articles
related to their writing genre or medium of their choice. The instructor will be checking the document weekly for completion.

**QUIZZES:**
There will be a total of 15 quizzes delivered over the course of the semester. The students will have advance knowledge of when quizzes will be and each quiz will be worth .5% of the student’s final grade.

**PARTICIPATION:**
Students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to engage with the class materials. Participation is worth 2.5% of the overall amount of this course. Students that come to class and do not engage with the subject matter or their peers should not expect full participation credit come December.

**FINAL PORTFOLIO:**
During the final week of the semester students will assemble a personal online portfolio showcasing their work. This online portfolio will include the revised editions of each of the students writing assignments along with their final project. It will be published on the internet and act as a resume for the student’s work.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**
1. Each student is allowed three absences without penalty. For each additional absence, two points will be deducted from your final course average.
2. Three tardies count as one absence. If you come to class 15 minutes or later after class has started, you will be counted absent.
3. If you do not plan to come to class, do not take this course.

**CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE**
All students are expected to show the instructor and their fellow students the appropriate respect. Although lively discussion is encouraged, please do not make unnecessary noise, do other class work, read or sleep.

Listen attentively.
Please put all cell phones on silent and refrain from text messaging during class.
Per University policy, you are not allowed to have food or drink in classrooms. The exception to this is bottled water. Do not bring cups of coffee or any other liquid into the classroom. If any damage results from spilled liquids or food, the student will be responsible for any cleaning or repairs.

**ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR**
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
Plagiarizing or copying material from another publication or another student without attribution will result in an automatic F for the course. Fabrication of facts and/or quotes in campus news stories also will be cause for a failing course grade. Facts and quotes will be checked periodically with listed sources to verify accuracy.
DEFINITION OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit.
Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp Students not complying with SFA’s academic dishonesty regulations will be given a failing grade in this course and may be subject to further disciplinary action.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
To obtain disability-related accommodations and/or auxiliary aids, students may call 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, DS will notify the instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided.

NOTE: This course is designated as Writing Enhanced for the purposes of university curriculum requirements.