Course Syllabus
MCM 205.093 (Class) and MCM 205L.023 (Lab)
Media Writing
Spring 2018

Instructor: Amy F. Roquemore
Email: aroquemore@sfasu.edu
Phone: (936) 468-4703
Office: BPSC, Room 2.308 (second floor)
Department: Mass Communication/Student Publications
Office Hours: 2 – 3 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday and by appointment
Class meeting time and place: 12:30 – 1:45 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday; Boynton Building, Room 202

Course Description: Fundamental principles of writing news across platforms of print, broadcast and online. Writing enhanced. Incidental fee required.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

1. Demonstrate the ability to write effectively across a variety of platforms appropriate to the discipline
2. Gather, organize and analyze discipline-appropriate research and communicate information about it
3. Understand the role of media in society
4. Comprehend legal and ethical principles relating to media
5. Demonstrate the application of media technology, terminology and techniques

Journalism Concentration PLOs:

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. Demonstrate journalistic writing skills across print, broadcast and online platforms
2. Understand and utilize research and investigative techniques for news stories across multiple platforms
3. Demonstrate the ability to utilize contemporary news gathering and writing technology
4. Demonstrate how to create and present a story simultaneously in print, broadcast and online platforms

**Required Text and Materials:**

1. *Writing & Reporting for the Media* by Bender, Davenport, Drager and Felder (11th edition.)
2. *The Associated Press Stylebook* (2015 or later edition.) This is the “Bible” of media writing. You need to own an up-to-date copy as long as you are studying or working in the mass communication field.
3. Instructor-prepared exercises given to students during class.

**Course Requirements:** Weekly lab exercises, a mid-semester exam and a final exam.

**Considerations:**

1. The mid-semester and final exams will cover material discussed in class along with assigned chapters from our textbook. Exams will be two-part: theory (questions taken from the assigned chapters and class lectures) and application (grammar, AP Style, usage, etc.). It is your responsibility to keep up with textbook reading assignments. We do not have time to cover the entirety of the text in class.
2. Policies regarding lab work:
   a. All assigned work will be completed during lab. You may not finish at home.
   b. Please plan to stay the entire lab period. Treat each lab as you would a test. Portions of some labs may be devoted to lecture.
   c. In completing your lab assignments, you may use notes, books, returned exercises, etc. Please do not talk to one another. If you have questions, ask your instructor.
   d. At the end of the semester, your two lowest lab grades will be dropped (not included in the lab portion of the grade). Therefore, there will be no make-ups.
   e. Please do not ask to begin a lab early.

**Additional Lab Information –**

3. **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.
4. **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.

**Grading Policy:**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lab exercises</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Mid-semester exam</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
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**IMPORTANT: 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 longer after class has started, you will be counted absent.
3. If you do not plan to come to class, do not take this course.

**Additional Considerations:**

1. Early tests will not be given. Make-up tests will be given only when warranted by extenuating circumstances, which will be considered by the instructor on a case-by-case basis.
2. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. If an exercise or exercises were handed out, please ask me for copies. I will not remind you.
3. Students are expected to conduct themselves as ladies and gentlemen in class. Whispering, talking, reading, studying material for another class, etc., will be not allowed. Students also are expected to remain in their seats throughout the class period unless there is an emergency.
4. Texting, going online, emailing or using social media during class is rude and will not be tolerated. Please make sure to turn off your cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc. before class begins, and put them away. They should not be on your desk during class.
5. Children are not allowed in either the class or lab.

**Academic Integrity (4.1):** Academic integrity is the responsibility of all university faculty members and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university polices, penalties and procedures for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of class;
the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or 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: submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and 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/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf.

**Withheld Grades Semester Policy (5.5):** Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same courses in future terms, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade-point average.

**Students with Disabilities:** To obtain disability accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services, Human Services Building, Room 325, (936) 468-3004/468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodation. For additional information, access www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices.

**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, http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-code-of-conduct-10.4.pdf). 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 classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over which 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 iCare Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.