TEXT:
Readings and lecture materials will come from OER (open educational resources) and other freely available articles, both online and in print.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Writing opinion pieces and columns for online and traditional media.

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.

COVID-19 MASK POLICY

Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.

FACE-TO-FACE/ONLINE COURSE

This class is offered as a face-to-face/online hybrid course due to the social distancing requirements on the SFA campus. You will receive course instruction via online modules and/or in-person classes, with different groups allowed in the classroom on different days to allow for socially distanced seating.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
Students in this class are expected to read and abide by the university policy on academic integrity. If a student is found in violation of this policy, he/she will be subject to receiving a failing grade for this course, and the violation will be reported to the proper university authorities.

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

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

WITHHELD GRADES SEMESTER GRADES POLICY (A-54):
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 course work 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 course 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-related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, Room 325, 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 accommodations. For additional information, go to http://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, 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.

**LAB FACILITY, COMPUTERS, AND PRINTERS:**
I know it’s tempting, but food and/or drinks are not allowed in the lab due to the nature of the equipment. Please help us with this policy by being responsible with yourself first. Printing that is 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, which computer you used, and report this information to the lab assistant.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**
You are expected to come to every class period. If you believe you have a reasonable excuse for absence, you must notify your instructor IMMEDIATELY. What constitutes a “reasonable excuse” is determined by your instructor.

**GRADES:**
You will be graded on eight column assignments, worth 60% of your overall grade (each column is worth 7.5% of your overall grade), class participation and debate, worth 10% of your overall grade, two editorials worth 10% of your overall grade (each editorial is worth 5% of your overall grade), a mid-term test worth 10% of your overall grade, and a portfolio worth 10% of your overall grade.

**COLUMNS (60% @ 7.5% each):**
Columns will make up the bulk of your overall grade. We will discuss these assignments in class and each will come with a specific rubric detailing what you will be graded on. Each column is worth 7.5% of your overall grade. Columns are well-researched opinion pieces you write yourself about a specific, newsworthy, and relevant topic.

**EDITORIALS (10% @ 5% each):**
You will be asked to write two editorials with a group of other students in the course. Editorials are opinion pieces written to reflect the values and beliefs of a publication or newsroom and must be written as though you are speaking on behalf of a group of people and not just yourself (because you are). Rubrics and group critique sheets will be provided.
CLASS PARTICIPATION (DISCUSSION & DEBATE) (10%): Each student is expected to participate in all class discussions and debates, as well as lead/proctor at least one debate in class. Students should also be prepared to critique the work of their peers online and in the classroom, as well as offer evidence that confirms or challenges what another student has written. PLEASE BE RESPECTFUL OF EACH OTHER. Basic ground rules for discussions and debates will be set by the professor and provided to students in a written format. Students will be expected to adhere to these rules both online and in class.

MID-TERM TEST (10%): Students will be given a mid-term test in the course that tests their knowledge and understanding of opinion writing, best practices for writing effective opinion pieces, some history of opinion news and its impact on society and other relevant topic discussed in the class.

PORTFOLIO (10%): Students will be asked to include corrected assignments, a short biography of themselves, and short essays on what they have learned in class in an online portfolio uploaded to D2L and a portfolio website of the student’s choosing. What is expected in terms of portfolio content will be discussed in class, and students will be given a rubric explaining what is expected in the final version of the portfolio. As this is a writing-focused course, the quality of the written content matters much more than the layout of your portfolio, but web portfolios should still be easy to navigate and somewhat pleasing to the eye when placed online.

Course Calendar (Tentative)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>Topics/Assignments</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION TO COLUMN &amp; EDITORIAL WRITING &amp; HOW TO RESEARCH AND ARGUE EFFECTIVELY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug 24 – Aug 30</td>
<td>HISTORY OF EDITORIAL &amp; COLUMN WRITING &amp; EFFECTIVENESS OF CLASSIC OPINION PIECES/WRITERS</td>
<td>COLUMNS 1 &amp; 2 DUE SUNDAY BY MIDNIGHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>MODERN EDITORIAL AND COLUMN WRITING &amp; EFFECTIVENESS OF MODERN OPINION PIECES/WRITERS</td>
<td>COLUMNS 3 &amp; 4 DUE SUNDAY BY MIDNIGHT</td>
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<td>Aug 31 – Sep 6</td>
<td>MID-TERM REVIEW/TEST</td>
<td>MID-TERM CONDUCTED IN PERSON</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>EDITORIAL 1 PITCH AND COMPLETION</td>
<td>EDITORIAL 1 DUE SUNDAY BY MIDNIGHT</td>
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<td>Sep 7 – Sep 13</td>
<td>ATTRACTING AN AUDIENCE: HOW TO GET YOUR WORK PUBLISHED AND SEEN</td>
<td>COLUMNS 5 &amp; 6 DUE SUNDAY BY MIDNIGHT</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>HOW TO PRESENT OPINIONS IN PERSON AND ON CAMERA &amp; EDITORIAL 2 PITCH</td>
<td>COLUMNS 7 &amp; 8 DUE SUNDAY BY MIDNIGHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 14 – Sep 20</td>
<td>EDITORIAL 2 &amp; PORTFOLIO</td>
<td>EDITORIAL 2 &amp; PORTFOLIO DUE BY 4:30 P.M. OCT 15</td>
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Grade calculator: [https://www.rapidtables.com/calc/grade/grade-calculator.html](https://www.rapidtables.com/calc/grade/grade-calculator.html)