

Sports Writing/Reporting

JOUR 4150/6150-001

Fall 2022

Meeting: MW, 2:20-3:45 p.m.

Meeman 202

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog description

Development of advanced writing, reporting and professional skills specific to sports media; emphasis on practice of game reporting, feature stories, column and opinion writing and multimedia.

Prerequisites

JOUR 3120 or 3629

JOUR 3526

Textbooks, Software and Required Materials

Required: Gisondi, J. (2017). Field Guide to Covering Sports Second Edition. Washington: CQ Press. / ISBN-13: 978-1506315683 / ISBN-10: 1506315682.

Classroom format

This course is designed to develop writing, reporting, and professional skills specific to sport media. You will learn about writing strategies for stories produced in print, Web, social media, audio, and video. Some sessions will require students to leave the classroom, in which case conduct will be governed by the rules of the classroom and the rules of the venue in which the class is meeting. A typical class session will consist of a lecture, discussion, and assignment/lab time. Students are required to complete multiple writing and media projects throughout the semester, as well as a final project..

Accessing the course website

1. Go to the University of Memphis online learning home page:
<https://memphis.instructure.com/>.
2. Log in using your University of Memphis username and password.
3. In the Term Year course list available to you, click on the link for JOUR 4535/6535-001 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Assignments & Grading

Assignment categories and points or percentage weights.

A = 92%-100%
 A- = 90%-91%
 B+ = 87%-89%
 B = 82%-86%
 B- = 80%-81%
 C+ = 77%-79%
 C = 72%-76%
 C- = 70%-71%
 D = 65%-69%
 F = 0%-64%

Grading Philosophy

A=Professional quality work that could be use with little or no modification; B=Good to excellent work and exceeds requirement but would require revision to be used professionally;
 C=Satisfactory work and adequately meets requirement but would need significant revision;
 D=Barely satisfies minimum requirement and below average quality; F=Unsatisfactory work and does not meet minimum requirement. NOTE: Plusses and minuses may be given.

Undergraduate Assignments

Assignment	No.	Points
Quizzes	5	125 (25 points each)
Deadline Stories	5	125 (25 points each)
Print Stories	4	200 (50 points each)
Broadcast Stories	4	200 (50 points each)
In-Class Press Conference	1	50 points
Final In-Depth Story	1	150 points
Online Portfolio	1	100 points
Participation	1	50 points
Total		1,000 points

Graduate Assignments

Assignment	No.	Points
Quizzes	5	125 (25 points each)
Deadline Stories	5	125 (25 points each)
Print Stories	4	200 (50 points each)
Broadcast Stories	4	200 (50 points each)
In-Class Press Conference	1	50 points
Final In-Depth Story	1	150 points
Lit Review	1	200 points
Online Portfolio	1	100 points
Participation	1	50 points
Total		1,200 points

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One, Aug. 22: Course introduction/Intro to the Field of Sports Reporting
 Assignment: Deadline Story 1 (In-class Wednesday)

Week Two, Aug. 29: Writing Workshop/Pre-Game

Homework: Quiz 1

Assignment: Deadline Story 2 (In class Wednesday)

Week Three, Sept. 5: The Game (Labor Day, No Class on Monday)

Homework: Quiz 2

Week Four, Sept. 12: Finding Sources/Interviews

Homework: Quiz 3; Print Story 1 (Due Sunday at 11:59 p.m.)

Assignment: Deadline Story 3 (In class Wednesday)

Week Five, Sept. 19: Broadcast Sports/Keeping Stats

Homework: Quiz 4; Broadcast Story 1 (Due Sunday at 11:59 p.m.)

Week Six, Sept. 26: The Press Conference

Assignment: In-class press conference

Week Seven, Oct. 3: Sports Feature Stories

Homework: Quiz 5; Print Story 2 (Due Sunday at 11:59 p.m.)

Week Eight, Oct. 10: Social Media Writing

Assignment: Deadline Story 5 (live tweeting in class Wednesday)

Week Nine, Oct. 17 Opinion Writing (columns and blogs)

Homework: Broadcast Story 2

Week 10, Oct. 24: Covering Prep Sports

Homework: Print Story 3

Week 11, Oct. 31: Sports Issue Reporting

Homework: Pitch In-Depth Sports Story

Week 12, Nov. 7: Developing a Sports Beat

Homework: Print Story 4

Week 13, Nov. 14: Writing Week

Homework: Broadcast Story 4

Week 14, Nov. 21: Work on Final Stories (Thanksgiving Week, no class on Wednesday)

Week 15, Nov. 28: Presentation of Final Stories

Homework: Final In-depth Stories

Final exam: Turn in your online portfolio by the scheduled Final date and time.

ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

Professional Values and Competencies in JOUR 4150

- Apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, both in a global context and in the United States.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the multicultural history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications.
- Demonstrate culturally proficient communication that empowers those traditionally disenfranchised in society, especially as grounded in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and ability, domestically and globally, across communication and media contexts.
- Present images and information effectively and creatively, using appropriate tools and technologies.
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

How professional values and competencies will be met

Cognitive objectives to be mastered (ability to explain, analyze, understand, think critically)

- Understand the role of a multimedia sports journalist in the field of sports journalism.
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct interviews with coaches, players, and other stake holders in the sporting community.
- Understand the role of social media in sports journalism.
- Think critically about the images, video, audio, and graphics presented in stories and packages.
- Think critically about the role of race, gender, gender expression, class, sexuality, ability, and power in the sports world and how that plays into the sports journalism.
- Analyze published sports stories and packages for accuracy, fairness, and diversity.
- Understand AP Style and use it sports reporting.
- Understand the role of multimedia platforms in sports journalism.

Performance standards to be met (demonstrable skills, abilities, techniques, applied competencies)

- Students will write several sports news stories or produce several sports broadcast packages during the semester. Story length and details will vary by assignment.
- Students are responsible for developing the story idea and researching and writing the story within the stated deadline.
- Students will conduct interviews with players, coaches, and stakeholders that incorporate a multicultural understand of the sports world.
- Students will analyze award-winning sports journalism for class discussion.
- Students will use AP style when writing sports stories.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Recognize various kinds of sports writing.
- Learn about a variety of sports (outside of men's basketball, men's football and men's baseball).
- Find out what opportunities exist in the field of sports writing.

Understanding

- Understand the professional requirements needed to become a sports writer.
- Understand the importance of reporting on diverse populations and of writing for equally diverse readers.
- Understand the differences between journalistic sports writing and fan-written sports stories, and between critical analysis and opinion.
- Appreciate the role of multimedia in sports writing.

Application

- Read pre-selected news stories about “minor” sports (any sport other than men’s football, men’s basketball and men’s baseball).
- Take weekly quizzes about these stories about “minor” sports.
- Meet professionals from the sports media industry.
- Cover live sports events on Twitter and with full-length stories.
- Write an in-depth thematic feature, a profile, a review of a sports book, and opinion columns, all on deadline.
- Record one-minute sports news audio updates.

JOURNALISM AND STRATEGIC MEDIA POLICIES

Portfolio requirement

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and graduate students are to begin in JRSM 7002. Students are to contribute to it in every skills course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student’s work from courses and/or professional experiences and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in their capstone courses.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. Students may use any content management system, but students are encouraged to use WordPress, Wix or SquareSpace. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but they must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional lives, via a common email service, such as Gmail.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile

- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files and writing pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

Email

Students must have their UofM email accounts activated. Students using another provider, such as Google, are required to have all UofM email forwarded to that account. Students should go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UofM email. Students are required to check their email daily. They are responsible for complying with any email sent to by professors or others in the University.

Electronic devices

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Instructors will set the policy for their specific classes.

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory in Journalism and Strategic Media. Students may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements with the class professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency, such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). Journalism and Strategic Media is a professional program, and students are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. Students who have some problem making it to class on time should make arrangements to correct the problem or consider taking another class. Students should consider this class as a "job" in the educational process and be on time just as they would elsewhere.

Course repetition

Majors and minors who fail to earn the minimum passing grade ("C-") in a class required by their program of study in Journalism and Strategic Media more than three times will be dropped from the program.

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the résumé and logo).

Academic integrity

In addition to University-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses or students receiving any assistance

from others for work assigned to be done on their own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. Punishment may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the University.

Further, as this is a journalism and strategic media class, students are expected to comply with copyright law and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for rating originality of your ideas. Also to evaluate proper use and assignment of sources. As part of this process, you may require to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your work. Other instructions to follow may also be given. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process. The assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database. It is solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Assignments not submitted according to the instructor's procedures may be penalized or may not be accepted at all. (*Office of Legal Counsel, October 11, 2018*)

Online SETEs

Students are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once the instructor has posted grades, student can immediately see that grade, provided they have completed a the SETE for that class. To access evaluation forms, students should log in to MyMemphis using their UUIDs and email passwords; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. Completing the SETE will only take a few minutes. Faculty take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Student feedback is essential and is appreciated.

Deadlines

All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. Students needing an extension on an assignment must receive approval from the instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

AP Style and grammar

All written work in this class must follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. Students are responsible for learning these rules and checking their work for errors.

Disability and accommodations

Students who need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office for Disability Resources for Students at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Diversity and inclusivity

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Media reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

Weather policy

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the University is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.

Student support

Student who are experiencing personal or academic challenges including, but not limited to food or housing issues, family needs, or other stressors, should visit the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support page to learn about resources that can help: <https://www.memphis.edu/saos/sos/crisis-resources.php>. Any student who faces personal challenges including, but not limited to securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of Student Accountability, Outreach & Support (901-678-2187) located in the University Center, Suite 359 for assistance. Students may also talk with course instructors about the challenges they are experiencing. Instructors may be able to assist in connecting with campus or community support.

COVID-19 protocols

If a student tests positive for COVID-19, they need to notify the Dean of Students Office at deanofstudents@memphis.edu and notify the University of their result. Faculty are expected to be accommodating with extra time for assignments; however, decisions will vary on a case-by-case basis according to the severity of the student's illness. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, students are encouraged to wear masks indoors, wash hands frequently and wipe down their workstations with sanitizing wipes before and after class.