

Advanced Media Writing

JRSM 7015-S50

Fall 2024

5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays on Teams

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Catalog Description

Designed to help students become more precise as well as versatile writers by diagnosing their writing, polishing their grammar and editing skills, and teaching them to write with clarity, cohesiveness, and conciseness.

Prerequisite

None

Required textbook

Media Writer's Handbook: A Guide to Common Writing and Editing Problems by George T. Arnold, fifth edition.

Course objectives

This course is designed to provide students with advanced practical and theoretical experience in storytelling. Students will read and discuss current research in journalism, ethics, and audiences. During the semester, you will build on skills learned in previous courses to:

- Deepen your understanding of journalistic ethics.
- Enhance your capacity to judge the newsworthiness of events and ideas; • Improve your analytical abilities when reading news and feature stories.
- Hone key skills, such as newsgathering, organization, and developing rapport with sources;
- Develop your skills of editing, verification and fact-checking.
- Strengthen your competence in writing clear, concise, accurate and interesting news stories; • Produce stories based on information obtained from primary sources.
- Work through and hone your problem-solving skills.
- Gain practical experience in advanced and specialized news coverage.

Accessing the Canvas website

1. Go to the University of Memphis eLearn home page: <http://elearn.memphis.edu>
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 JRSM 7015-001/M50 to enter your course and read the instructions on the welcoming page

Requirements Computer Usage

Students are expected to use a computer in this course. Students will use Apple computers running the Macintosh operating system in class but may use Windows computers at their own discretion. Students will work with the design software standard in the professional world. At this time, the professional standard is the Adobe Creative Cloud, particularly Adobe InDesign, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator. Extensive instruction about how to use these programs will be offered in this course.

Course equipment

The use of a digital single lens reflex (DSLR) camera is required in this course. The Department of Journalism and Strategic Media has provided cameras with 30-55mm lenses for students in this course. Cameras are limited to a 24-hour checkout. Students may use their own DSLR cameras with approval from the instructor. Lost, stolen, or broken cameras and equipment will be the financial responsibility of the student; the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media will put a financial obligation hold on your registration until the camera/equipment is replaced. Cameras and equipment must be returned on time. Failure to return a camera on time will result in a one-letter grade deduction from your final grade for each day late. Students with unreturned/broken cameras will receive a grade of O/F until the financial obligation is met.

Grading for Students registered for JRSM 7015

Stories (40%)

You have 5 assignments during the semester:

1. General news story
2. News analysis story
3. Profile due
4. Feature story
5. Opinion story with at least one interviewed source

Project (30%)

You will team up for a semester-long multimedia journalism project. You and your partner(s) will choose a timely topic to report on throughout the semester. You will have to build an audience (don't hesitate to use social media) and update it at least once a week. What follows are the minimum requirements for this final project. Be inventive, be creative, don't limit yourself to these guidelines. You're journalists. Report on the topic to the best of your ability and with all the tools at your disposal! You are welcome to use some of your homework toward this project, but be aware that homework assignments are individual

while you have (a) partner(s) for this project.

Quizzes (30 percent)

You will complete a weekly quizzes on AP Stylebook and the Media Writers Handbook.

By Thursday, September 14 at the end of class [Project Assignment 1]: • Decide on a topic • Begin setting up a website with at least two pages: - About / Contact page - Presentation of topic • Email me a link to the website by 9:30 p.m.

By Thursday, September 28 at the end of class [Project Assignment 2]: • Start building an audience for your website. Set up social media accounts. • Email me when the website is updated and ready

By Thursday, November 30 at 8:30 p.m. [Final Project]: • Have at least 12 stories overall including - At least one audio story - At least one photo slideshow (may be on a different page) - At least one video reportage - At least 2 story packages that integrate text and visuals and/or sound • Email me when the website is updated and

Number grades on tests and quizzes translate into these letter grades: A, 90-100; B, 80-89; C, 70-79; D, 60-69; F, below 60.

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.

Class assignment schedule

All multimedia assignments and multimedia projects are to be submitted electronically via eCourseware. Generally, each assignment and project will come with unique formatting guidelines. Be sure to follow these guidelines exactly. Work that does not comply to these guidelines, as well as the production specifications for the assignment, will receive a grade of 0. •

All projects are generally due at 11:59 p.m. Tuesdays of every week. Work will be critiqued in the classroom and must be suitable for presentation. Students are encouraged to work ahead on assignments to develop their own processes for the work.

Week 1, Aug. 27

On the Agenda Course Introduction, Syllabus Overview, brief writing exercise (not graded)

Week 2, Sept. 3

Chapter 1 – 25 Ways to Improve Immediately; Chapter 9 – nouns.

Story ideas due

Week 3, Sept. 10.

Chapter 2 – 50 Flubs Media Professionals Make Frequently; Chapter 10 - Pronouns

Week 4, Sept. 17

Chapter 3 – Are These Distinctions Worth Making?; Chapter 11- Noun-pronoun agreement
General news story due

Week 5, Sept. 24

Chapter 4 – Gotcha Times 15; Chapter 12 – Verbs and Verbals
Re-write of general news story due.

Week 6, Oct. 1

Chapter 5 – The Trouble with Only; Chapter 13 – Subject-verb agreement
News analysis story due.

Week 7, Oct. 8

Chapter 6 – One Potato, Two Potatoes; Chapter 14 - Adjectives
Re-write of news analysis story due.

Week 8, Oct. 22

Chapter 7 – Excising the Excessive; Chapter 15 - Adverbs
Feature story due

Week 9, Oct. 29

Chapter 8 – I don't Sound like a Vice President; Chapter 16 – Comparison of Adjectives and Adverbs
Re-write of feature story due.

Week 10, Nov. 5

Chapter 31- Sensitivity to Language; Chapter 17 - Prepositions
Opinion story due

Week 11, Nov. 12

Chapter 18 – Conjunctions; Chapter 19 - Interjections
Re-write of opinion story due.

Week 12, Nov. 19

Chapter 20 – Sentences and Syntax

Week 13, Nov. 26

Chapter 21- Periods; Chapter 22 – Question Marks
Final project due

Week 14, Dec. 3

Chapter 23 – Exclamation Marks; Chapter 24 - Commas

Week 15, Dec. 10

Re-write of final project due

ASSESSMENT

Five Pillars in JRSM 4700/6700

- *Professionalism*: Students learn the First Amendment protections for and legal constraints on journalism and mass communication publication and consider these in the context of professional standards of media practice.
- *Writing*: Students are required to articulate the legal concepts covered in the course by writing essays on these areas of media law.
- *Multimedia*: Students examine the copyright limitations of using multimedia elements, including images and music, as well as creative commons/open-source material available for multimedia presentation.
- *Critical Thinking*: Students analyze case scenarios and find applicable media law principles to suggest whether First Amendment protections prevail or government sanctions might be permitted in that case.
- *Media Literacy*: Students examine professional media practice in advertising, public relations and journalism to develop understanding of the role of media in society and why society provides special protections publication under the First Amendment.

Professional Values and Competencies for JRSM 4700/6700

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press in the United States as well as understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of media professionals and institutions in shaping communications

How professional values and competencies will be met

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

- Students will have a basic understanding of the law affecting mass media as well as how the law affects those who plan to work in media-related fields. In particular, students will learn basics of

First Amendment protections, libel, privacy, copyright, access to government information, as well as government regulation of advertising, corporate speech and telecommunications.

- Students will learn about the political and social forces that help to shape the law in order to understand that law is not static but an evolving system of legal principles and government regulations.
- Students will gain knowledge of the operation of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as its influence on their daily lives, including the effect of the law on the rights of women and minorities and their inclusiveness in American life.
- Students will gain confidence in the exercise of their legal protections for free expression in the practice of journalism, public relations and advertising.
- Students will gain an understanding of the workings of state and federal access law, through textbook readings, class lectures and speakers from local media.

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

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of media law in general through successful completion of the following: complete essay questions and a series of quizzes over assigned materials.
- Students will participate in class discussions of media law principles and court cases that affect the meaning and application of the First Amendment today in both their personal and professional lives as well as explore emerging trends in specific areas of media law such as web/social media publication, deregulation in advertising and broadcast expression, and barriers to access of government information.

How assessment of student learning will be met

Awareness

- Awareness of the historical progression of First Amendment freedoms and their application in journalism and media practice.

Understanding

- Understanding how media law principles protect and, in some cases, limit publication in the practice of advertising, creative mass media, journalism and public relations.

Application

- Successfully apply media law principles to legal dilemmas presented by various case scenarios in the practice of advertising, creative mass media, journalism and public relations.