

COMM 2310 Basic Multimedia Writing
COURSE SYLLABUS –COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

I. COURSE INFORMATION

- Spring 2020
- COMM 2310 Basic Multimedia Writing CRN: 22386
- This class is cross-listed with WS 3383 CRN: 27418
- Class meets on Monday and Wednesday from 10:30 am to 11:50 am in Liberal Arts Building 405A
- Required texts: • Rich, Carole (2015) Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method 8th Edition. ISBN-10: 1305077331
- Reference texts- not required:
 - i. Strunk, William and White, EB (1999) The Elements of Style 4th Edition ISBN-10: 020530902X
 - ii. The 2018 Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law ISBN-10: 091736063X
- Materials:
 - i. Smart cell phone
 - ii. USB memory stick - 1 gigabyte - available in the UTEP bookstore
 - iii. Dictionary, Webster's, American Heritage, etc. (Electronic version OK)

II. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

- Dr. María de los Ángeles Flores
- Assistant Professor of Communication
- Office: Kelly Hall 223A
- Office Hours: MW from 8:30 am to 10:15 am and by appointment.
- Phone: 915/747-8798
- Email: mdelosangelesflores@utep.edu

III. COURSE CONTENT

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

- Basic Multimedia Writing is a skills-based immersion into journalism. Students will learn the foundations of journalism and the craft's two main components - reporting and writing of the news. In addition, students will explore how news is delivered through multiple platforms such as traditional printed publications, television and radio as well as the new media mediums such as social media, and internet based text, audio and video posting. In this class, students will learn and practice different styles of multimedia writing, concentrating on news, features and more personal styles of communication.
- Students will gain an understanding of journalistic form, content and how information is gathered and presented to inform and engage readers, with special emphasis on how to use social media tools for reporting and dissemination of journalism content.
- Students also will become proficient with and use the AP stylebook for their assignments.

- The class will include an emphasis on ethics in journalism and the consequences of plagiarism.
- Students will work on verification, accuracy and the elimination of errors under the pressure of deadlines.
- Students also will learn what they need to do while still in school to prepare for newsroom internships and become work-place ready for news jobs after graduation.

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Gain an understanding of the history of media in American society and multimedia nature of modern American journalism.
- Understand the process and practice of clear and concise news writing, specifically how to write and report hard news stories, news features and blog with multimedia elements.
- Learn how to gather information for news stories, including interviewing and the use of journalistic research methods.
- Practice using social media tools for reporting and content dissemination.
- Begin to think critically about news media and how it shapes public opinion/attitudes and society.
- Develop a keen sense of skepticism/questioning about what you read, see and hear in the news media.
- Learn the process of rewriting your own stories for greater conciseness and accuracy.
- Learn about internships, how to develop a resume and develop an internship plan for success as a future news media professional while still at UTEP.

C. LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Report and write hard news stories and news features.
- Learn and practice effective interview, information-gathering and research skills.
- Integrate news-writing with digital tools (digital photo, video and audio) for effective multimedia story-telling.
- Use social media tools to report and promote your news-writing.
- Prepare a resume and develop an internship plan.

D. ASSIGNMENTS:

- Attendance —5%
- Class participation – 5%
- Chapter exams – 20%
- Column/Blog – 20%
- News story – 25%
- Final news story – 25%

E. GRADING SCALE:

- Final grades are based on the total of 100 percentage earned in the course.
- A= 90 -100 %, B= 80-89 %, C= 70-79%, D= 60-69%, F= below 60%.

IV. RULES, CLASSROOM POLICIES/ ETC:

- A. **ATTENDANCE:** It is highly recommended that students regularly attend the classes and do the assigned readings prior to class. Five percent of the final grade will be determined by students' attendance and participation in class. The class will use a "five minutes" late policy. If a student has a personal emergency, family emergency, or illness that impedes him/her from attending class, the student is responsible for sending an email to Dr. Flores requesting an excused absence. **If a student is absent eight times or more during the semester Dr. Flores will drop the student from the class.**
- B. **LATE WORK:** All assignments and exams must be turned in/taken on time. Late work will not be accepted after the due date without written consent from Dr. Flores.
- C. **PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:** You are expected to write all of your own work and that you will know how to cite sources and quote people accurately. Please read the university's Code of Conduct:
<http://admin.utep.edu/LinkClick.aspx?link=HOOPSection+II.pdf&tabid=30181&mid=63285> **Plagiarism will result in dismissal from the class and an automatic grade of F. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the Chair of the Department of Communication and to the Dean of Student Affairs.**
- D. **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:** All written work submitted for grading should be on Word document, neatly typed, double-spaced (Times New Roman font, size 12, 1 inch margins on all sides), well-organized, free from spelling & grammatical errors, and must be submitted electronically via Blackboard. If students have any questions about these standards, please ask Dr. Flores. After completing your writing assignments, always email a copy to your own email address to have a backup.
- English or Spanish: You may write your assignments in English or Spanish or both, whichever languages you intend to work in professionally.
 - Accuracy: You must always use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation in every assignment. Always use the spell check feature in Word.
 - Storage: You are required to bring an electronic copy of your work to class on a USB-memory stick. We will often edit your work in class. Memory sticks, or thumb drives, with at least one GB of memory.
- E. **COURSE COMMUNICATION:** Students are expected to show respect for professors, guests, and each other regardless of opinions, values, cultural or other differences. Students should give each other equal opportunity to express opinions, experiences, and ideas. All students should be supportive of a cooperative learning environment in the classroom. Dr. Flores reserves the right to publicly address students whose behavior disrupts the learning environment. Be prepared to discuss current events in the news locally, regionally and beyond. This shows that you are observing coverage, technique and news judgment.
- F. **CELL PHONES:** Personal and work cell phones must be muted before class begins. If you need to keep the ringer on for emergency purposes, please let Dr. Flores know before the start of the class session.

G. COURSE LABTOPS AND TABLETS: Students are encouraged to take class notes on their laptops and tablets. Please use Evernote (free software) to keep your class notes organized and neat. For more information, please visit: <https://evernote.com> Evernote video overview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pjn6YkCY2yA>

V. **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** The University of Texas El Paso prides itself on its standards of academic excellence and students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submitting work for credit that is attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, and any act that gives or attempts to give unfair advantage.

VI. **CASS POLICY:** If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

VII. **COURSE CALENDAR**

Week	Assignments
Week 1 January 20 to 25	Introductions Review of syllabus Rich: Changing Concepts of News
Week 2 January 27 to 31	Basics of News Rich: Changing Concepts of News
Week 3 February 3 to 7	Exam Changing Concepts of News Story structure Rich: The Basic News Story
Week 4 February 10 to February 14	Story structure Rich: The Basic News Story The basic of covering the news conference
Week 5 February 17 to 21	Story structure Rich: The Basic News Story
Week 6 February 24 to 28	Exam of The Basic News Story Interviewing techniques, quotes and attribution. Rich: Interviewing techniques
Week 7 March 2 to 6	Rich: Interviewing techniques Editorial meeting for story #1
Week 8 March 9 to 13	Newsgathering week Exam of Interviewing techniques

Week March 16 to 20	Spring break
Week 9 March 23 to 27	News writing workshop for News Story #1 News story #1 FIRST draft due on March 30 at 10:30 AM-before class via Blackboard
Week 10 March 30 to April 3	Editorial meeting for story #2 Newsgathering week
Week 11 April 6 to 10	Peer copy-editing sessions News story #1 SECOND draft due on APRIL 30 at 10:00 AM-before class via Blackboard News story FINAL draft due on April 11 at 11:30 PM via Blackboard
Week 12 April 13 to 17	News writing workshop for News Story #2 News story #2 FIRST draft due on April 20 at 10:30 AM-before class via Blackboard
Week 13 April 20 to 24	Peer copy-editing sessions News story #2 SECOND draft due on April 22 at 10:30 AM-before class via Blackboard. Second news story is due on Saturday April 25 at 11:30 PM via Blackboard
Week 14 April 27 to May 1	Editorial meeting for story #3 Newsgathering week for story #3 News writing workshop News story #3 FIRST draft due on May 4 at 10:30 AM-before class via Blackboard
Week 15 May 4 to 8	Last week of classes Peer copy-editing sessions News story #3 SECOND draft due on May 6 at 10:30 AM-before class via Blackboard Third news story is due on Saturday May 9 at 11:30 PM via Blackboard

THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE NECESSARY CHANGES IN THE SCHEDULE/CALENDAR/ASSIGNMENTS DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS OF THE CLASS.