

# MC 300 - OV: Media Writing.      Fall 2018

Instructor: **ADJ. PROF. Byron J. Keys**

Class Time: 6:00 pm - 8:40 pm Monday

O P Lowe Education Building 153

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course emphasizes journalistic writing and the critical thinking that goes with it. Regardless of whether students are in the news and information or strategic Communication tracks, it all comes down to coherent and engaging storytelling. That, in turn, is based on an understanding of how the purpose of the communication, the audience it targets and the medium used in conveying it dictate the form each message takes. Good writers need to use effective sentence construction, and clear and concise wording to get their points across. One of the purposes of this class is to, help students enhance their writing and interviewing skills for the web, for print and for broadcast; sharpen their judgment in choosing and attributing information, sources and story forms; and appropriately targeting the audience and message for persuasive purposes. Students will also learn communicating with multicultural and diverse audiences.

## **OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES**

Students will learn how to function outside their comfort zones. Specifically, the class objectives/outcomes are to:

- Write clear and accurate stories.
- Develop news judgment.
- Observe, interview, gather research and verify information.
- Develop storytelling skills for mass media and strategic communication.
- Write effective leads and logically organized stories.
- Synthesize information from multiple sources.
- Know when information must be attributed to a source to avoid editorializing.
- Make pictures and words work together to tell a story.
- Use correct grammar, punctuation and syntax.

And at the same time, the class will work to accomplish the Outcomes of the Department of Mass Communication

## **COURSE FORMAT**

The course will follow a multiple pedagogical formats. That is, the course content will be presented through the synthesis of lectures, readings, class and small group discussions, visual recordings (e.g., VHS, DVD), and the listening post. For this reason, class participation is an essential and measurable commodity. Also, for you to be prepared to participate in thoughtful and critical discussion, you should complete all readings and assignments before you come to class.

## **REQUIRED READING**

Vince F. Filak. *Dynamics of Media Writing: Adapt and Connect*. CQ Press. 2016.

## **MATERIALS**

- Google Classroom
- Notebook and pen or pencil

## **EXAMS**

You will have unannounced periodic quizzes over readings in this course. Each will be based on the readings, lectures, video presentations, guest speakers, field visits and discussions.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

This course requires that you:

1. **Attend class.** Class starts on time and attendance will be taken every class meeting.
2. **Participate in class and group discussions.** This class will include open class discussions and small group discussions. Therefore, you are expected to attend and participate in these discussions.
3. **Complete the assigned readings** for the day they are assigned (listed) on the syllabus. Do not get behind in the readings as the pace and structure of the course make it difficult to catch up. Further, many of the lecture-discussions will supplement (not repeat) the assigned readings and thus presume that you already have read the material. In other words, you must read for this class! Please have all readings done by Sunday of the week listed.
4. **Complete Weekly homework assignments.** You will have weekly news articles, videos, and podcast that you will give your reflections on (**no less than 300 words double-spaced**). These short assignments are designed both to encourage you to keep up with what's going on in the media and to provide an opportunity to hone your writing and critical thinking skills as you matriculate through the Mass Comm program/ juniors and seniors prepare for your final year. These assignments will be posted in **GOOGLE CLASSROOM**
5. Complete periodic quizzes and a midterm examination.
6. **Complete a final project** that further develops a topic (including videos) covered in class or on a related topic not covered in class. The project must demonstrate your ability writing and interviewing for the web, for print and for broadcast appropriately targeting the audience and message for persuasive purposes. You will also demonstrate communicating with multicultural and diverse audiences..

## **FINAL PROJECT**

Note: While you should feel free to be as creative and innovative as you'd like for the final project, please remember that the project must demonstrate your understanding of one or more of the concepts discussed in the class

1. **Option #1: Magazine:** For this project, you are required to produce a 6 article magazine-Your magazine should be suitable for publishing, distributing among the campus and for future classroom use. A printed and bounded copy of the magazine must be submitted, as well as a emailed copy. You must discuss with your teacher what your magazine stories will be about..

## **SPECIAL FEATURES**

Special features for the course may include any/or all of the following events: guest speakers, listening post, VHS/DVD screenings, etc. All special features will be subjected to who/what is available during the months for which the class session is held (More to come on these activities). **The instructor reserves the right, at any time and with notice, to alter, cancel and substitute all assignments, due dates, and other information stated in both the course syllabus and the course schedule.**

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

The make-up policy is that there is no such thing as make-up work. This is not high school. This is a college class for mature students who are expected to balance their lives and class work. The whole idea of this course is to work consistently and turn in your work when it is due.

## **CELL PHONES/TECHNOLOGY, FOOD, DRINKS, ETC. POLICY**

All cell phone ringers, tones, melodies, etc., should be turned off during class. Cell phones, also, must be put away during class unless instructed by the instructor to take them out. (Put away means the object must be off your lap, away from your hands, away from your sight, in your bag. You may not nap. Guest speakers and classmates and the instructor should be treated with the utmost respect.

## **PLAGIARISM**

**DON'T!** You must do your own work on all assignments. If you cheat, fabricate or plagiarize, you will receive an F on the assignment and may fail the course. Plagiarism is defined as presenting another person's work or ideas as one's own. This includes information from the Internet.

## **GRADING SCALE & BREAKDOWN**

There is no class curve. Grades are not negotiable. The grading scale in this class is:

A = 90% or higher  
B = 80-89%  
C = 70-79%  
D = 60-69%  
F = 0-59%

The grading breakdown in this class is:

30% = Final Project  
20% = Attendance & Participation  
20% = Reading Tests, Quizzes, Homework & Misc. assignments  
30% = Midterm

### **ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to be in class each scheduled meeting. Only one unexcused absence per course meetings per semester will be permitted. Three unexcused absences will lower your final grade by **one letter**. Three tardies will equal one unexcused absence. Students more than 20 minutes late will be marked absent for that period. Car trouble, relationship problems, situations involving pets, traffic conditions, alarm-clock failure, a change in work schedule, work obligations papers or exams in other classes, doctors' appointments, etc., are not reasons for an excused absence. You will be unable to make up any work for a class missed because of an unexcused absence. Acceptable reasons for missing a class include your hospitalization, death in your immediate family (parents, children, siblings, spouse) with documentation, and, with prior written notice, a recognized event of a sanctioned MVSU organization of which you are a member in good standing (Team obligations). Only official excuses from the VP of Student Affairs will be accepted to excuse an absence.

### **Tentative Schedule (subject to change with notice)**

**Week 1 Aug. 20:** Introductions; Syllabus review/class discussion; Read Chapter 1 prepare for next week's class.

**Week 2 Aug. 27:** Read Chapter 2.- prepare for discussions

**Week 3 Sep. 3: Labor Day, No Class** Read Chapter 4 – prepare for discussions.

**Week 4 Sep. 10: Last Day to Add and Drop Class** Read Chapters 5 – prepare for discussions

**Week 5 Sep. 17:** Read Chapter 6. – prepare for discussions.

**Week 6 Sep. 24:** Read Chapter 7 – prepare for discussions

**Week 7 Oct. 1:** Midterm

**Week 8 Oct. 8:** Read Chapters 8 - prepare for discussions

**Week 9 Oct. 15:** Read Chapters 9 - prepare for discussions

**Week 10 Oct. 22:** Read Chapter 10 - prepare for discussions

**Week 11 Oct. 29:** Read Chapter 11 - prepare for discussions.

**Week 12 Nov. 5:** Last day to withdraw. Read Chapters 12 - prepare for discussions

**Week 13 Nov. 12:** Read Chapters 13 & 14 - prepare for discussions.

**Week 14 Nov. 19:** Fall Break.

**Week 15 Nov. 26:** Final Projects and presentations

**Week 16 Dec. 3:** Senior Finals

**Final Examination Period:**

### Rubric for Homework Writing

Task Description: Give your thoughts on the various topics that will be posted for homework assignments.					
Criteria	weight	Exemplary Yes	Accomplished Yes, but	Developing No, but	Beginning No
<b>Retelling of Experience</b>	20 %	<input type="checkbox"/> A detailed explanation of experience <input type="checkbox"/> Specific descriptors of observations during experience <input type="checkbox"/> Writing is highly organized with logical sequence	<input type="checkbox"/> Clear explanation of experience <input type="checkbox"/> Objective observation of experience <input type="checkbox"/> Organization is clear and easy to follow	<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat clear explanation of experience <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat objective observation of experience <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Vague explanation of experience <input type="checkbox"/> Non-objective observation of experience <input type="checkbox"/> No organization evident; confusing
<b>Reflections/ Personal Response</b>	20 %	<input type="checkbox"/> Reflects well on own work <input type="checkbox"/> Provides many examples	<input type="checkbox"/> Reflects on own work <input type="checkbox"/> Provides examples	<input type="checkbox"/> Some reflection on own work <input type="checkbox"/> Provides few examples	<input type="checkbox"/> Little reflection on own work <input type="checkbox"/> Provides very few or no examples
<b>Relevance to Classroom</b>	20 %	<input type="checkbox"/> Student listens well in different contexts;	<input type="checkbox"/> Student listens in class; relates some	<input type="checkbox"/> Makes minimal reference to what is	<input type="checkbox"/> Makes no reference to what is heard in class or

<b>Concepts or Personal Experience</b>		relates observations to classroom concepts and/or personal experiences	observations to classroom concepts and/or personal experiences	heard in class or to personal experience	personal experiences
<b>Analysis of Experience</b>	20 %	<input type="checkbox"/> Makes many inferences <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehends deeper meanings <input type="checkbox"/> High level of critical thinking expressed	<input type="checkbox"/> Makes inferences most of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Usually comprehends deeper meanings <input type="checkbox"/> Some critical thinking expressed	<input type="checkbox"/> Some inferences are made <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehends surface level meaning <input type="checkbox"/> Minimal critical thinking expressed	<input type="checkbox"/> Few or no inferences are made <input type="checkbox"/> No comprehension or reflection on assignment <input type="checkbox"/> Little or no evidence of critical thinking
<b>Effort on Assignment</b>	20 %	<input type="checkbox"/> Obvious, detailed effort on assignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Acceptable effort on all parts of the assignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Some effort on assignment	<input type="checkbox"/> Little or no effort on assignment

Assignment Score \_\_\_\_\_