COMM 3301 WRITING AND REPORTING FOR NEWSPAPERS
MW 2:00-3:20   TLC 1106

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION
Instructor  Soo Jung Moon
Office / Telephone  Humanities 149 / (678) 839-4936
Office Hours  MTW 3:30-5:30
Virtual office hours through campus mail (Gmail) chatting  F 1:00- 5:00
E-mail  smoon@westga.edu

TEXT
2. Local Newspapers or New York Times
3. Additional, required reading will be assigned

COURSE OVERVIEW
The course introduces you to the fundamentals of news reporting and writing. You will learn what journalists do and how they do it. The class is designed to begin to prepare you for a career in mass communications.

Students interested in any number of careers in communications must be able to write with care and precision regardless of whether their intended careers are in newspaper/magazine journalism, advertising, public relations, broadcast journalism or photojournalism. Consequently, we will focus on basic news writing.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students will learn how to research, gather information, organize and write news and feature stories for the mass media. The course will emphasize the following aspects of good writing and reporting:
1. Accuracy and Verification
2. Logical Thinking
3. Precise Writing
4. News Value and Ethics

GRADING POLICY

Grading Scale  A = 90-100
B = 80-89.99
C = 70-79.99
D = 60-69.99
F = below 60 points

Grading  Test  15 points
          Journalism issues  5 points
          Event news stories  15 points
          Leads analysis  10 points
          Speech writing  10 points
          Film analysis  5 points
          AP quizzes  10 points
          Attendance, Quizzes and Class Exercises  30 points
          Total 100 points
Extra Credit
- Full attendance will add **2 points** to your FINAL grade.
- You can receive up to **2 points** added to your FINAL grade for news or feature stories published during the semester (1 point per clip typically). The articles must be a feature story, not a letter to the editor, opinion piece, or entertainment review. Clips are due by the last day of classes. You may publish any assignments you do for this class and receive the extra credit.

Portfolio grading
I will keep all your writing assignments (both in-class exercises and original stories) in a portfolio or folder. I will then grade, at random, writing assignments from the portfolio.

Fact errors
Corrections are costly in journalism—they can harm your credibility as well as the credibility of the newspaper or company you’re working for. For our lab, an assignment written for your portfolio that contains a fact error will get an F. Common fact errors are found in names, addresses, ages, quotes and narration. **Proofread** your copy before you turn it in. These Fs may or may not be part of your final lab grade since they are part of your portfolios, and portfolio stories will be chosen AT RANDOM for grading.

Grading Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Copy is publishable as is. No fact error and copy meets deadline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Copy needs minor editing. No fact error and copy meets deadline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Copy needs close editing. No fact error and copy meets deadline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Copy needs heavy editing. No fact error and copy meets deadline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Copy has fact error(s) and/or misses deadline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TESTS**
- There will be one test based on lectures, class discussions, and assigned readings and viewings.
- Early and make-up tests are administered ONLY in cases of absence due to unavoidable situations substantiated with documentation. Requests for early tests must be made at least one week prior to the test, and requests for make-up tests must be made within two hours of the test. Make-up tests must be completed during the current semester at a time determined by me.

**Test Material**
You are responsible for bringing two No. 2 pencils and a pink scantron.

**News Quizzes**
Journalism students are expected to stay abreast of local, regional, state, national and world events by reading a local daily each day. To ensure that students maintain a broad news awareness and develop a world perspective, the instructor will give occasional quizzes based on the week’s news.

**Make-ups, Late and Missed deadlines**
This is journalism, and the one thing we value most after truth telling is meeting deadline. Therefore, turn in all assignments on the day they are due at the beginning of class, in class. Late assignments and those turned in late will result in a penalty of 20% per day. **I do NOT accept any assignment by email.** You will not be allowed to make up assignments/quizzes you miss.

**ATTENDANCE**
Attendance is absolutely necessary to succeed in this course. However, I understand there will be times when it is necessary for you to miss class. **Four absences are allowed**—no difference is made between excused and unexcused. Students with five to seven absences will receive 50% of total attendance points. More than seven absences will result in zero attendance points. Please note how I define an absence: (1) not coming to class; (2) arriving late to class; (3) leaving class early; (4) sleeping, texting, web surfing or doing other non-class related activities during class.

Students (and teachers, too) often learn best from one another, so an open environment is encouraged. Ask questions and help each other. If you miss classes, please check with a classmate. You are required to have the email of the person sitting right next to you now!

**Excused absences:** Again, no difference is made between excused and unexcused absences. You have
four absences, use them judiciously. In any case, you cannot make up your missed in-class assignments and quizzes.

**CLASS DISCUSSION AND PARTICIPATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation</th>
<th>You will need to complete each reading/viewing/listening assignment before the scheduled class session. You need to read carefully and critically, take notes and be prepared to intelligently discuss and apply the material in class discussion and activities.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Handouts</td>
<td>You are responsible for collecting all handouts at the time they are distributed. If you are absent, you have ONE WEEK to collect the materials. After one week, do not ask me for copies of handouts. I will not keep extra copies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>You are encouraged to use e-mail for all class related correspondence. I will try to respond within 24 hours, though messages sent during weekends (or Friday afternoons) may not receive such a prompt response.</td>
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**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

The penalties for academic dishonesty range from receiving 0 points on the exam or the assignment to receiving an “F” grade in the course.

All the work you do must be your own. Do not present the work of another as if it were your own. Use quotation marks to indicate the exact words of someone else, and cite the source. Cite sources of ideas that are not your own, even if you did not use their exact words. Summarizing OK – it is considered paraphrasing, but do not just rearrange a sentence or change some of the words. Still, each time a source is paraphrased, a credit for the source needs to be included in the text.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cheating</th>
<th>Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fabrication</td>
<td>Falsification or unauthorized invention of any information or citation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plagiarism</td>
<td>Representing the words or ideas of another as one's own. Direct quotations must be indicated and ideas of another must be appropriately acknowledged</td>
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**SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS**

I will make special arrangements for students with special needs. If you need special accommodations for tests, let me know early, not a few days before the test. I am here to facilitate your learning, but I need to be informed to do so.

**BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM**

- You are expected to participate in class discussions. Feel free to speak your mind during class, no matter how outrageous your comments may be. I expect, however, that you will show respect to your classmates. If you disagree with their points of view, please express that disagreement in a way that is not offensive.
- Turn off all cell phones. If a phone rings, I reserve the right to ask you to leave the classroom.
- With regard to texting, web surfing, emailing, sleeping or doing other non-class related activities during class, I will give you a warning. Each warning will be counted as an absence of the day. See the ATTENDANCE section.
# CLASS SCHEDULE

The class schedule and assignments are subject to change in order to accommodate guest speakers, reinforce course material, and maintain some flexibility. Additional reading and viewing/listening assignments will be made throughout the semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics / Readings / Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 6</td>
<td>Introduction/Interviews in Class</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jan. 8</td>
<td>Ch. 1: Changing concepts of news</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 13</td>
<td>Ch. 4: Convergent news writing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jan. 15</td>
<td>Ch. 3: Basic news story/Handout for Journalism issues (Group time)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>/AP Top 10 Quiz #1 &amp; 2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan. 20</td>
<td><strong>MLK Holiday</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jan. 22</td>
<td>Ch. 8: Leads and nut graphs /AP Top 10 Quiz #3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jan. 27</td>
<td>Ch. 9 &amp; 10: Story organization</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jan. 29</td>
<td>Ch. 9 &amp; 10 (cont.) /AP Top 10 Quiz #4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 3</td>
<td>Ch. 11: Storytelling</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feb. 5</td>
<td>Ch. 5: Collecting Information / AP Top 10 Quiz #5</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 10</td>
<td>Ch. 7: Interviewing Technique</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feb. 12</td>
<td>Ch. 7 (cont.)/Ch. 18: Profile / AP Top 10 Quiz #6</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Feb. 17</td>
<td><strong>Journalism issue presentation</strong></td>
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<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>Ch. 20: Speeches and meetings /AP Top 10 Quiz #7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feb. 24</td>
<td>Ch. 20 (cont.) Sign-up for 15-minute individual sessions with the instructor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td>Write SPEECH Story in Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mar. 3</td>
<td><strong>Test</strong> Leads analysis due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mar. 5</td>
<td><strong>Media Day</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar. 10</td>
<td>Individual session (Bring a proposal of event news stories. Use a template)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mar. 12</td>
<td>Individual session (Bring a proposal of event news stories. Use a template)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mar. 17</td>
<td><strong>Spring Break</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mar. 19</td>
<td><strong>Spring Break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mar. 24</td>
<td>All the President’s Men</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mar. 26</td>
<td>All the President’s Men /AP Top 10 Quiz #8</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Mar. 31</td>
<td><strong>Honors Convocation</strong></td>
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<td>Apr. 2</td>
<td>Blind editing/ Bring your manuscripts of event news</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AP Top 10 Quiz #9 and #10</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All the President’s Men analysis due</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Apr. 7</td>
<td><strong>Online Class TBA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apr. 9</td>
<td><strong>Online Class TBA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Apr. 14</td>
<td>Ch. 13: Online journalism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apr. 16</td>
<td>Event news stories submission/ presentation</td>
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Common Language for Course Syllabi

Updated June 21, 2013

Students should review the following information each semester, because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given.

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student’s responsibility to check his or her email.

Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

University of West Georgia Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student’s conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student’s account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions.