

**COMM 3301 WRITING AND REPORTING FOR NEWSPAPERS1**

M/W 12:30-1:50 p.m. TLC 1106

***INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION***

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Instructor                   Soo Jung Moon  
Office / Telephone        Humanities 149 / (678) 839-4936  
Office Hours               MW 3:30 - 6:00 p.m.  
                                  Virtual office hours through campus mail (Gmail) chatting F 12:00- 5:00  
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***TEXT***

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1. Rich, C. (2007). *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
2. Local Newspapers or *New York Times*
4. Additional, required reading will be assigned

***COURSE OVERVIEW***

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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***

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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***

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<b>Grading Scale</b>	A = 90-100	
	B = 80-89.99	
	C = 70-79.99	
	D = 60-69.99	
	F = below 60 points	
<b>Grading</b>	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
	<b>Total 100 points</b>	

<b>Extra Credit</b>	- Full attendance will add <b>2 points</b> to your FINAL grade. - You can receive up to <b>2 points</b> 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.
<b>Portfolio grading</b>	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.
<b>Fact errors</b>	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. <b>Proofread</b> 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
<b>Grading Criteria</b>	A Copy is publishable as is. No fact error and copy meets deadline. B Copy needs minor editing. No fact error and copy meets deadline. C Copy needs close editing. No fact error and copy meets deadline. D Copy needs heavy editing. No fact error and copy meets deadline. F Copy has fact error(s) and/or misses deadline

### TESTS

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-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.

<b>Test Material</b>	You are responsible for bringing two No. 2 pencils and a pink scantron
<b>News Quizzes</b>	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.
<b>Make-ups, Late and Missed deadlines</b>	This is journalism, and the one thing we value most after truth telling is meeting deadline. Late assignments and those turned in late will result in a penalty of 20% per day.

### ATTENDANCE

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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. **Three absences are allowed**—no difference is made between excused and unexcused. After those three allowed absences, two points will be taken off of your final average for each additional absence, no exceptions.

**Students who miss more than eight classes will receive a failing grade (F) for the semester.** 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 three absences, use them judiciously. If you miss in-class activities and have not made arrangements prior to the day, you will not be given a substitute assignment.

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**CLASS PARTICIPATION and COMMUNICATION**

<b>Preparation</b>	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.
<b>Handouts</b>	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.
<b>Email</b>	You are encouraged to use campus Gmail (smoon@westga.edu) 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.

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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.

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

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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.

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**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.

See the Common Language for Course Syllabi

[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf)

**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.

Week	Date	Topics / Readings / Due
1	Jan.11	Introduction/Interviews in Class
	Jan.13	Ch. 1 :Changing concepts of news
2	Jan.18	<b>MLK Day. No Class.</b>
	Jan.20	Ch. 4: Convergent news writing
3	Jan.25	Ch. 3: Basic news story/Handout for Journalism issues (Group time) <b>AP Top 10 Quiz #1</b>
	Jan.27	Ch.3 (Cont.)
4	Feb.01	Ch. 8: Leads and nut graphs / <b>AP Top 10 Quiz #2</b>
	Feb.03	Ch. 8 (Cont.)
5	Feb.08	Ch. 9 & 10: Story organization / <b>AP Top 10 Quiz #3</b>
	Feb.10	Ch. 9 & 10 (cont.)
6	Feb.15	Ch. 5: Collecting Information / <b>AP Top 10 Quiz #4</b>
	Feb.17	<b>Journalism issue presentation</b> Sign-up for 15-minute individual sessions with the instructor
7	Feb.22	Ch. 7: Interviewing Technique / <b>AP Top 10 Quiz # 5</b>
	Feb.24	<i>Individual session</i> (Bring a proposal of event news stories. Use a template)
8	Feb.29	<i>Individual session</i> (Bring a proposal of event news stories. Use a template)
	Mar.2	<b>Media Day. No Class.</b>
9	Mar.7	Ch. 20: Speeches and meetings / <b>AP Top 10 Quiz #6</b> <b>Leads analysis due</b>
	Mar.9	<b>TBA</b>
	Mar.14	<b>Spring Break</b>
10	Mar.14	<b>Spring Break</b>
	Mar.16	<b>Spring Break</b>
11	Mar.21	Ch. 20 (cont.) / <b>AP Top 10 Quiz #7</b>
	Mar.23	<b>Write SPEECH Story in Class</b>
12	Mar.28	<b>Test</b>
	Mar.30	<b>Honors Convocation. No Class.</b>
13	Apr.4	<i>All the President's Men</i> / <b>AP Top 10 Quiz #8</b>
	Apr.6	<i>All the President's Men</i>
14	Apr.11	Blind editing <b>Bring your manuscripts of event news</b>
	Apr.13	Ch.17: Multicultural sensitivity <b>All the President's Men analysis due /</b>
15	Apr.18	Ch. 13: Online journalism/ <b>AP Top 10 Quiz #9 and #10</b>
	Apr.20	<b>Event news stories submission/ presentation</b>