

COMM 3301 WRITING AND REPORTING FOR NEWSPAPERS

May 31 - July 24 / 100% Online course

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor	Soo Jung Moon
Office / Telephone	Humanities 149 / (678) 839-4936
Virtual Office Hours	By appointment via campus Gmail Chatting
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TEXT

1. Rich, C. (2014). *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
2. *New York Times, Washington Post, AJC or other elite newspapers*
3. *Associated Press Stylebook* (optional)
4. 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 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	Exam	20 points
	Event news story	12 points
	Leads analysis	10 points
	Weekly AP Style quizzes	16 points
	Exercises /Assignments & Others	42 points
		Total 100 points

Grading Criteria	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

ASSIGNMENTS & EXAMS

Orientation Module Introduction Posting /Syllabus Quiz (4 %)

See course website and class schedule for more information on these two assignments that should be completed during the first week of class. Unlimited multiple attempts are available for this Syllabus quiz.

Weekly Assignments & News Quizzes (38%)

You are expected to complete various assignments every week. The guidelines of activities are placed in the module of the chapter. For instance, module “Ch.1 Changing concepts of news” includes two assignments such as 1) Web’s impact on news and 2) News values. Please pay attention to due dates of those activities.

You might be requested to revise & resubmit writing assignments. I will leave this “R&R” note in the Assignments’ feedback area. Even a partial score will not be given if you fail to resubmit the assignments WITHIN ONE WEEK.

News Quizzes: To ensure that students maintain broad news awareness and develop a world perspective, the instructor will give occasional quizzes based on the week’s news. Instruction will be given prior to the quiz.

Exam (20%)

You are expected to complete one online exam (in the *Quizzes* area in CourseDen) at the end of the semester. The exam will be based on lectures, class discussions, and assigned readings and viewings and will include multiple-choice/true-false/ short- answer/long-answer questions. You will have 75 minutes to complete the exam. A study guide will be provided. You will not be able to revisit questions.

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 a day of the test. Make-up tests must be completed during the current semester at a time determined by me.

Leads Analysis (10 %)

Handout is placed in the “Assignment Guidelines” module.

You will write and analyze different styles’ hard-news leads. All materials and further details are described in the handout.

Event News Reporting & Writing (12%)

You need to write a story on event that happens on or off campus. You may cover government meetings, charity events, demonstrations or speeches, etc. You can cover any event but it must have **news values** and be organized by a professional group, not by individual students. Entertainment and sports event is not accepted. The story should be minimum **500-word**.

This assignment is composed of three parts: Proposal submission (2 points), Virtual individual session with the instructor (2 points) and News story (8 points). Detailed handout is placed in the "Assignment Guidelines" module.

Weekly AP Style News (16%)

Associated Press style provides guidelines for news writing. Many media organizations across the United States use AP style. A basic knowledge of AP style is considered essential to those who want to work in any kind of media related arenas including public relations. While AP Stylebook is not required for the course, I recommend you to use the book for the quizzes.

The abridged version of AP Style Book (PDF file name "Associated_Press_Stylebook") is placed in the module "Style Books." The last AP Quiz (AP #7, 4p) will be based on "Style Guide_Cengage" placed in the same module.

You will have **two minutes per question** and **cannot revisit** the questions.

AP Style Quizzes will open at 12:01 am and close at 11:59 pm on scheduled days (Monday and Tuesday).

Late Work Policy

There will be NO acceptance of unexcused late work, including discussions and online exams. If you miss an exam, discussions, or other assignments, you will receive zero points. Also, there will be no make-up unless arrangements have been made prior to the missed work.

COURSEDEN RESOURCE & TECHNICAL SUPPORT

For CourseDen assistance, including tutorials, troubleshooting, and online support resources, I encourage you to reference the CourseDen Desire2Learn (D2L) Resources link on the course homepage, or contact the UWG Online Helpdesk Services via email at online@westga.edu, or via the Internet at <http://uwgonline.westga.edu/students.php>.

Monday - Friday 8am - 5pm EST, you may also visit the Distance Education & Distributed Center at the Honors House or call the staff at 678.839.6248 or 1.855.933.8946 (UWGO). Additionally, you may contact the GeorgiaVIEW D2L Help Center for assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year via the Internet at <https://d2lhelp.view.usg.edu> or via its support hotline at 1.855.772.0423.

If you experience technical difficulties, it is very important that you contact CourseDen support staff - Distance Education & Distributed Center (first choice) or GeorgiaVIEW D2L Help Center. The staff will document your case, and verify whether it is a personal or campus technology issue. Personal technology issues do not justify due date extensions; and due dates will be extended only in cases of campus technology issues or cases of unavoidable situations substantiated with documentation. To request an extension for qualified cases, you should e-mail me within two hours of due date. However, if you do not contact CourseDen support staff, late online assignments or exams may not qualify for credit or will be subject to late penalties.

Important CourseDen Tools

-Grades: Use the Grades tool to view your grades.

-CourseDen Email: The Email tool allows you to send email to, and receive email from, me and your classmates. It is important to check your email on a regular basis. DO NOT send email to my westga.edu email address (unless CourseDen is unavailable).

-Discussions: Some class activities will be posted Discussions to make students share the works. Each Discussion forum will be closed after designed cut-off time.

-Assignments: This tool is your drop box for the most of writing assignments. You cannot access this tool after cut-off time.

-Quizzes: All exams including Syllabus Quiz and AP Style quiz will be conducted through Quizzes tool. You need to read carefully the time enforcement and cut-off time.

COMMUNICATIONS

You are encouraged to use **CourseDen email** 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.

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.

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

University Policies

See the Common Language for Course Syllabi

https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/assets/docs/faculty-resources/common_language_for_course_syllabi_v2.pdf

Because these statements are updated as federal, state, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

[END OF SYLLABUS -- WEEKLY SCHEDULE IN SEPARATE DOCUMENT]