

Writing & Reptg for Newspapers

COMM-3301

Summer 2020 Section E01 3 Credits 06/01/2020 to 07/23/2020 Modified 05/22/2020

Description

Basic procedures and techniques for writing and reporting for newspapers. Emphasis on news style and judgment as well as ethical and legal issues.

Requisites

Prerequisites:

COMM 1154 Minimum Grade: C and ENGL 1102 Minimum Grade: C

Corequisites:

Contact Information

Office / Telephone Humanities 142 / (678) 839-4936

Virtual Office Hours By appointment

E-mail smoon@westga.edu

Note. Please use CourseDen email. DO NOT send an email to my westga.edu email address unless CourseDen is unavailable.

Meeting Times

Virtual office hours available via Google Meet. Please email me to arrange the meeting.

Materials

1. Rich, C. (2014). *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
2. *Associated Press Stylebook* (optional)
3. Additional, required reading will be assigned

Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method

Author: Rich, C.

Publisher: Wadsworth

Edition: 8

Outcomes

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

Evaluation

Grading Scale

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

Grading

Total 100 points

Exam	20 points
Event or Speech news story	10 points
Leads analysis	10 points
Weekly AP Style quizzes	16 points
Exercises /Assignments & Others	44 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

Orientation Module Introduction Posting /Syllabus Quiz (4 %)

See the 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 (40%)

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 the 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 before 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. 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 %)

The 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 (10%)

You need to write a story on an 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 a minimum 500-word.

This assignment is composed of three parts: Proposal submission (2 points), Proposal approval by the instructor, and News story (8 points). A detailed handout is placed in the "Assignment Guidelines" module.

Note. If the situation does not allow us to cover events due to a virus or a disaster, this item will be replaced with Speech News writing.

Weekly AP Style News (16%)

Associated Press style provides guidelines for news writing. Many media organizations across the United States use AP style. Basic knowledge of AP style is considered essential to those who want to work in any media-related areas, 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).

Schedule

Week #	Modules	Assignments	AP Quiz (Mon & Tue)
Mon-Sun		Due @ 11:59 pm	
1	Ch. 0	<u>Sun</u>	-
June 1-7	Orientation Module	Introduce yourself (2p)	
	Introduction	Syllabus Quiz (2p): Multiple quiz attempts available	

2 June 8 - 14	Ch. 1- Changing concepts of news Ch. 2 - The basic news story	<u>Wed</u> Web's impact on newspaper (2p) News values (2p) <u>Sun</u> Quote Quiz (2p)	AP1. Abbreviations (2p)
3 June 15-21	Ch. 7 – Leads and Nut graphs	<u>Wed</u> News writing on right/left hands (3p) News Quiz (2p) <u>Sun</u> Leads exercises (4p) Submit your resume (1p)	AP2. Addresses (2p)
4 June 22 - 28	Ch. 8 & 9 – Story organization and Forms	<u>Wed</u> List Technique (3p) <u>Sun</u> Event news proposal (2p)	AP3. Capitalization (2p)
	Ch. 5 - Interviewing techniques	<u>Wed</u> Making Interview Questions (2p) <u>Sun</u> Answer Interview Questions (3p)	AP4. Numerals (2p)
5 June 29- July 5	Ch. 18 – Speeches and Meetings Ch. 20 – Crime and Punishment	<u>Thu</u> Leads Analysis (10p) <u>Sun</u> Big fire Video - News Story (3p)	AP5. Time (2p)
6 July 6 -12	Ch. 16- Multicultural sensitivity	<u>Wed</u> Time Cover Analysis (4p) <u>Sun</u> Profile story (3p) News Quiz (2p)	AP6. Titles (2p)

7	Special Topic: News	<u>Wed</u>	AP7. Comprehensive* (4p)
July 13 -19	Literacy	Discussion on Fake News (4p)	
		<u>Sun</u>	
		Event news story submission (8p)	* It includes spelling, punctuation and grammar.
			See the PDF
			" Style Gudie_Cengage"
8			
July 20-21	Reading day		
July 22-23	Exam (20p)		
		See the Study Guidelines in the "Assignments Test Guidelines" module	
July 25	Final Grade will be posted		

* Course Policies and Resources

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 before the missed work.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The penalties for academic dishonesty range from receiving 0 points on the exam/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.

Institutional Policies

Academic Support

Accessibility Services: 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. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php).

Center for Academic Success: The [Center for Academic Success \(http://www.westga.edu/cas/\)](http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu.

University Writing Center: The [University Writing Center \(https://www.westga.edu/writing/\)](https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu.

Online Courses

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the [UWG Online \(https://uwgonline.westga.edu/\)](https://uwgonline.westga.edu/) site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the [Online/Off-Campus Student Guide \(http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php\)](http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the [UWG Cares \(http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/\)](http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/) site. [Online counseling \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.

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. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook \(https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php).

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).

HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: [http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information#\(http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information\)](http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information#(http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information))

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: [https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php\(https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php(https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php))

Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](#). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](#). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](#).

Additional Items

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.