Public Affairs Reporting  COM-3302
Spring 2021  Section 01  3 Credits  08/11/2021 to 12/10/2021  Modified 08/05/2021

Description

This writing-intensive course builds upon the student’s basic skills attained in COMM3301, Writing & Reporting for Newspapers. Public Affairs Reporting concerns coverage of government and community events such as city council meetings, hearings, and press conferences. The course also includes writing for beats, editorials, columns and reviews.

Requisites

Prerequisites:
COMM 3301 and COMM 1154 Minimum Grade: C and ENGL 1102 Minimum Grade: C

Corequisites:

Contact Information

Dr. John Ike Sewell

CONTACT INFO:

Email: Email while logged into CourseDen, using the CourseDen email tool only.

Email Policy: CourseDen email is the best way to reach me. All email communication for this class should be sent using the CourseDen email tool only. Do not contact me using my UWG email address.

Email Response Time: Monday through Thursday I will respond to Course Den email within 24 hours. On weekends I will respond to CourseDen email within 48 hours.

Cell Phone: 423-741-1474

Phone Policy: Call during business hours (Monday-Thursday, 9am-5pm) only. If I do not pick up, leave a clearly stated voice mail message that includes your name, phone number, and a brief description of what the call concerns. I do not respond to text messages from students.

Voicemail Response Time: I will respond to Monday-Thursday voicemail messages within 24 hours. I will respond to Friday-Sunday voicemail messages within 48 hours.

Meeting Times

COMM 3302 is a hybrid class. Half of the class will be held in person—and the other half will be held online.

The first class meeting (Thursday, August 12) will be held IN PERSON in TLC 1111.

After the first class meeting (Thursday, August 12), in person sessions occur each Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. in TLC 1111.

This class is sequentially ordered and is best learned over time. As such, you will only be able to access online course content sequentially and in evenly dispersed time increments spanning the semester.

Each learning module will be accessible for a 48-hour (that's two days) period from 12 a.m. on the Wednesday start date until 11:59 p.m. on the following Thursday night. On Fridays, the learning module will no longer be available.
Materials

The Associated Press Stylebook

Author: The Associated Press
Publisher: Basic Books

Outcomes

Learner Outcomes: students will learn how to research, gather information, organize and write news stories for mass media. The course will emphasize the following aspects of good writing and reporting:

- Editing, precision, accuracy and verification (SLO6, SLO9, SLO10)
- Logical thinking (SLO6, SLO10)
- News value (SLO9)
- Ethics (SLO6, SLO10)

Mass Communications Program Learning Outcomes

ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies: As a unit accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), the School of Communication, Film and Media (SCFM) is committed to preparing students with the requisite knowledge and skills to be successful in the media and communications industries after graduation. SCFM has adopted as its degree program learning outcomes ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies that all graduates of an ACEJMC accredited program should be aware of and able to demonstrate as scholars and professionals in the discipline. These include the six (6) values and six (6) competencies listed below. For the detailed list of the ACEJMC professional values and competencies, see the UWG Undergraduate Catalog or ACEJMC - Standard 2. Curriculum and Instruction.

Evaluation

Grading Scale:
A: 90-100 points
B: 89-80 points
C: 79-70 points
D: 69-60 points
F: 59 points and below

ASSIGNMENTS

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Semester Project Pitch</td>
<td>5 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
<td>5 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
<td>5 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz 3</td>
<td>5 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz 4</td>
<td>5 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Story 1</td>
<td>25 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Story 2</td>
<td>25 pts.</td>
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Criteria

Semester Project Pitch (5 points): Each student is required to find a "beat" to cover during the semester. For this assignment, you are required to write two full paragraphs about your proposed ("pitched") beat. In the report, you will explain your beat, what group or organization you are covering, what issues face that group or organization during the semester, who your sources will be and why it is newsworthy. A document explaining specific requirements for semester pitch assignment is available in Module 1.

Four AP Style Quizzes (5 points each = 20 points total): There will be four AP style quizzes this semester. The quizzes will be in the verbal-to-written format: Each quiz will include an audio recording. Your task is to listen to the audio recording and write certain passages that I speak on the recording, using AP style and punctuating correctly. You will be granted only one opportunity to take the quiz during a 30 minute period. Have your AP Stylebook on hand for access during the quizzes.

Semester Project Parts 1-3: Three stories about your beat (25 points each = 75 points total): Students will write three 500 word inverted pyramid style stories about their beat during the semester. Deadlines are absolute. Final, publication-ready articles are to be turned in on time as directed on the assignment schedule. A 20% point deduction (5 of 25 possible points) will be made for every day that a final article is turned in late. A handout explaining the exact requirements for the articles is available in Module 1.

Assignments

Schedule

A schedule for the semester will be provided at the first in class meeting and in Module 1.

College/School Policies

Mission

Fair, just, and productive societies require the free flow of news, information, and ideas from communicators of knowledge, skill, and integrity who reflect the diversity of the people they serve. Therefore, the School of Communication, Film, and Media strives to provide high quality academic and experiential learning opportunities to prepare students for successful integration into the global community as industry professionals, leaders, and thinkers in the fields of convergence journalism, digital media and telecommunication, film and video production, and public relations.

Vision

The School of Communication, Film, and Media is committed to empowering students to communicate clearly, act responsibly, think critically, and understand context(s) to enhance their personal, civic, academic, and professional lives, facilitating active participation in an evolving and increasingly diverse society.

Strategic Priorities

Invested Teaching

To inspire and equip students to discover their personal, intellectual, and professional potential through personalized teaching, academic coaching, and career mentoring.

Experiential Learning

To offer students early and on-going multiple and diverse hands-on learning to develop and enhance personal, intellectual, and professional growth.

Connectedness
To serve as the hub that connects and cultivates partnerships among key stakeholders to enhance personal, intellectual, and professional growth. Key stakeholders include administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, industry, community, and friends.

Mass Communications Degree Program Learning Outcomes

**ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies:** The Bachelor of Science degree program in Mass Communications is accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), and the School is committed to preparing students with the requisite knowledge and skills to be successful in the media and communications industries after graduation. The School has adopted as its Mass Communications degree program learning outcomes ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies, known as 6 X 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS, that all graduates of an ACEJMC accredited program should be aware of and able to demonstrate as scholars and professionals in the discipline. For the detailed list of the ACEJMC professional values and competencies, see the [UWG Undergraduate Catalog](https://catalog.westga.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=11&poid=1991) or [ACEJMC - Standard 2. Curriculum and Instruction](http://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/nine-standards/).

### 6 X 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS

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<tr>
<td>5. Theory</td>
<td>6. Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Think Critically &amp; Creatively</td>
<td>8. Research &amp; Evaluate</td>
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<td>9. Write Effectively</td>
<td>10. Self-Evaluate</td>
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<td>11. Apply Numbers &amp; Statistics</td>
<td>12. Apply Technology</td>
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Film & Video Production Degree Program Learning Outcomes

**Overview:** The Bachelor of Science degree program in Film & Video Production is designed to train graduates in the field who are agile, adaptable, and able to employ their skills in an array of roles from entrepreneurial content producers to on-set film work, both above and below the line. It will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the machinery at work behind media production and distribution, along with a set of tangible, marketable, and transferable skills for an array of positions within the infrastructure of film and content production. The FVP degree program learning outcomes include:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking, aesthetic awareness and technical proficiency in the production and assessment of audio-visual film work.
2. Understand all phases and roles of film production in order to help formulate career goals.
3. Understand the various potentials of film as both a commodity for a targeted audience, and an act of authorship and creative expression.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of cinema in a global society.

### 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).

**Center for Academic Success:** The Center for Academic Success (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/) 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/) 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).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the UWG Cares (http://www.westga.edu/UWGcares/) site. Online counseling (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 visit the Office of Community Standards (https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/ocs/index.php) site.

**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#)

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)

**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.

**ELL Resources**

If you are a student having difficulty with English language skills, and / or U.S. culture is not your home culture, specialized resources are available to help you succeed. Please visit the E.L.L. resource page for more information.

**COVID-19**

The health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff remain the University of West Georgia’s top priority.

For the most recent information on coronavirus disease (COVID-19) visit:

- Georgia Department of Public Health [https://dph.georgia.gov/](https://dph.georgia.gov/)

**Additional Items**