GROSSMONT COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

Curriculum Committee Approval: 11/29/2022

Approved by GCCCD Governing Board: 12/13/2022

MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS 112 - INTRODUCTION TO REPORTING AND NEWS WRITING

1. Course Number Course Title Semester Units

MCOM 112 Introduction to Reporting and News Writing 3

Semester Hours

3 hours lecture (54 hours); 108 outside-of-class hours; 162 total hours

2. Course Prerequisites

None

Corequisite

None

Recommended Preparation

None

3. Catalog Description

This course is an introduction to gathering, organizing, and writing news in journalistic style across multiple platforms, including the role of the journalist and related legal and ethical issues. Students will report and write based on their original interviews and research to produce news content for print, broadcast, and digital media. Experiences may include covering events, interviewing sources, writing under deadline, and implementing Associated Press style.

4. Course Objectives

The students will:

1. Define and execute newsgathering strategies.
2. Construct interview questions and conduct interviews with sources.
3. Write simple news and feature leads.
4. Construct basic to long-form news stories using the inverted pyramid and other formats.
5. Produce articles under deadline.
6. Write and edit articles for proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, and Associated Press style.
7. Interpret writing differences for print, broadcast, and digital news outlets.
8. Review and analyze legal and ethical issues in reporting.

5. Instructional Facilities

Standard classroom

6. Special Materials Required of Student

Computer and internet access

7. Course Content

1. Information gathering, including live interviews and verification.
2. Journalistic writing forms, including inverted pyramid and other formats.
3. Writing for multiple platforms, including print, broadcast, digital, and social media.
4. News gathering strategies and practice.
5. Writing under deadline.
6. Introduction to story mechanics and Associated Press style.
7. Writing news and feature leads.
8. Constructing basic and long-form stories.
9. Legal and ethical issues in reporting.

8. Method of Instruction

1. Classroom lecture and group discussion
2. Exercises: Students organize and write data into news stories
3. Instructor critique of each student's writing assignments
4. Student rewrite of assignment
5. Recording news reports for broadcast

9. Methods of Evaluating Student Performance

1. Writing assignments including hard news and feature stories.
2. Story mechanics and Associate Press style quizzes.
3. Exams including a final.
4. Instructor and peer critiques.
5. Professional protocols, such as meeting deadlines, attendance, and adherence to ethics.

10. Outside Class Assignments

1. Conduct an interview, such as interviewing a source in the students’ preferred profession.
2. Cover and write a news story on a current, localized topic.
3. Experiment with various news writing styles, such as obituaries, reviews, and press releases.
4. Record broadcast version of news stories.
5. Collect and incorporate photojournalistic and multimedia components to tell a story.

11. Representative Texts

a. Representative Text(s):

1. Baker, Jonathan. *Essential Journalism: The NCTJ Guide for Trainee Journalists*. Routledge, 2021.
2. Bender, John R., et al. *Writing and Reporting for the Media*. Oxford University Press, 2018.
3. Ellis, Paula L., et al. *News for US: Citizen-Centered Journalism*. Cognella, 2022.

b. Supplementary texts and workbooks:

1. *The Associated Press Stylebook*: 56th ed., 2022-2024. The Associated Press, 2022.

Addendum: Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, our students will be able to do the following:

1. Analyze the basic narrative organization of communication.
2. Convert narrative communications style into the inverted pyramid and other story structures used to organize news stories for print, broadcast, and other methods of delivery.
3. Recognize and differentiate the definitions and values used to determine the focus and relative strength of a news story.
4. Apply critical and creative thinking to both the organizational and stylistic aspects of the news writing process.