

## **Journalism 202: Mass Media Writing for Advertising and Public Relations Majors**

Section 008, Coliseum Room 3012

Spring 2012

Monday and Wednesday 4:00 – 5:15 p.m.

Jeff Stensland

Office Hours: By appointment

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### **Course Objectives:**

This course is a foundation for news writing, public relations writing and advertising writing. It will help you understand the styles and purposes of writing for these segments of the communications industry, as well as their differences and similarities. We will begin with basic news writing, the foundation for both public relations and advertising writing.

### **Course Goals:**

- To study the importance of mass media writing as a powerful communications tool.
- To study the complete writing process (planning, prewriting, writing and revision) that leads to a polished product.
- To study how all communications processes — writing, speaking, listening, reading — are linked through the process of critical thinking.
- To study the mechanics of writing — grammar, syntax, punctuation, style and spelling.

At the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Write persuasive copy with a sharp focus.
- Write logical, well-organized copy using clear, concise and effective prose.
- Use attribution accurately.
- Compose copy using accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Know the differences and similarities between news, advertising and public relations.

### **Required Texts:**

Associated Press *Stylebook and Libel Manual*

You will need a USB drive. For in-class writing assignments, please save your work on the drive and do so frequently. Do not save your work on the hard drives of lab computers.

### **Suggested Materials:**

A dictionary and a thesaurus, in addition to the tools on your computer, will help you as you write. Please do not think you can rely solely on your computer's spell-check function. On occasion, I will ask you to read *The State*, *The Greenville News*, *The Post and Courier* and other South Carolina and national newspapers, as well as other publications and Web sites.

### **Policies:**

Please complete reading assignments **before** you come to class. Also, please bring your stylebook to class with you. We'll use it frequently.

All work must be typed and double-spaced. Please be sure your name and the date are at the top of each page. Correct grammar and punctuation are essential. See grading guidelines. Your in-class assignments may require you to write on deadline.

Assignments are due on the dates I specify, without exception. Please turn in homework at the beginning

of class, if not sooner. There will be writing homework virtually every class. The due date is very clear on every assignment I give you. Please be sure to read the assignment completely so you know exactly what is expected of you. If you are confused about an assignment, please ask about it sooner rather than later.

**Attendance:**

Attendance is critical in any college course, but in a writing class, it is essential. Missing more than three classes may result in a failing grade. And because we evaluate and discuss in-class assignments during the class periods, missing even one or two classes can affect your grade adversely. Please speak to me in advance if you think you may have difficulty attending a future class. I suggest you find a partner to gather handouts for you if you miss a class, and you can do the same for that person. I give handouts frequently and I often base your assignments on those handouts.

We will have several guest speakers during the semester, and I base assignments on their presentations. Please do not miss classes when we have guests. They are very busy professionals and are volunteering their time to share their knowledge and expertise with you.

**Grading:**

Please note that you **will** lose points for incorrect grammar, spelling and punctuation, and style. You have the *AP Stylebook* for a reason. Please use it.

I'll calculate your final grade based on the following percentages:

Class and homework assignments: 30%

Attendance and participation: 10%

Mid-term assignment: 20%

Final project: 15%

Tests and quizzes: 25%

<b>A</b> 90-100	Work is of professional quality, acceptable in a professional setting
<b>B</b> 80-89	Work is good but needs editing
<b>C</b> 70-79	Quality of work is weak and needs major editing
<b>D</b> 60-69	Work needs complete rewrite
<b>F</b> below 60	Unacceptable

**Class Schedule:**

The schedule will be flexible and subject to change, depending on availability of professional guest speakers and mastery of topics. We may have in-class writing assignments at any time, and we also may do peer-editing at any time, so please be prepared. I'll give detailed homework assignments at the end of each class.

January 9                      First day; course introduction

January 11                     Introduction to mass communications

January 16	NO CLASS—MLK Day
January 18	Introduction to mass communications
January 23	Brevity
January 25, 30	Introduction to news writing
February 1	News writing--Leads
February 6	Leads
February 8, 13	<b>News Quiz</b> ; Introduction to AP style
February 15	AP Style
February 20, 22	Reporting assignment
February 27	<b>AP Style Quiz</b>
February 29	Introduction to public relations
March 5, 7	SPRING BREAK
March 12, 14	Press releases
March 19	Press releases
March 21	Social media
March 26, 28	More public relations writing; <b>PR quiz</b>
April 2	Introduction to advertising

April 4	More advertising
April 9	Final project work day
April 11	Final project presentations
April 16	Final project presentations
April 18	Final review
April 23	Class by appointment
April 25	Class by appointment
<b>April 27</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>