

Communication 356 (Section 2): News Team

Fall 2016

Thursdays 8:00-10:50am CAC 112 (Computer lab: CAC 301)

Course website: D2L

Instructor: Alex Ingersoll - alex.ingersoll@uwsp.edu

Office Hours: (CAC 309) 12:00-1:00pm Tu/Wed and 11:00am-12:00pm Thur

Course Objectives

"News is something someone wants suppressed. Everything else is just advertising."

-Alfred Harmsworth, Lord Northcliffe

This course provides students with the opportunity to produce a newscast as an introduction to the television and multimedia newsroom environment. Through a combination of broadcast and online journalism production, the newscast will be produced entirely by the students enrolled in the course. You will be required to gather information, write, shoot, and edit stories for half-hour newscasts that the class will organize and produce. Much like local affiliate stations working with national broadcasters, these newscasts will not only implement local journalism but national and international content through a content license with CNN. In addition to producing three original video reports, student journalists will be expected to rotate through the television studio and control room environments. The goal is to develop timely, credible, engaging, and well-produced news content. The end result will provide students with a broad skill set and a working environment in which they can advance their professional skills and produce a resume reel for potential employers.

Required Texts

- Tuggle, C.A., Forrest Carr, and Suzanne Huffman. *Broadcast News Handbook: Writing, Reporting, and Producing in a Converging Media World*, 5th Ed. McGraw Hill, 2014.
 - Other materials to be distributed online.
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Communication¹

Due to the highly collaborative nature of news production and the limited time available to complete work for the course, effective communication among all classmates and the instructor is CRITICAL. I will often send emails to the class through D2L. You will need to have and regularly check an active UWSP email account. Much of the work in the course is geared toward significant group coordination and therefore necessitates a sincere willingness to cooperate. This course requires each student to commit to the success of every other student's work at each step of the news production process.

Lab & Equipment

You are responsible for knowing and adhering to all Lab Policies and you are responsible for all equipment you check out. Failure to abide by the rules of the equipment check-out room, besides being inconsiderate to your fellow classmates, may affect your borrowing privileges. A final grade for this course will not be issued until any and all equipment you have checked out or have made complete arrangements for replacement restitution. Please remember to always be respectful and courteous to staff members.

¹ This syllabus is subject to change as my opinions change and evolve, especially with your help and guidance.

If you are still enrolled in this course on the ninth day of the semester, a \$25 rental fee will be charged to your student account. Paying this fee allows you to access production equipment (cameras, tripods, light kits, etc.) available for checkout through the IT Help Desk.

Evaluation

Your final grade in this course is a composite of the different projects listed below. Detailed explanations of each assignment will be given in class at the appropriate times. Late work will not be accepted past the assigned due date. All work will be collected at the beginning of class unless stated otherwise. All projects turned in on flash drives or online filesharing (in Quicktime .mov format) must be clearly labeled with your name, the project number, and the title of the project (if applicable) with the file name itself.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Due</u>
<i>Assignments</i> 18%		
01-News Production Critique	3%	9/15
02-Editing Exercise	7%	10/6
03-Producer Exercise	8%	10/20
<i>News PKGs</i> 45%		
01	10%	10/13
02	10%	11/3
03	10%	12/1
Segment Productions	15%	11/10; 12/1; 12/8
<i>Live Newscasts</i> 30%		
01	10%	11/17
02	10%	12/8
03	10%	12/15
Résumé Tape	7%	12/20, 12:30pm

Grade Breakdown

A (100-93.5%) A- (93.4-89.5%) B+ (89.4-86.5%) B (86.4-83.5%) B- (83.4-79.5%) C+ (79.4-76.5%)
 C (76.4-73.5%) C- (73.4-69.5%) D+ (69.4-66.5%) D (66.4-59.5%) F (<59.4%)

Evaluation Cont.

Since the success of this class depends upon your presence in class, it is expected that you will come to every class on time and ready to engage in the day's materials. Students who attend every single meeting will see their diligence reflected both in their participation grade, and most likely, in the quality of their work. For an absence to be considered excused, you must present University-approved documentation. Your second unexcused absence will result in 1 full letter grade deducted from your News PKG grades overall. Your third will result in 1 full letter grade deducted from your overall grade. Lateness of more than ten minutes will count as 1/2 of an absence. (Repeated lateness of less than ten minutes will also add up to an absence, at my discretion). **If you have four unexcused absences, you will fail the course.** In this course, missing a live newscast counts as **two absences.** If you do miss a class, please be sure to check with me and/or your classmates for what you missed and make sure you receive any assignments, hand-outs, etc.

Production work will often happen during class time using lab equipment, *unless you make arrangements that includes full participation by your group members.* You will be responsible for extra lab work that must occur outside of class, whether in CAC or the library. When working on lab projects, you will be expected

to pull your weight and participate in each aspect of the production process. Again, this course focuses on media production as a collaborative process. Creating an environment of mutual respect is *paramount* to successful work. While difference of opinions and vigorous debate are highly encouraged, you will be expected to refrain from using disparaging remarks (e.g., sexist, racist, homophobic language) in class, lab, or written work.

Communicating with Me

The best way to talk to me is during my office hours. I am available over email but it may take me a day to respond. This means that you will need to ask questions about assignments more than 24 hours before they are due. If you are having problems completing the assignments, you need to communicate the issues with me at least 24 hours before the assignment is due so we may lay out alternative courses of action.

Computers, Procrastination & Murphy's Law²

Late assignments will not be accepted. Please don't come to class without homework due to technical difficulties. (My computer crashed, printer ran out of ink, not enough batteries, etc.) Don't wait until the last minute to carry out your work. If you do, you will be rushed, your work will suffer and you won't have time to deal with the inevitable computer issues. Expect equipment to malfunction, batteries to run down, and hard drives to crash. ALWAYS make a redundant copy of your work. Save your media into a master directory on your external drive. REMEMBER to set the Final Cut Pro Scratch disk to your external directory every time you launch it.

Links of Interest

WJFW NBC TV-12 <http://www.wjfw.com>

WSAW CBS NewsChannel 7 <http://www.wsaw.com>

WAOW ABC NewsLine 9 <http://www.waow.com>

Wisconsin Public Television <http://wpt.org>

Wisconsin Broadcasters Association <http://www.wi-broadcasters.org>

National Press Photographers Association <https://nppa.org>

Poynter Institute <http://www.poynter.org>

Radio, Television, Digital News Association <http://www.rtdna.org>

Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

UW-Stevens Point values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to success, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. Read more here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. Don't do it! The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the UWSP "Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures" section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RIghtsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

² The 4th law of thermodynamics: "Anything that can go wrong will go wrong."

Assistive Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, check here: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations, please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me at the beginning of the course. I am happy to help in any way that I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here: <http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

"Morning" Meetings

These meetings will occur three times during the semester. They will be held in a fashion consistent with the morning editorial meetings that occur in newsrooms throughout the country. Every journalist will be expected to pitch at least two story ideas that can then be further developed by collaborate groups into video reports for broadcast. Pitches will be open for review by everyone in class to determine which stories should become primary and which stories should be considered backups.

News PKGs

You be expected to turn in three collaborative video reports on the date and time that is noted on the syllabus. **Much like a professional newsroom, late reports are unacceptable and will not be accepted.**

When a PKG or VO/SOT is turned in, you are expected to provide the following:

- Your video reports as a QuickTime .mov file ready for playback
- A script for the video report (as an electronic word document via email)
- A story sheet that details the shoot itself (as an electronic word document via email)

Advice From Students in Previous Versions of the Course

At the end of every semester I ask my students to reflect on what they learned in the course and to give advice to students who will take this course in the future. Here is a small sample of the most common replies:

"Plan ahead for every project and don't wait until the last minute."

"You can never have too much b-roll."

"Don't be afraid to take risks, go for the best interviews. Be outgoing and personable. Make connections and always look for growth, not perfection."

"Take this class seriously, have fun with it though too. If you don't put effort into your work in the class, the only person you're hurting is yourself."

"Practice. Practice your skills. Do things outside of class that will enhance you. Watch the nightly newscasts, take notes, practice your newswriting and camera delivery. It's only going to make you better."

"Be willing to work with others. Balancing your team is the most important aspect."

Course Schedule

Week 1 - Introduction and Overview

9/8	Introduction, course overview, and checkout policies Previous experience survey
	Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 2 “Selecting Stories and Starting to Write” Review: Tuggle, et al. Appendix A “Word Usage and Grammar Guide”

Week 2 - Developing Stories and Camera Operation

9/15	Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 3 “Writing Great Leads and Other Helpful Tips” Assignment 01: News production critique DUE
	Workshop: Introduction to Cameras; Media Lab and Equipment Tour Read: Zettl “Lenses” and “Camera Operation and Picture Composition” (on D2L)

Week 3 - Editing & Writing

9/22	Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 1 “Characteristics of Broadcast News Writing” Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 4 “Deadly Copy Mistakes and How to Avoid Them”
	Adobe Premiere Demo Introduce Assignment 02: Editing Exercise (Due 10/6)

Week 4 - Ethics, Scripts, and Edits

9/29	Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 13 “Why We Fight” Read: Tuggle, et al. Appendix B “Legal and Privacy FAQs” Review: http://www.rtdna.org/content/rtdna_code_of_ethics
	MORNING MEETING 01

Week 5 - Interviewing

10/6	Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 5 “Interviewing: Getting the Facts and the Feelings” Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 9 “Television News Story Forms—The Package”
	Assignment 02: Editing Exercise DUE [Review in class]

Week 6 - Producing

10/13	Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 11 “Producing TV News” Introduce Assignment 03: Producer Exercise Determine producing groups and topics for segment productions
	PKG 01 DUE

Week 7 - VO/SOTs

10/20	Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 7 “Television News Story Forms—The VO” Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 8 “Television News Story Forms—The VO/SOT” Assignment 03: Producer Exercise DUE
	MORNING MEETING 02

Week 8 - Studio and Control Room

10/27	Read: Zettl, “Techniques of Television Lighting” (on D2L)
	Setting up the News Room Set - Studio and Control Room Workflow Determine news team roles


Week 9 - Anchoring

11/3	PKG 02 DUE MORNING MEETING 03
	Anchoring Demo (dress appropriately!!!)

Week 10 - Studio Run-Through

11/10	NEWSCAST 01 Run-Through Review: Tuggle, et al. Appendix C “Producing a Student Newscast from Beginning to End”
	Anchoring Demo (continued) Show producers and segment producers in class meeting

Week 11 - SHOW 01

11/17	 LIVE NEWSCAST 01
	Analysis of Newscast 01 Anchoring Demo (continued??) Show producers and segment producers in class meeting


Week 12 - THANKSGIVING

11/24	No Class


Week 13 - Show Review and Résumé Tapes

12/1	Read: Tuggle, et al. Ch. 16 “So You Want a Job? The Art of the Résumé”
	PKG 03 DUE Show producers and segment producers in class meeting

Week 14 - SHOW 02

12/8	 LIVE NEWSCAST 02
	Analysis of Newscast 02

Week 15 - SHOW 03

12/15	 LIVE NEWSCAST 03
	Analysis of Newscast 03

Final Résumé Tapes

Tues. 12/20 12:30pm	Résumé Tapes DUE
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