

**Sam Houston State University**  
**Department of Mass Communication**  
**MCOM 2362: News Reporting & Editing (3 credits)**  
**Spring 2018**

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Course: MCOM 2362  
Meeting Times: 3:30-4:50pm, Tuesdays & Thursdays  
Classroom: CB 205  
Section: 02

Instructor: Dayna Galganski  
Office Number: CB 203  
Phone Number: 936-294-2695  
Email Address: [dmg018@shsu.edu](mailto:dmg018@shsu.edu)  
Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 1:00-2:00pm  
or by appointment

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## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

In this course, you will learn to identify good news stories, learn interviewing techniques, learn researching skills for supporting information, and how to report the news with accuracy, precision, and balance on a deadline. This course will cover the theory and practice of writing specialized stories typically covered by the news media. Emphasis will also be placed on knowledge of current events.

### **Course Objectives**

- Writing readers
- Writing VO/SOTs
- Writing packages
- Develop research skills
- Writing stories for radio
- Writing stories for newspaper
- Editing & shooting VO/SOTs for Cable 7

### **Required Textbook**

Tuggle, C.A. *Broadcast News Handbook: Writing, Reporting and Producing in the Age of Social Media*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. McGraw Hill, 2014.

### **Required Materials**

- Headphones: Headphones are required and not provided when editing in labs and bays. Over the ear headphones are preferred but ear buds or on ear headphones will suffice.
- 1 SDHC Card: You will need one class 10 SHDC card of at least 16gb each. Lower classes may not function properly with some of the checkout equipment. No micro SD cards.
- Suggested: It is a good idea to have an external hard drive that you can back up all of your work on and have with you at all times. I would suggest at least 500gb, but 1 or 2tb will probably be a better bang for you buck. Having an external hard drive is NOT a requirement, but rather a suggestion and a good habit to get into.

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

### Assignments

You will be given handouts that detail each assignment or series of assignments, its requirements, and the grading breakdown and due dates for each component. You will have separate due dates for smaller components of each project (example: scripts, shot sheets, etc). Here is a list and brief explanation of those assignments.

- *Quizzes:* There will be quizzes throughout the semester that will be based on lectures and readings. There will be no more than 5 during the semester. They may or may not be scheduled so be ready for “pop” quizzes. All material covered up to that point will be fair game for quizzes.
- *Critiques:* You will be given at home critiques to develop your eye, ear and writing for good and not so good news qualities. These will correlate with the topics we will be discussing in class and will help raise your awareness and develop the skills we are working on. These will be assigned throughout the semester but no more than 10 total.
- *Tests:* There will be 2 tests throughout the semester. The date of those will be announced at least a week in advance. They will not be cumulative, but will cover everything not previously on a test to the current topics.
- Most of your focus will be on writing different types of news stories. These will be evaluated on two levels:
  - The reporting involved to get the story (the people you interviewed, as well as your thoroughness of your research and the angles you pursued)
  - The actual writing (clarity, organization, focus, creativity, grammar and spelling)

You will be required to interview people face to face, taking extensive notes and later in semester on-camera interviews. If there is any question about the authenticity of your story, you will be asked to provide phone numbers and email addresses of your subjects.

It is likely you will be assigned to cover events or conduct interviews off campus. You must provide your own transportation. All written assignments must be typed and in correct format.

If at the end of the semester the total points allowed is less than 1000 (i.e.: had less than 5 quizzes and/or critiques), the additional points needed will be added to the overall worth of the final exam.

Extra credit opportunities may be available throughout the semester. However, it will not be scheduled or built in to the class structure. Therefore, extra credit may be available if and when unique circumstances present themselves.

### Point system

Points earned	1000-900	899-800	799-700	699-600	599-0
Letter Grade	A	B	C	D	F

## Grading

Requirement	Due Date	Points
Quizzes (no more than 5)	various	20 each (100 total)
Critiques (10 total)	various	20 each (200 total)
Tests (2)	TBD	100 each (200 total)
In class assignments	various	150 total
Out of class assignments	various	150 total
Final Exam	May 3	200
Extra Credit	TBD	TBD
<b>Total</b>		<b>1000</b>

## Late Work

There is no tolerance for late work, and make up work will not be accepted. If you do not turn in the materials by each due date, you will receive a zero. Malfunctioning equipment, PA closet being closed, computers breaking, dog eating homework, etc. are not valid excuses. I'm not interested in your reason for turning work in late. I am interested in seeing your work submitted by the deadline. This is your first and last warning.

## Exam Policy

This class will have a cumulative final exam. The final will be given on the last day of regular classes. However, we will still meet on our official exam date to give back materials/grades and finish up. We will discuss this more in detail when it gets closer.

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## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

### Attendance Policy

The Student Handbook provides that regular and punctual class attendance is expected of each student at Sam Houston State University and that it is expected that each faculty member will keep a record of student attendance. Absences, tardiness, or leaving early will adversely affect the student's grade. **Students will be allowed 3 class hours (2 days) of absences without penalty. ANY additional absence over 3 hours (2 days) will result in final grade reductions of 100 pts per absence from the final course grade. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of EVERY class. Arriving late is the same as an absence in this class.**

### STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy #861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present

to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). This request must be made two weeks in advance of when the absence(s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examination are to be completed.

### **Expectations Regarding Course Behavior**

Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Please turn off or mute your cell phones before class begins. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking with each other at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in, minimally, a directive to leave class or being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with University policy. *Additionally, we will observe the FCC prohibition on the use of obscene and profane language. If you do not know the seven "forbidden" words, learn them.*

### **Academic Integrity**

The University expects all students to engage in academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. Furthermore, the University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. Students found guilty of dishonest behavior in this class will be given the grade of F for the entire class.

*There is zero tolerance for academic dishonesty. Any form of it will result in you failing the class. In this class, submitting video, audio, or graphics that were not produced/created by you, it is also considered plagiarism. Similarly, submitting projects that you did not edit or produce, will also be considered plagiarism. If you fabricate content or otherwise violate ethical news gathering practices, you will fail this course.*

### **Appropriate Dress**

Please dress professionally when conducting interviews or covering events. Some sources and members of the public will make a judgment on your professional credibility based on your appearance. Don't give them a reason to doubt or otherwise undermine your efforts.

### **Computer Use**

The computers in this classroom are for schoolwork only. You are not allowed to do personal business on the computer (such as checking emails or social media) during class. During class lectures and discussions, you are allowed to use the computers only to take notes or as directed to complete assignments. Students who violate this policy will be asked to leave.

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## **SUPPORT SERVICES**

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

### **Writing Center**

You should already know proper grammar and mechanics, including the correct use of punctuation. If writing is difficult for you, I encourage you to visit the Sam Houston Writing Center, located in Farrington 111. Tutor are

available to work with you one-on-one at no charge. To schedule an appointment, you can drop by the writing center or call 936-294-3680.

### **Inclusive Learning Environment**

As we share our personal beliefs and stories inside or outside of the classroom, it is always with the understanding that we value and respect diversity of background, experience, and opinion, where every individual feels valued. We believe in, and promote, openness and tolerance of differences in ethnicity and culture, and we respect differing personal, spiritual, religious and political values. We further believe that celebrating such diversity enriches the quality of the educational experiences we provide our students and enhances our own personal and professional relationships. We embrace Sam Houston State University's Non-Discrimination Policy, which reads, "Sam Houston State University, in accordance with applicable federal and state law (including Title VII) and institutional values, prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, ancestry, marital status, citizenship, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, or gender identity."

*\*\*This syllabus is subject to change throughout the semester as necessary. Students will be informed via email or in class of any changes.\*\**

### **Tentative Semester Calendar**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic(s) Covered</b>	<b>Chapters</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
1	Jan. 18	Class intro, syllabus, expectations, overview		
2	Jan. 23	Shot sheets, camera framing, first project	1, 6	Quiz 1
2	Jan. 25	Using cameras, tripods, mics	4, 5	Critique 1
3	Jan. 30	Logging on to network, intro to Premiere	12	Shot Sheets
3	Feb. 1	Premiere, importing, editing, exporting	12	Intro Silent Videos Quiz 2
4	Feb. 6	Phases of production, personnel	1, 2	
4	Feb. 8	Lighting, color, camera functions	4, 8	
5	Feb. 13	Scripts	17	
5	Feb. 15			Quiz 3

6	Feb. 20			Scripts Shot sheets
6	Feb. 22	camera movements	5	PSA
7	Feb. 27	audio capturing	7	
7	Mar. 1	News packages		
8	Mar. 6	News packages		
8	Mar. 8			Critique 2
	Mar 12-16	SPRING BREAK		
9	Mar. 20			
9	Mar. 22			
10	Mar. 27			Scripts Shot Sheets
10	Mar. 29			News Packages Peer Evaluations
11	Apr. 3	Studio intro, personnel	2, 10, 14	
11	Apr. 5	Personnel and individual roles	2, 16, 17	
12	Apr. 10			Quiz 5
12	Apr. 12	In studio		
13	Apr. 17	In studio		
13	Apr. 19	begin studio run-throughs		Scripts Personnel sheets
14	Apr. 24	Final studio run-throughs		
14	Apr. 26			Studio Show Peer Evaluations
15	May 1	Debriefing last project, details on written and practical final		
15	May 3			Written Final Critique 5
16	May 7-10	FINAL WEEK – see academic calendar for scheduled exam date and time		Practical Final

*\*\*This schedule is subject to change throughout the semester. Students will be notified of any changes via email or in class.\*\**