



RTV2100 Writing for the Electronic Media Spring 2018

Instructor: Andrew Selepak, PhD
 Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday Period 8
 Office: Weimer Hall 3053
 Email: aselepak@ufl.edu

Lectures: Tuesday and Thursday, Period 7 (1:55 – 2:45)
 Lecture Location: Williamson Hall Room 0100
 Lab: as scheduled (see Lab Sections Roster)

Lab Sections Roster

| <u>Section</u> | <u>Day</u> | <u>Periods</u> | <u>Weimer Hall</u> | <u>Instructor</u> |
|----------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 01DB | Thursday | 8-9 | 2050 | |
| 01C8 | Thursday | 10-11 | 2056 | |
| 3577 | Friday | 2-3 | 2056 | |
| 5649 | Friday | 3-4 | 3028 | |

What to expect from RTV2100

This course is designed to provide fundamental instruction and practice in writing for the electronic media, specifically radio and online. Additional emphasis will include the impact of social media on the public and media professionals, as well as a focus on personal branding and networking. It is required of all telecommunications majors.

Prerequisites are: Six hours of English composition, sophomore standing, and ability to type at least 25 words per minute.

Course Objectives

- Move toward mastery of language skills with special emphasis on language used in the electronic media
- Identify news values and what makes a good story
- Develop radio news stories that will engage and enlighten the target audience
- Formulate radio announcements that are clear, interesting and persuasive
- Develop a basic understanding of writing for television and online
- Acquire a greater awareness of the increase in use and availability of online media
- Gain a great understanding of the ethics involved in digital media

Teaching Philosophy

Few careers are more exciting than a job in media. But the media industry is rapidly changing and the skills students needed just a few years ago are already outdated. For this reason, few textbooks are as up-to-date as needed to cover the skills you will need for a job when you graduate. So all the material you will need for this course comes in lectures and handouts. Some of these lectures will be online in Canvas.

Course Policies

1. **Course Format.** The format of the course is two 50-minute lectures* and one 115-minute lab per week. It would be useful to think about this course as a theory and practice course. The lectures provide you with ideas about writing for the electronic media and provide examples to use as models for your work in lab. During lab sessions, we will help you put those ideas into practice. Your lab leader will help you develop your skills more closely and will grade your work.

*** Frequently throughout the semester lecture material will be posted to Canvas**

2. **Computers labs.** You will need your own laptop for this course with Microsoft® WORD. We will communicate by campus email. Please be sure you are familiar with basic operations of these programs.
3. **Attendance.** Attendance is required because it is essential to your learning. In general, acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special pre-approved extracurricular requirements (professional conferences or athletic events where you are a participant), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and court-imposed obligations (i.e. jury duty or subpoena).

It is the responsibility of the student to keep up-to-date of all material, deadlines, and assignments missed, and will be his/her responsibility to meet all deadlines for assignments for ANY ABSENCE, excused or otherwise. If you miss a lab, it is your responsibility to arrange to make up the missed work with your lab instructor.

Your lab instructor will take attendance at the beginning of labs and lectures. It is your responsibility to be on time AND make sure you are recorded as present. If you come late to class and attendance is already noted, you will be considered absent. It is YOUR responsibility to be on time.

4. **Late Work.** You will be permitted to makeup assignments missed due to an excused absence. For excused absences, provide documentation to your lab instructor for the reason you missed lab within 24-hours of the time of the missed lab. Your lab instructor will provide you the assignment missed. You will have until the start of the next lab to complete the missed lab assignment unless other arraignments have been made.

You will be permitted to makeup assignments missed due to an unexcused absence. There will be a 25% penalty on all work submitted for an unexcused absence. For unexcused absences, email your lab instructor within 24-hours of the missed lab. Your lab instructor will provide you the assignment missed. You will have until the start of the next lab to complete the missed lab assignment unless other arraignments have been made.

Failure to make-up work missed by the next lab for excused and unexcused absences will result in a zero for the assignment.

This course moves quickly, and only by having you complete assignments will your lab instructors know you are on pace to do well.

5. **Courtesy.** If you arrive late, settle in with minimum disturbance. Put your cell phone on vibrate. **DO NOT TAKE PHOTOS DURING THE LECTURE OF POWERPOINTS OR OTHER MATERIAL.** First, this can be distracting to the instructor. Second, if you are only taking photos of the material, you are not processing the information and you will not learn it.
6. **Learning.** Learning is a lifelong process. Learning to write well involves continued exposure to good examples and a lot of practice. Students who are unduly concerned with grades usually play it safe and give the teacher what they think he or she wants. Real learning requires you to experiment and make mistakes. In this class when faced with a choice between playing it safe for a grade and experimenting, with the possibility that you will make a mistake you can learn from, dare to take that risk. Choose what will contribute to your long-term learning, not what will enhance your semester grade. We will give you the space to make mistakes without being punished by a grade. Don't just think about giving the "right" answer, instead give the best answer.
7. **Guidelines.** Be sure to put your name, lab instructor's name, and section number on all quizzes and lab assignments as grades are kept by individual sections.
8. **Incompletes.** A course grade of incomplete will be permitted only for serious illness documented by a physician. A timetable for completing the course work must be set before the incomplete is given.
9. **Flexibility.** We believe the semester plan outlined in the calendar is realistic. Nonetheless, we reserve the right to adjust the course content, exercises, exams, etc., based on the class's collective ability to maintain pace.
10. There will be additional lectures provided online for you to watch on your own time. These online lectures substitute for homework and readings you would otherwise be assigned.

Grading

| | |
|-----|---|
| 25% | News Lab exercises |
| 25% | Production Lab exercises |
| 15% | Midterm exam |
| 15% | Final exam |
| 10% | Personal Branding & Networking Assignment |
| 5% | Current Events quizzes |
| 5% | Meet and Greet |

Your grades will be posted to Canvas at <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>

Grading Scale

| | |
|----|------------|
| A | (93-100) |
| A- | (90-92) |
| B+ | (87-89) |
| B | (83-86) |
| B- | (80-82) |
| C+ | (77-79) |
| C | (73-76) |
| C- | (70-72) |
| D+ | (67-69) |
| D | (63-66) |
| D- | (60-62) |
| E | (below 60) |

Current Events quizzes (5%). People working in the media must know what's going on in their communities, in the country, and in the world. They must be in the daily habit of consuming news and information. There should be at least one local source in your daily dose of news. Here are some of the media outlets available for this purpose:

- **From print.** The *Gainesville Sun* (Gainesvillesun.com or @GainesvilleSun). National newspaper websites like *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or *The Los Angeles Times*. There are also weekly news magazines like *TIME* and *U.S. News & World Report*.
- **From radio.** WUFT weekdays.
- **Network and local television news.** Watch the news on ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, and NBC. Watch programs that treat issues in greater detail like ABC's *Nightline* and magazine shows like *60 Minutes* on CBS.
- **From the Internet.** Visit news web sites frequently to know what is going on in the world, and up-to-the-minute like cnn.com, foxnews.com, drudgereport.com, and huffingtonpost.com. And follow accounts like @CNN and @HuffingtonPost

Lab exercises (40%). This grade is divided between news writing exercises (25%) and production/online writing exercises (25%). You are graded on journalistic style (precise, accurate and fair information), aural style (conversational, ear-pleasing), writing (clear, concise, compelling), effort (applying class ideas, originality/creativity, persuasiveness), and mechanics (punctuation, grammar, spelling, vocabulary).

Exams (30%). Your exams are based on material in the lectures and labs.

Personal Branding and Networking Assignment (10%). You will complete a semester long personal branding assignment that will require you to create professional social media accounts and use these accounts to network with individuals in your chosen industry. A final paper will be completed and submitted in the last lab of the semester highlighting your results. You will also submit a mid-semester report of your progress.

Meet and Greet (5%). You will write a short paper (300 to 500 words) explaining 1.) why you are taking RV2100, 2.) what you hope to get out of the class, 3.) what your future goals are in the industry, 4.) ideas for internships, 5.) describe your perfect workday.

Your lab instructors will provide more information on this assignment concerning what they want to receive from you in your short paper.

You will also need to provide your lab instructor with a copy of your resume including education, work, volunteer experience, etc. Use this link for a reference:

https://www.crc.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CRC_ResumePreparation.pdf

You can leave off the Objective section

In addition, you will meet with your lab instructor in the first three weeks and explain what you wrote to receive full credit.

50% of grade - resume

25% of grade - short paper

25% of grade - meeting with your lab instructor

References

For news majors

AP Broadcast News Style Book

Random House Dictionary of the English Language

Kern, Jonathan (2008). *Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

For all majors

Orlik, Peter (2009). *Broadcast/Broadband copywriting*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Kessler, Ronald and Duncan McDonald (2015, 9th Ed.), *When words collide: A media writer's guide to grammar and style*. Cengage Learning.

Wenger, Debora Halpern, and Deborah Potter (2015, 3rd Ed.). *Advancing the story: Broadcast journalism in a multimedia world*. SAGE.

News Test: To be enrolled in RTV 3303 (Radio One), if you are selected to take the course based on your grade from the News Test, you must pass RTV 2100, RTV 3007 and have six hours of English, all with a "C" grade or better. You may take the second English course concurrently with RTV 3303.

For those of you wishing to follow the News Track for telecom, the department has put together a web page that should answer any questions you have about the test, requirements, eligibility, and other Frequently Asked Questions. It can be found by following this link:

<https://www.jou.ufl.edu/current-students/undergraduate/academics/telecommunication/newsplacement/>

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities:

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Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. You must submit this documentation prior to submitting assignments or taking the quizzes or exams. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore, students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations.

Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

University counseling services and mental health services:

Counseling and Wellness resources

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

352-392-1575

U Matter, We Care:

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575.

The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength.

In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>

Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>

Class Demeanor:

Mastery in this class requires preparation, passion, and professionalism. Students are expected, within the requirements allowed by university policy, to attend class, be on time, and meet all deadlines. Work assigned in advance of class should be completed as directed. Full participation in online and live discussions, group projects, and small group activities is expected.

My role as instructor is to identify critical issues related to the course, direct you to and teach relevant information, assign appropriate learning activities, create opportunities for assessing your performance, and communicate the outcomes of such assessments in a timely, informative, and professional way. Feedback is essential for you to have confidence that you have mastered the material and for me to determine that you are meeting all course requirements.

At all times it is expected that you will welcome and respond professionally to assessment feedback, that you will treat your fellow students and me with respect, and that you will contribute to the success of the class as best as you can.

University Policy on Academic Misconduct:

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/students.php>

The University of Florida Honor Code was voted on and passed by the Student Body in the Fall 1995 semester. The Honor Code reads as follows:

Preamble: In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. A student-run Honor Court and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

The Honor Code: "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

For more information about academic honesty, contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 352-392-1261.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students in the College of Journalism and Communications are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of integrity. It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they know and understand the requirements of every assignment. At a minimum, this includes avoiding the following:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism occurs when an individual presents the ideas or expressions of another as his or her own. Students must always credit others' ideas with accurate citations and must use quotation marks and citations when presenting the words of others.

Cheating: Cheating occurs when a student circumvents or ignores the rules that govern an academic assignment such as an exam or class paper. It can include using notes, in physical or electronic form, in an exam, submitting the work of another as one's own, or reusing a paper a student has composed for one class in another class. If a student is not sure about the rules that govern an assignment, it is the student's responsibility to ask for clarification from his instructor.

Misrepresenting Research Data: The integrity of data in mass communication research is a paramount issue for advancing knowledge and the credibility of our professions. For this reason any intentional misrepresentation of data, or misrepresentation of the conditions or circumstances of data collection, is considered a violation of academic integrity. Misrepresenting data is a clear violation of the rules and requirements of academic integrity and honesty.

Tips for doing well

Attend all lectures and labs. Lecture PowerPoints will not be available in Canvas which means you must be in attendance to learn the material from the lectures. The material from the lectures will be used to help you in your lab work, and the exam questions will come from the lectures.

Some lectures will be posted to Canvas in video form or covered in lab.

Course Calendar

Course Calendar

*****NOTE: schedule subject to changed based on guest availabilities and other factors.

| Date | Topic |
|-----------|--|
| 1/9 | Introduction: course structure and course content. <i>Definition of news</i> |
| 1/11 | <i>News Values</i> |
| 1/11-1/12 | LAB 1 – Introductions, Slugs, & Fact Sheets |
| 1/16 | <i>News Values (cont.)</i> |
| 1/18 | <i>Leads</i> |
| 1/18-1/19 | LAB 2 – Writing in Broadcast Style & Leads |
| 1/23 | <i>The Basics of Newswriting</i> |
| 1/25 | <i>The Basics of Newswriting (Cont.)</i> |
| 1/25-1/26 | LAB 3 – Writing Readers |
| 1/30 | <i>Newsroom</i> |
| 2/1 | <i>Media Integration, Online News, Social News</i> |
| 2/1-2/2 | LAB 4 – Writing Readers |
| 2/6 | <i>Sound Bites & News Story Formats</i> |
| 2/8 | <i>Interviewing and Sources</i> |
| 2/8-2/9 | LAB 5 – Writing Sound Bite Stories |

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|-----------|---|
| 2/13 | <i>Breaking News</i> |
| 2/15 | <i>News Features</i> |
| 2/15-2/16 | LAB 6 – Writing Sound Bite Stories |
| 2/20 | <i>Legal & Ethical Considerations</i> |
| 2/22 | <i>Legal & Ethical Considerations (cont.)</i> |
| 2/22-2/23 | LAB 7 – NO lab this week (NEWS TEST) |
| 2/23 | News Placement Exam |
| 2/27 | <i>Video & Television News</i> |
| 3/1 | <i>Test #1 in class</i> |
| 3/1-3/2 | LAB 8 – Writing News Stories from Press Releases |
| 3/6 | <i>No Lecture – Spring Break</i> |
| 3/8 | <i>No Lecture – Spring Break</i> |
| 3/8-3/9 | LAB 9 – NO LAB – SPRING BREAK |
| 3/13 | <i>Sound Elements</i> |
| 3/15 | <i>Radio Copy Format & Persuasive Messages</i> |
| 3/15-3/16 | Week 10 – Writing PSAs |
| 3/20 | <i>Television Language</i> |
| 3/22 | <i>Television and Film Writing</i> |
| 3/22-3/23 | LAB 11 - Storyboard Assignment |
| 3/27 | <i>Being Ethical in the Media</i> |
| 3/29 | <i>Being Ethical in the Media (cont.)</i> |
| 3/29-3/30 | LAB 12 – Fake News Assignment |
| 4/3 | <i>Online World</i> |
| 4/5 | <i>Online Writing</i> |
| 4/5-4/6 | LAB 13 – Infographic Assignment |
| 4/10 | <i>Web Essentials</i> |
| 4/12 | <i>Web Essentials (cont.)</i> |
| Canvas | <i>Social Media</i> |
| 4/12-4/13 | LAB 14 – Online Writing Assignment |
| 4/17 | <i>Personal Branding</i> |
| 4/19 | <i>Personal Branding</i> |
| 4/19-4/20 | LAB 15 – Elevator Pitch |
| 4/24 | <i>Test # 2 in Class</i> |