JOU 4311: ADVANCED MAGAZINE WRITING
Tuesday periods 4-6, Weimer 3219

PROFESSOR
Ted Spiker @ProfSpiker
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OFFICE HOURS
Wednesday 2-4 p.m.
Best to make appointment
Skype: ProfSpiker (by appointment)
g-chat: ProfSpiker (by appointment)

REQUIRED READING
Writing Tools, Roy Peter Clark (Little, Brown)
Other readings as determined by class

OBJECTIVE
This course aims to prepare students for magazine-style reporting, writing, and revising articles suitable for publication in various print/digital outlets. You will assume the role of a professional magazine writer, and we will conduct this class in a writer’s-group format. In this capstone course, you are expected to produce senior-level, high-quality work with depth and critical thinking. In exchange, you will receive feedback that will improve and strengthen your writing in new and creative ways.

GOALS
>>To use a variety of advanced research and interviewing techniques
>>To develop advanced writing, rewriting and storytelling skills
>>To develop good marketing techniques to get stories accepted and published

COURSE TOPICS
| Idea Generation | Marketing/Audience |
| Interviewing    | Reporting/Research |
| Diversity of Sources | Revision |
| Ethical Issues   | Writing Short, Writing Tight |
| Story Structure  | Story Genre |
| Style/Voice     | Literary Devices |

GRADING
You will be graded on a 1,000-point scale:

A: 925–1000
A-: 900–924
B+: 875–899
B: 825–874
B-: 800–824
C+: 775–799
C: 725–774
C-: 700–724
D+: 675–699
D: 625–674
D-: 600–624
E: 0-599
ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

Main Story (500 points)
50 points: Idea memo
50 points: Story excerpt
150 points: First draft
200 points: Revision
50 points: Query/pitch

Other (500 points)
75 points: Warm-Up writing assignment
150 points: Short feature (75 for first draft, 75 for revision)
75 points: Writing Tools test
50 points: Reading quizzes
50 points: Reading presentation
100 points: Attendance/participation

ASSIGNMENTS

Main story
You will write one narrative, long-form magazine-style piece, using advanced storytelling techniques. In order for this to work, you must find a story worthy of depth and nuance, and you must report it. Word count: About 2,000 to 2,500. Find a story that you want to spend time with and that you will be able to have a reasonable amount of access to. Details of each of the following elements will be discussed in class:

Idea memo:
No more than one page single-spaced.
Due Tuesday 9/13 by email and hard copy in class.
50 points: Judged on overall quality (unique idea, specifics and details)

Story excerpt:
About 500 words of any part of your story.
Due Tuesday 9/27 by email and hard copy in class.
100 points: 50 points on quality of reporting, 50 points on quality of writing

First draft:
Due Tuesday 10/11 by email and hard copy in class.
150 points:
- Quality of lede: 25
- Quality of nut: 25
- Overall structure: 25
- Quality of reporting/info: 50
- Writing strength/mechanics: 25
**Query/pitch** (no more than a half of a page single-spaced):
Due **Tuesday 10/11** by email and hard copy in class.  
50 points: Judged on overall quality (appropriate market, specific sell, structure)

**Revision:**  
Due **Tuesday 11/29** by email and hard copy in class (10-point bonus if turned in on or before 11/22).  
200 points: 
Overall quality of writing (structure, mechanics, etc..): 100  
Overall quality of reporting (compelling and unique info): 100

**Other**

**Warm-Up Writing Assignment**  
No more than 750 words.  
Due **8/30** in class by email and hard copy.  
75 points: Details given in first class, judged on overall quality

**Short Feature**  
About 500 words.  
First draft: **Tuesday 11/1** by email and hard copy in class.  
Revision: **Tuesday 11/15** by email and hard copy in class.  
75 points each: Overall quality of reporting, writing based on genre.  
Story can be of any magazine-style genre, except news, essays and reviews. Some reporting required (minimum of two live sources). You can do mini-profiles, how-to’s, trends, etc… Ideas must be approved.

**Reading Presentation**  
You will choose a magazine-style piece, distribute to class, do a short presentation about it, and lead the class discussion. Dates will be determined the second week of class.  
50 points

**Reading Quizzes/Tests**  
We’ll have short quizzes on the assigned reading. They’ll be straightforward if you have done the reading. A Writing Tools test will be given 9/13.

**Attendance/Participation**  
You are allowed one unexcused absence (“excused” includes religious holidays and documented medical excuses). After that, your grade will be deducted by an automatic 50 points for each absence. Lateness to class can also result in a point deduction at instructor’s discretion. No makeup quizzes will be given (unless the absence is excused).
STORY SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

>> Turn in one hard copy, and e-mail one copy (unless otherwise noted)
>> TRIPLE-space all stories
>> Include source info (name, phone, e-mail) at bottom of every story
>> Include a headline and subhed for each story
  (not for grade; to help you think and focus what story is about)
>> Submit first draft with my comments along with final draft of main story

Failure to follow guidelines will result in a point penalty at instructor’s discretion

DEDUCTIONS
Failure to meet deadlines for writing assignments will result in a 20-point deduction for every 24-hour period that it is late. Fact errors will result in a deduction at instructor’s discretion, depending on the error and assignment.

CLASSROOM NEEDS
Students requesting special classroom needs must first register with the Dean of Students Office, which will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide the documentation to instructor.

HONOR CODE
Violation of the honor code includes plagiarizing material from other sources or fabricating material, as well as other forms of cheating. Violations will result in a failing grade, and you will be dismissed from the journalism program and reported to the Honor Court. See the Department of Journalism web site for specific outline of honor code violations.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT
This is a workshop-style class in which we will all contribute ideas and critiques of other writers’ work and ideas. Please use professional courtesy. Turn cell phones off. No texting (or checking your phone) in class. If you need to check your phone, please leave the room to do so. Be prepared to bring laptops to class. You will be notified at least 48 hours in advance if we are going to do in-class work.

THE INSTRUCTOR
Professor Ted Spiker is the chair of the UF department of journalism and has overseen the department’s magazine courses since he arrived at UF in 2001. A graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a former articles editor at Men’s Health, Spiker has had work published in TIME.com, Esquire.com, Outside, O the Oprah Magazine, Fortune, Men’s Health, Women’s Health, Runner’s World, Reader’s Digest, Best Life, and many others. He is also the author of DOWN SIZE and the co-author of a dozen books, including the national bestselling YOU: The Owner’s Manual series. Twitter: @ProfSpiker. Web site: www.tedspiker.com.