

ENTERTAINMENT WRITING — JOU 4930 — SPRING 2018

INSTRUCTOR: Miss Andrea Billups

Thursdays — 5-7 period Room: 3219 **Weimer** Hall

Contact: 517-775-9951 AndreaBillups@hotmail.com or princessmouse@jou.ufl.edu

Office (Room 3326 Weimer) hours: Thursdays 2-3:40 p.m. or by appt. You may email, text or call me anytime you need me. Don't be shy. I am available to you throughout the semester for guidance. Reach out.

GOALS: This course should prepare a student to report and write about celebrity and entertainment news and to produce professional-quality content for specialized publications and websites. Students will learn about the entertainment business — in music, film, television, creative arts, fashion and also the celebrity world's merge with politics. We will study how this industry gets covered by journalists across platforms. Students will produce original stories and creative content for their own entertainment-focused websites — aimed at their personal interests.

READING MATERIALS: Weekly online readings provided by the instructor as needed and two non-fiction books as assigned. (Please order, download or retrieve from library, whatever you can afford — we'll work thru each during the semester).

- * "Women Walk the Line" -- Holly Gleason
- * "Scrappy Little Nobody" — Anna Kendrick

SCHEDULE — Subject to change (please attend class to stay up to date — assignments and speakers may shift due to availability, breaking news, etc.) Please bring your laptops to class. Crucial.

Jan. 11 — Introduction to class — discussion of class goals — review of syllabus. Website set-up assigned including intro video.

*Begin reading "Scrappy Little Nobody." Weekly celeb reports assigned.

Jan. 18 —In-class writing assignment. Music/Film/TV publication reports assigned; content discussion, packaging, aggregating, covering live events. (midterm discussion) SAG Awards (Jan. 21) item assigned.

* Midterm assigned: Live event coverage — 800 words.

Feb. 1 — No class. You are excused. Read PEOPLE, peruse TMZ, tweet, jossip, frolic.

Feb. 8 — SAG Award assignment due. Reviews, Profiles — first weekly story assigned: "What's in Your Bag?" — Guest speaker: TBD
Discussion: "Scrappy Little Nobody."

Feb. 15 — Speciality publication/coverage presentations due — 3 minutes — in-class.

Feb. 22 — **Begin reading Women Walk the Line — first story due. Covering the Academy Awards and the red carpet : Guest Speaker — Alexia Fernandez

March 1 — Television and Film - lecture and discussion. Academy Awards (ceremony March 4) assignment.

March 8 — Spring Break — Have fun, be careful. Sunscreen.

March 15 — Academy Awards assignment due. Lecture: Fashion and celebrity — second weekly story assigned.

***Final project assigned.

March 22 — Lecture: Covering sensitive stories and topics related to celebrity news. Guest speaker: How to work with publicists and reps. — Second story/package due.

March 29 — Entertainment law/public records and media ethics;
Guest speaker: attorney/legal expert.

April 5 — Lecture: Sourcing and branding in the entertainment media world; the merge of celebrity, media and politics.

April 12 — Tabloid media — Lecture: Ethics, entertainment and social media. Creating content with credibility.

April 19 — Last class — Final projects due + presented in class.

NO in-class final.

Attendance policy: Please attend class. We only have it once each week and there will be assignments made you'll need to know about, some of them in-class work. If you are sick and cannot make it, it is your responsibility to let me know and also to discern what you missed. Late assignments may only be turned in with permission and approval from the instructor **PRIOR TO YOUR ABSENCE**. Do not attempt to turn in late work if you did not discuss your absence with me prior to your missed class. I will not accept it. Have respect for your time and mine. Please communicate with me honestly. I will deviate from this syllabus throughout the semester so do not miss class and expect to know what has been covered.

How Your Grade is Determined:

10 percent — Attendance; class participation, website curation and maintenance.

15 percent — Weekly celebrity briefs; weekly assignments, attendance; class participation, website curation and maintenance.

25 percent — 2 story assignments — and 1 book story (from books you have read during the semester). Total of 3 stories.

25 percent — Midterm (live event coverage — a video/print package for web).

25 percent — Final project — (Story on a national celebrity/entertainment media outlet — details TBA in class).

Grading scale

A = 90 or above

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 - 79

D = 60 - 69

E = 59 or below

Class attendance, make-up exams, etc.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found

at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Your feedback

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations 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/>

And finally... This is a fun class with lots of discussion and writing assignments — in class and out. You will also be required to do original reporting. Please plan your schedule accordingly — we'll be busy. I look forward to working with you and learning more about you and your goals. :-)