

## JOU 4311: ADVANCED MAGAZINE WRITING

### PROFESSOR

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### OFFICE HOURS

By appointment  
or drop-in

### REQUIRED READING

*Writing Tools*, Roy Peter Clark, Little, Brown  
Other readings will be sent via email

### 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. In short, what you give, you get.

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

## ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

### *Main Story (600 points)*

- 50 points: Idea memo
- 100 points: Story excerpt
- 200 points: First draft
- 200 points: Revision
- 50 points: Query/pitch

### *Other (400 points)*

- 50 points: Warm-Up Writing Assignment
- 150 points: Short feature
- 100 points: Reading Quizzes
- 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 3,000. 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 will be discussed in class:

#### ***Idea memo:***

No more than one page single-spaced.  
Due **Wednesday 2/4 at noon by email.**  
50 points: Judged on overall quality

#### ***Story excerpt:***

About 500 words of any part of your story.  
Due the week of **2/16 at your individual conference.**  
100 points: 50 points on quality of reporting, 50 points on quality of writing

#### ***First draft:***

Due **3/16 in class.**  
200 points: Point breakdown to be handed out in class

#### ***Revision:***

Due **4/6 in class.**  
200 points: Point breakdown to be handed out in class

#### ***Query/pitch:***

Due **4/6 in class** (no more than a half of a page single-spaced).  
50 points: Judged on overall quality

## **Other**

### **Warm-Up Writing Assignment**

No more than 1,000 words.

Due **1/16 at noon** by email.

50 points: Details given in first class, judged on overall quality

### **Short Feature**

About 500 words.

Due **4/13 in class**.

150 points: 75 on quality reporting, 75 on quality of writing.

Story can be of any magazine-style genre (no news), except essays and reviews. Some reporting required. You can do mini-profiles, how-to's, trends, etc... Ideas must be approved.

### **Reading Quizzes**

We'll have short quizzes to make sure you do the reading. They'll be straightforward if you have done the reading. Links to magazine stories will be sent out the week before they're due.

### **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 20 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).

## **READING SCHEDULE**

(Links or PDFs will be emailed)

### **For 1/26**

Writing Tools: Intro, Part One and Part Two

### **For 2/2**

Writing Tools: Part Three and Part Four

Links for approximately six long-form pieces will be sent out the week before the reading is due

## **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

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

## **DEADLINES**

Failure to meet deadlines for writing assignments will result in a 20-point deduction for every 24-hour period that it is late.

## **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, please leave the room to do so.

## **THE INSTRUCTOR**

Associate Professor Ted Spiker is the interim 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](http://www.tedspiker.com).