

## **JOU 4311: ADVANCED MAGAZINE WRITING**

### **PROFESSOR**

Ted Spiker  
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### **OFFICE HOURS**

T: 2-3:30 p.m.  
W: 10-11:30 a.m.  
Available other days;  
E-mail for appointment

### **REQUIRED READING**

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

### **RECOMMENDED READING**

*The Best American Magazine Writing*, various editions  
*Esquire's Big Book of Great Writing*, Hearst Communications, various authors  
*Beyond the Game, The Collected Sportswriting of Gary Smith*, Gary Smith, Grove Press  
*The Journalist's Craft: A Guide to Writing Better Stories*, Jackson and Sweeney, ed.,  
Allworth Press

### **OBJECTIVE**

This course aims to prepare students for magazine-style reporting, writing, and revising articles suitable for publication in various outlets. You will assume the role of a professional magazine writer, and we will conduct this class in a writer's-group format.

### **GOALS**

- >>To identify differences in target audiences and develop compelling story ideas for specific markets
- >>To use a variety of advanced research and interviewing techniques
- >>To develop advanced writing and rewriting skills
- >>To develop advanced and alternative structural techniques and approaches to stories
- >>To explore different genres of creative non-fiction writing
- >>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

## **DESIGN YOUR OWN SYLLABUS!**

The bulk of your grade will be based on your writing assignments throughout the semester. You have four choices in terms of how you would like to complete the assignments. Choose the path that you're most interested in and excited about.

- You are required to e-mail a 1-page, single-spaced memo detailing your plan with specifics by Friday 1/25 at noon. It's important to identify your intended audience in this memo, because that dictates story angles, sources, etc....
- All stories will be graded 50-50 on reporting (quality of info) and writing (mechanics, creativity, etc...)

### **Option 1: The Package Writer (good for those who want to be magazine eds)**

You will write one magazine package that includes a main story (about 1,200 to 1,500 words) and about four sidebars of various lengths and genres (depending on content of package) that total about 1,800 words. All stories are related to one main theme.

Excerpt or sidebar due (25 points):	Wednesday, 2/6
One sidebar due (50 points):	Wednesday, 2/20
First draft due (175 points):	Wednesday, 3/20
Final draft due (125 points):	Wednesday, 4/17

### **Option 2: The Storyteller (good for those who want to write in-depth about one topic)**

Write one piece of narrative non-fiction using literary and storytelling techniques (about 3,000 to 3,500 words).

Excerpt 1 (25 points):	Wednesday, 2/6
Excerpt 2 (50 points):	Wednesday, 2/20
First draft due (175 points):	Wednesday, 3/20
Final draft due (125 points):	Wednesday, 4/17

### **Option 3: The Freelancer (good for those with multiple ideas or ideas not quite big enough to warrant previous two options and those who want more publishing options)**

Write three stories of various lengths (about 1,200, 800 and 500 points) and genres. All ideas must be approved.

1,500- or 1,000-worder (100 points):	Wednesday, 2/13
1,500- or 1,000-worder (100 points):	Wednesday, 3/13
500-worder (100 points):	Wednesday, 4/3
Revision of 1,500- or 1,000-worder (75 points):	Wednesday, 4/17

### **Option 4: Customize Your Experience**

Have something else in mind? See me and we can create a different assignment with similar workload.

\*\*All options end up with about 3,000 to 3,500 words with expectations of doing at least 10 in-depth interviews throughout the semester, whether it's one story, a package of stories, or separate stories.

## **GRADING**

You will be graded on a 500-point scale:

375 points: Writing Assignments  
25 points: Short Warm-Up Assignment (due 1/16)  
50 points: Reading Quizzes  
50 points: Attendance/Participation

A: 465-500  
A-: 450-464  
B+: 435-449  
B: 420-434  
B-: 400-419  
C+: 380-399  
C: 365-379  
C-: 350-364  
D+: 335-349  
D: 320-334  
D-: 300-319  
E: 299 and below

## **READING SCHEDULE**

(Links or PDFs will be emailed)

### **For 1/16**

Writing Tools: Intro and Part One

### **For 1/23**

Writing Tools: Part Two

### **For 1/30**

Writing Tools: Part Three

### **For 2/6**

Writing Tools: Part Four

### **For 2/13**

“The \$20 Theory of the Universe,” Esquire, by Tom Chiarella

### **For 2/20**

“A Second Life,” Runner’s World, by Charlie Butler

**For 2/27**

“The Rapture of the Deep,” Gary Smith, Sports Illustrated

**For 3/13**

“Frank Sinatra Has a Cold,” Gay Talese, Esquire

**Second half of the semester**

TBD

**STORY SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

- >>All ideas must be approved
  - >>Turn in one hard copy, and e-mail one copy
  - >>Double-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*

**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.

**ATTENDANCE/DEADLINES**

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 (first coming from your attendance/participation score, and then dipping into writing score if necessary). 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). Deadline penalties on stories are -10 points for each 24-hour period it’s late after the start of class.

**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 heads the magazine sequence at UF. He came to UF in 2001 after being articles editor at *Men's Health*. He's currently a contributing editor to *Men's Health* and a freelance magazine writer. A graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, Spiker has had work published in *Outside*, *O the Oprah Magazine*, *Fortune*, *Women's Health*, *Runner's World*, *Cosmopolitan*, *InStyle*, *Every Day with Rachael Ray*, *Reader's Digest*, *Best Life*, and many others. He is also 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).