

**Writing for Mass Communication (MMC 2100)**  
**Spring Semester 2014**  
**Lecture Syllabus**  
**Thursdays (10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> periods, Florida Gym, 0230)**

Lecturer: Professor Rob Marino  
Office Hours: Thursdays: 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> periods (TBA)  
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Email: marinor@cf.edu  
Sakai: Tests, course announcements, course lectures

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

MMC 2100 is a pre-professional course designed to promote fundamental instruction and practice in writing as a basis for upper division courses in such areas as advertising, agriculture communications and technical communications. It is also an introductory course designed to provide basic instruction in writing for print, broadcast and online media, advertising and public relations. Exploration of the role of mass media in today’s world and its impact on our daily lives will be included in the course curriculum. When possible, experiences with media professionals and hands-on learning will be provided. Instructional Methods: lecture, discussion, student-directed learning, hands-on production, observation, peer evaluation and guest speakers.

**General Goals and Major Learning Outcomes**

The major objective of MMC 2100 is for students to be able to write accurately and comprehensively using the tenets of good news writing. Students should also be able to use persuasive writing to sway selected publics without misrepresentation and to understand the dynamics of communication.

At the completion of the course, students will demonstrate:

1. correct newspaper style in news writing
2. the ability to write hard news copy in an informative and timely way
3. the ability to write an online news story, including breaking news
4. the ability to write features that capture reader interest
5. the ability to write editorials that shape opinion
6. the ability to write broadcast news copy that stresses immediacy and basic news value
7. the ability to write public service announcements, advertising copy, and commercials that stress a unique selling point through emotional or rational appeal as well as PR material designed to garner public attention
8. the ability to write a well-constructed cover letter and include major relevant sections of a resume

You will receive a lab syllabus during your first lab meeting. The lab syllabus contains your lab instructor’s name, office location, phone number, office hours and weekly lab assignments. You **MUST ATTEND** lab and lecture each week.

**Prerequisite for course --** You must have completed the required six hours of English credit, typically ENC 1101 and ENC 1102. This requirement may be fulfilled through Advanced Placement scores.

### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

Stovall, James Glen. *Writing for the Mass Media*. Eighth Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. 2006.

Goldstein, Norm, editor. *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*. Addison-Wesley Publishing. (2009 or later). The bookstores will often place the AP Stylebook in the section for JOU 3101. You may want to purchase the iPhone app, which costs more than the print version but is searchable.

### **Other Materials**

- Flash memory drive for transporting drafts of required lab assignments
- Reporter's notepad or small notebook for interview notes
- Digital camera for taking photos
- Audio recorder – recommended

### **Resources**

Communications Coaching Center (1088 Weimer Hall) – Student members of the Journalism and Communications Ambassadors staff the center. They can provide coaching on writing assignments, grammar and AP style issues. They also can assist you in applying for internships and finding sources for stories.

Computers – Call 392-HELP for locations and hours of computer labs on campus.

Career Resource Center – The CRC is located on the main floor of the Reitz Union and provides free career assessment and counseling. Check the CRC web site for information about workshops, career and job fairs, or to schedule an appointment.

<http://www.crc.ufl.edu>

Division of Student Services (352-392-1261) – Contact this office if you need to miss class due to an on-going medical problem or family emergency. This office will send a courtesy letter to your instructors about your absence.

Counseling Center (352-392-1575) – The center provides scheduled and drop-in appointments with counselors to discuss a range of personal issues.

<http://www.counsel.ufl.edu>

Disability Resource Center – Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://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.

Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. You will receive documentation to give to each of your instructors. You must meet with your lab instructor and with me during office hours to discuss special arrangements.

### **Lecture portion of the course**

You are expected to be in lecture each week. Since there is only one lecture/per week, missing lecture will put you significantly behind. ALL your lab assignments will be based off material from a previous lecture. Several lectures involving guest speakers will turn into lab assignments. If you miss a lecture that is the basis of a lab assignment, such as an in-lecture interview, you must get notes from a classmate. It is neither my responsibility nor any of the other lab instructors' responsibility to provide you with notes if you miss a lecture.

**Grade for lecture portion of course** – lecture counts 25 percent of your overall class grade. Your lecture grade will be broken down this way:

FOUR (4) exams (20 percent)

Exam One (100 points)

Exam Two (100 points)

Exam Three (100 points)

Exam Four (100 points)

Each exam date is listed on this syllabus. Each exam will include 50 multiple-choice questions. I will provide a study guide for each exam. No make-up exams will be given. THERE WILL BE **NO** FINAL EXAM.

Average of FOUR (4) in-lecture quizzes (5 percent)

Your quiz grade will be the average of your FOUR in-lecture, pop quiz grades. I will NOT post the dates of the quizzes on the web site. No make-up quizzes will be given. NO quiz grades will be dropped.

### **Lab Portion of the Course**

Your performance in lab is the majority of your grade. You must attend the lab in which you are enrolled. NO lab grades will be dropped or curved.

One of my goals as the lecture instructor and lab coordinator is to make sure the labs are comparable. The lab instructors and I meet to discuss the lab assignments and grading. We agree on the amount of time for deadline writing assignments so the students in each lab have the same time. All instructors use the same grading standards. Your grade on each writing assignment will consist of the points earned for content minus the points deducted for grammatical errors and mechanics. We will conduct a grammar review in lecture early in the semester, but you are expected to know the basic rules of grammar (i.e. rules for use of commas).

Extra Credit Opportunities

1. Complete "Cleaning Your Copy" on <http://newsu.org> (except Style section) and send a course report to your lab instructor prior to Lab 3 (10 points)
2. TBA in-lecture assignments

### Attendance

Since lecture is so closely connected to lab and meets once/week, you are expected to be at every lecture. You will lose -10 points on several lab assignments if you are not in lecture that week. Each absence will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but the MMC 2100 attendance policy follows UF's official attendance policy and can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### Course Evaluation

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/>

### **Grading Scale** (for writing assignments and the course overall)

We do not assign minus grades

A	90-100	C+	77-79	D	60-66
B+	87-89	C	70-76	E	59 and below
B	80-86	D+	67-69		

## Academic Honesty Guidelines

Academic honesty is an important dimension of your performance as a student. As a student at the University of Florida, you have agreed to comply with the University Honor Code.

*“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. 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.”*

More information on the Honor Code can be found at:

<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

I encourage you to review the information posted online that explains what academic dishonesty violations are, how to avoid those, and what the penalties are for those found guilty of violations.

In MMC 2100, if you are found to have committed an academic honesty violation in lecture or lab, you will receive a zero (0) for the assignment and may be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. Violations include:

- Receiving or giving help during a quiz or exam.
- Using someone else’s quotes or information without appropriate attribution.
- Using friends, family members or work colleagues as sources in your stories
- Using someone else’s photos for assignments that require you to take your own photos
- Making up quotes or information (i.e. fabrication)

You can read about issues related to academic dishonesty in the College of Journalism and Communications at <http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academic/jou/honesty/>

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

Drop-Add: Jan. 6-10, 2014

Last day to withdraw with no fee liability: Jan. 10, 2014

Last day to withdraw with 25 percent refund: Jan. 31, 2014

Last day to withdraw and receive a “W”: April 11, 2014

## **MMC 2100: WRITING FOR MASS COMMUNICATION**

### **TENTATIVE MMC 2100 Course Outline/ Spring 2014**

\*This schedule may change based on guest speaker availability, etc.

**ASSIGNED READING MUST BE COMPLETED BY DATE IT WILL BE DISCUSSED.**

**Thursday Jan. 9:** Course overview. Review syllabus. Chapter 1: Sit Down and Write. Chapter 2: Basic Tools of Writing. Grammar refresher. Appendix B & C. Grammar practice exercises. Chapter 14: Getting a Job in the Media Market. Preparation for resume/cover letter Lab 2.

**Thursday Jan. 16:** Begin Chapter 5: Reporting with Text. Practice news brief. Chapter 3: Style and the Stylebook. Writing in correct journalistic style. Using the AP stylebook. Appendix A. Using correct copy-editing symbols. AP style practice exercises.

**Thursday Jan. 23:** Wrap-up of police brief. Continue Chapter 5. Chapter 7: Writing for Print Journalism (pgs. 131-136). Writing longer news story. Inverted pyramid. Nut graph. Direct/indirect quotes. Begin online news writing unit. Guest: online content editor.

**Thursday Jan. 30:** Begin online media unit: Chapter 10: Writing for Web Journalism. How to write an online news story and best news Web sites. Social media networks. \*\*\*\*-10 points off online lab story if you do not attend lecture\*\*\*\*

**Thursday Feb. 6: NO LECTURE. \*\*\*\*\*Test #1 (Chapters 1-5 and Chapter 7) and Appendix A, B, C\*\*\*\* (online through Sakai).**

**Thursday Feb. 13:** Begin feature writing/personality profile unit. Chapter 7: Writing for Print Journalism. Writing Feature Stories. Guest: feature writing/interviewing tips. Introduction to blogging.

**Thursday Feb. 20:** Blog assignment instructions. Chapter 9: Writing for Broadcast Journalism. TV broadcast script writing. Guest: TV-20 anchor.

**Thursday Feb. 27: NO LECTURE. \*\*\*\*\*Test #2 (Chapter 7/feature writing & Chapter 9/broadcast writing). \*\*\*\*\*(online through Sakai)**

**\*\*\*\*UF SPRING BREAK: MARCH 1-8. NO CLASSES.\*\*\*\***

**Thursday March 13:** Photo essay instruction. Chapter 6: Reporting with Images Guest: photojournalist/creating photo essay.

**Thursday March 20:** Begin Chapter 12: Writing for Public Relations. Guest: PR practitioner: how to write a news release. News release lab assignment announced\*\*\* -10 points off news release lab story if you do not attend lecture.

**Thursday March 27:** Chapter 11: Writing Advertising Copy. Soundslides instruction. Watch sample Soundslides project in lecture. Begin Chapter 13: The Writer and the Law.

**Thursday April 3: NO LECTURE.** \*\*\*\*\*Test #3 (Chapter 6: Reporting with Images/Chapter 11: Advertising/Chapter 12: Public Relations). \*\*\*\*\*(online through Sakai)

**Thursday April 11:** Finish Chapter 13: The Writer and the Law.

**Thursday April 18: NO LECTURE**\*\*\*\*\*Test #4 (Chapter 13: Media Law).  
\*\*\*\*(online through Sakai)\*\*\*\*