



RTV2100 Writing for the Electronic Media

Spring 2013

Instructor: Andrew Selepak, Ph.D.
 Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday, Period 8
 Office: Weimer Hall 3053
 Email: aselepak@ufl.edu

Lectures: Tuesday and Thursday, Period 7 (1:55 – 2:45)
 Lecture Location: Williamson Hall Room 0100
 Lab: as scheduled (see Lab Sections Roster)

Lab Sections Roster

<u>Section</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Periods</u>	<u>Weimer Hall</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
01C8	Thurs	8-9	2050	Leonor Suárez
3577	Fri	2-3	2056	Leah Burns
5649	Fri	3-4	3028	Matthew Cretul
5648	Fri	4-5	2056	Elaine Sponholtz
<u>Section</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Periods</u>	<u>Weil Hall</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
01DB	Fri	2-3	408a	Belinda Post

What to expect from RTV2100

This course is designed to provide fundamental instruction and practice in writing for the electronic media, specifically radio and online. It is required of all telecommunications majors. Prerequisites are: Six hours of English composition, sophomore standing, and ability to type at least 25 words per minute.

Course Objectives

- Move toward mastery of language skills with special emphasis on language used in the electronic media
- Understand news judgment and what makes a good story
- Develop radio news stories that will engage and enlighten the target audience
- Formulate radio announcements that are clear, interesting and persuasive
- Develop a basic understanding of writing for television and online
- Acquire a greater awareness of the increase in use and availability of online media

Course Policies

1. **Course Format.** The format of the course is two 50-minute lectures and one 115- minute lab per week. It would be useful to think about this course as a theory and practice course. The lectures provide you with ideas about writing for the electronic media and provide examples that you can use as models for your own work. During lab session your lab instructor will help you put those ideas into practice. Your lab leader will help you develop your skills more closely and will grade your work.

2. **Computers.** We will be using PC computers. We will write and edit electronically using Microsoft[®] WORD. We will communicate by campus email. Please be sure you are familiar with basic operations of these programs.
3. **Attendance.** Attendance is required because it is essential to your learning. In general, acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special pre-approved extracurricular requirements (professional conferences or athletic events where you are a participant), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and court-imposed obligations (i.e. jury duty or subpoena).

We have about 30 lectures and 15 lab sessions for a total of 45 sessions. You will get THREE absences without penalty. For unexcused absences four through eight we will deduct one point from your final grade average for each lecture and lab missed. If you miss one-fourth of the sessions, 10 or more, you will earn an F for the course. In addition, work can only be made-up for excused absences, but current events quizzes cannot be made-up.

It is the responsibility of the student to keep up-to-date of all material, deadlines, and assignments missed, and will be his/her responsibility to meet all deadlines for assignments for ANY ABSENCE, excused or otherwise. If you miss a lab, it is your responsibility to arrange to make up the missed work with your lab instructor.

Your lab instructor will take attendance at the beginning of labs and lectures. It is your responsibility to be on time AND make sure you are recorded as present. If you come late to class and attendance is already noted, you will be considered absent. It is YOUR responsibility to be on time. To facilitate taking attendance you are expected to sit in an assigned location in the lecture hall every time.

4. **Courtesy.** If you arrive late, settle in with the minimum amount of disturbance. TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE DURING CLASS, and NO TEXT MESSAGING, and NO FACEBOOK or TWITTER. If your instructors are not on their phone, then neither should you.
5. **Learning.** Learning is a lifelong process. Learning to write well involves continued exposure to good examples and a lot of practice. Students who are unduly concerned with grades usually play it safe and give the teacher what they think he or she wants. Real learning requires you to experiment and make mistakes. In this class when faced with a choice between playing it safe for a grade and experimenting, with the possibility that you will make a mistake you can learn from, dare to take that risk. Choose what will contribute to your long term learning, not what will enhance your semester grade. We will give you the space to make mistakes without being punished by a grade. Don't just think about giving the "right" answer, instead give the best answer.

6. **Guidelines.** Be sure to put your name on all quizzes and lab assignments. Also make sure you include your lab instructor's name on the mid-term and final exams as grades are kept by individual sections.
7. **Incompletes.** A course grade of incomplete will be permitted only for serious illness documented by a physician. A timetable for completing the course work must be set before the incomplete is given.
8. **Flexibility.** We believe the semester plan outlined in the calendar is realistic. Nonetheless, we reserve the right to adjust the course content, exercises, exams, etc., based on the class's collective ability to maintain pace.

Grading

50%	Lab exercises
20%	Midterm exam
20%	Final exam
5%	Current Events quizzes
5%	Meet and Greet

Current Events quizzes (5%). People working in the mass media must know what's going on in their communities, in the country, and in the world. They must be in the daily habit of reading at least one newspaper and listening to the news on radio, television, or online. There should be at least one local source in your daily dose of news. Here are some of the media outlets available for this purpose:

- **From print.** The *Gainesville Sun* (Gainesvillesun.com). National newspaper websites like *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, or *The Los Angeles Times*. There are also weekly news magazines like *TIME*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News & World Report*.
- **From radio.** WUFT weekdays.
- **Network and local television news.** Watch the news on ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, and NBC. Watch programs that treat issues in greater detail like ABC's *Nightline* and magazine shows like *60 Minutes* on CBS.
- **From the Internet.** Visit news web sites frequently to know what is going on in the world, and up-to-the-minute like cnn.com, foxnews.com, drudgereport.com, and huffingtonpost.com.

Lab exercises (50%). This grade is divided equally between news writing exercises (25%) and production writing exercises (25%). You are graded on journalistic style (precise, accurate and fair information), aural style (conversational, ear-pleasing), writing (clear, concise, compelling), effort (applying class ideas, originality/creativity, persuasiveness), and mechanics (punctuation, grammar, spelling, vocabulary).

Both the Mid Term and Final exams (40%). Your exams are based on material in the lectures and labs.

Meet and Greet (5%). You will write a short paper (400 to 600 words) explaining why you are taking RV2100, what you hope to get out of the class, what your future goals are in the industry, and ideas for internships. Your lab instructors will provide more information on this assignment concerning what they want to receive from you in your short paper. In addition, you will meet with your lab instructor and explain what you wrote in order to receive full credit.

Grading Scale:

A	(93-100)
A-	(91-92)
B+	(88-90)
B	(83-87)
B-	(81-82)
C+	(78-80)
C	(73-77)
C-	(71-72)
D+	(68-70)
D	(63-67)
D-	(61-62)
E	(below 61)

References

For news majors

AP Broadcast News Style Book

Random House Dictionary of the English Language

Kern, Jonathan (2008). *Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

For all majors

Orlik, Peter (1998). *Broadcast/cable copywriting*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Kessler, Ronald and Duncan McDonald (2011, 8th Ed.), *When words collide: A media writer's guide to grammar and style*. Boston: Wadsworth Publishing.

News Test: To be enrolled in RTV 3303 (Radio One), if you are selected to take the course based on your grade from the News Test, you must pass RTV 2100, RTV 3007 and have six hours of English, all with a "C" grade or better. You may take the second English course concurrently with RTV 3303.

For those of you wishing to follow the News Track for telecom, the department has put together a web page that should answer any questions you have about the test, requirements, eligibility, and other Frequently Asked Questions. It can be found by following this link:

<http://www.jou.ufl.edu/academic/telecom/news-placement-faq/>

Disability Awareness. Students with Disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented. DRC is located in room 001 in Reid Hall or you can contact them by phone at 352-392-8565.

Course Calendar

****NOTE: schedule subject to changed based on guest availabilities and other factors.

Date	Topic
1/8	Introduction: course structure and course content. <i>Definition of news</i>
1/10	<i>Leads</i>
1/10 & 1/11	LAB 1 – Introductions, slugs, and fact sheets – No Wednesday Lab
1/15	<i>News Values</i>
1/17	<i>Aural Style</i>
1/17 & 1/18	LAB 2 – Writing in Broadcast Style & Leads
1/22	<i>News Story Basics</i>
1/24	<i>News Story Basics (continued)</i>
1/24 & 1/25	LAB 3 – Writing Basic Stories
1/29	<i>News Structure</i>
1/31	<i>Writing with Sound</i>
1/31 & 2/1	LAB 4 – Writing Readers
2/5	<i>Developing Stories & Media Convergence</i>
2/7	<i>Interviewing</i>
2/7 & 2/8	LAB 5 – Writing Sound Bite Stories
2/12	<i>News Features</i>
2/14	<i>Television News</i>
2/14 & 2/5	LAB 6 – Writing Sound Bite Stories
2/19	<i>Legal and Ethical News</i>
2/21	<i>Careers and College</i>
2/21 & 2/22	LAB 7 – Writing News Stories
2/26	<i>Test #1 in class</i>
2/28	<i>Advisory Council in Class</i>
2/28 & 3/1	LAB 8 – News Placement Test – No Lab for those not taking the News Placement Exam
3/5	<i>Sound Elements</i>
3/7	<i>Radio Copy Format</i>
3/7 & 3/8	LAB 9 – Writing Promos
3/12	<i>PSAs</i>
3/14	<i>Persuasive Messages</i>
3/14 & 3/15	LAB 10 – Writing PSAs & Commercials
3/19	<i>Television Language</i>
3/21	<i>Television and Film Writing</i>
3/21 & 3/22	LAB 11 - Storyboard Assignment
3/26	<i>Legal & Ethical Considerations</i>
3/28	<i>Guest Speakers from Telecom Department</i>
3/29 & 3/29	LAB 12 – Social Media Assignment

4/2	<i>Online Media & Writing</i>
4/4	<i>Online Media & Writing (cont.) & Web Essentials</i>
4/4 & 4/5	LAB 13 – Pitch and Audience Analysis
4/9	<i>Web Essentials (cont.)</i>
4/11	<i>Social Media</i>
4/11 & 4/12	LAB 14 – Converged Media Assignment
4/16	<i>Social Media (cont.)</i>
4/18	<i>Personal Branding</i>
4/18 & 4/19	LAB 15 – Online Writing Assignment
4/23	Test # 2 in class