

# Electronic News Writing and Reporting

Oklahoma City University  
Fall 2013  
MCPM 4103 - 3 credit hours  
9:30-10:45 a.m. TR  
Walker Center, Room 122

## **Instructors:**

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## **Required Text:**

Associated Press. (2013). In Christian, D., Jacobsen, S. & Minthorn, D. (Eds.), *The Associated Press Stylebook*. New York, NY: The Associated Press.

## **Recommended Texts:**

Good media practitioners (and citizens) are well-informed news consumers. You should read *The Oklahoman* ([newsok.com](http://newsok.com)) and *The Campus* ([MediaOCU.com](http://MediaOCU.com)) every day. We recommend you get into the habit of reading at least one daily metropolitan newspaper (ex: *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *USAToday*, etc.) and a weekly news magazine. We also recommend you watch at least one televised newscast each day.

We also recommend you become readers of online news on some of the best sites. Consider:

<a href="http://nytimes.com">nytimes.com</a>	<a href="http://washingtonpost.com">washingtonpost.com</a>
<a href="http://usatoday.com">usatoday.com</a>	<a href="http://msnbc.com">msnbc.com</a>
<a href="http://huffingtonpost.com">huffingtonpost.com</a>	<a href="http://latimes.com">latimes.com</a>
<a href="http://bbcnews.com">bbcnews.com</a>	<a href="http://cnn.com">cnn.com</a>

## **Course Description:**

In this course you will gain the knowledge of electronic journalism necessary to appropriately function in today's multimedia/multiplatform news environment. The course will give you a comprehensive overview of online journalism including the topics of Web design, online story/package development and content management. You will learn these aspects of journalism through participating in a "real world" online journalism via the Student Publications staff's news site, *Media OCU* ([www.mediaocu.com](http://www.mediaocu.com)). The site will serve as a practical lab for the purposes of the course. You will participate in classroom lectures, practical lab assignments, and comprehensive writing and web publishing projects. Upon

completion of this course, you will have the knowledge and skills necessary to publish multimedia content including stories, photos, audio, and video. These are the skills necessary to function in today's changing news environment and secure a job.

## **Grading:**

We will attempt to grade all class assignments and return them to you within a week of submission. You are encouraged to visit our offices to discuss any questions or concerns you have about your grades on individual assignments or in the course as a whole. You are strongly discouraged from openly discussing your grades during class sessions. Your grade for the course will consist of grades in four categories:

- Midterm project – 20 % (55 percent at midterm)
- Final project – 35 %
- Assignments – 35 %
- Class attendance/participation – 10 %

*NOTE: Be certain to sign the attendance sheet during every class session. It is the method I will use for tracking your attendance. If you will miss class for a university-sanctioned happening, I must have a notice from the appropriate university official beforehand. Failure to provide such documentation will result in your absence being counted. You are encouraged to submit due assignments before your absence. If you are unable to do so, you must arrange it with me and submit any due assignment on your return class session.*

## **Projects**

You will complete midterm and final projects in this course. The projects will be special standing sections on *MediaOCU* ([www.mediaOCU.com](http://www.mediaOCU.com)). You will receive more information about the projects, including specific assignment details and grading rubrics, as the semester progresses.

## **Assignments**

You will complete a variety of assignments during the course. We will provide a detailed handout explaining each assignment, its grading criteria and its due date.

## **Missed assignments:**

Missed assignments cannot be made up without approval. We will not accept assignments sent to class with peers. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain any assignments, handouts and notes that you miss. We will not contact you regarding your absence. We also will not save copies of course materials distributed during individual class periods. If you need an extension on an assignment because of an absence, you must schedule a time to privately discuss it with us. If you miss an assignment and are allowed to make it up, you must do so at the scheduled time or you will not receive credit.

## **Attendance:**

Course attendance and participation are required and will be counted as 10 percent of your final grade. You are expected to arrive to class on time and leave when class is complete. At this point in your academic career you should understand the concept of decisions and consequences. You are free to make your own decisions regarding your attendance. However, it's important that you are aware that lack of attendance in any class will result in you missing

important material that will not be repeated. In addition, repeat absences will result in the lowering of your final grade. If you cannot avoid missing class, you must notify us prior to the class session. Do not assume we know you will not be present. Communicate with me regarding every necessary absence. Notification of an absence from anyone but yourself will not be considered adequate. Do not send word of your absence via another classmate. We will give excused absences on a case-by-case basis. Remember: ***You make choices. You live with the consequences.***

### **Participation:**

You are required to participate in class. Participation could include commenting on readings, interactive lecture, and careful and active note taking. Asking questions always is encouraged. Discussion of things unrelated to class is discouraged. You are not allowed to be disruptive in any way that takes class value away from your classmates. In addition, you must always attend class prepared for participation. This includes having paper, copied notes, writing utensils, etc.

### **Technology:**

You are allowed to use a laptop, iPad or smart phone to document class notes during the course session.

You are not allowed to have your cell phone ringer or alert notification on during class. Students found texting or using cell phones or computers for anything other than note taking during class will be asked to discontinue this practice or leave. Repeated issues will result in lowering of your attendance/participation grade.

### **Printing/Editing:**

All assignments must be completed outside of class.

Writing assignments must be typed and stapled. You will not be excused from class to print assignments. Do not come to class to discuss printing with us. It is up to you to determine if you should be late to class to print. If you do not have access to a computer and/or printer, you are welcome to use the mass communications computer lab at the front of our department. Malfunctions of the equipment in the computer lab will not constitute an excuse for late assignments.

Digital assignments should be completed in the assigned format prior to the class session. Technological malfunctions will not constitute an excuse for late assignments.

### **Course Schedule:**

This schedule is tentative and subject to change.

#### **WEEK 1:**

**Tuesday, Aug. 20 – Introduction**

**Thursday, Aug. 22**

- Lecture: *What is Multiplatform Journalism? (KRG)*

#### **WEEK 2:**

**Tuesday, Aug. 27**

- Lecture: *Multimedia Basics (KRG)*

**Thursday, Aug. 29**

- Lecture: *Multimedia Basics (KRG)*

**WEEK 3:**

**Tuesday, Sept. 3**

- Lecture: *Writing for Web (KRG)*

**Thursday, Sept. 5**

- Lab: *Writing for Web (KRG)*

**WEEK 4:**

**Tuesday, Sept. 10**

- Lecture: *Visual Storytelling (KRG)*

**Thursday, Sept. 12**

- Lab: *Editing/placing photos (KRG)*

**WEEK 5:**

**Tuesday, Sept. 17**

- Lecture: *Podcasting (WB)*

**Thursday, Sept. 19**

- Lab: *Editing Audio (WB)*

**WEEK 6:**

**Tuesday, Sept. 24**

- Lecture: *Audio Storytelling (WB)*

**Thursday, Sept. 26**

- Lab: *Editing Audio Packages (WB)*

**WEEK 7:**

**Tuesday, Oct. 1**

- Lecture: *Combining photos and audio (KRG)*

**Thursday, Oct. 3**

- Lab: *Editing/placing photos and audio (KRG)*

**WEEK 8:**

**Tuesday, Oct. 8 – Midterm Work Day**

**Thursday, Oct. 10 – Midterm Projects Due**

**WEEK 9:**

**Tuesday, Oct. 15 – Fall Break. No Class**

**Thursday, Oct. 17**

- Lecture: *Planning video packages (WB)*

## **WEEK 10:**

**Tuesday, Oct. 22**

- Lecture: *Planning video packages (WB)*

**Thursday, Oct. 24**

- Lecture: *Planning video packages*

## **WEEK 11:**

**Tuesday, Oct. 29**

- Lecture: *Shooting video (WB)*

**Thursday, Oct. 31**

- Lecture: *Shooting video (WB)*

## **WEEK 12:**

**Tuesday, Nov. 5**

- Lecture: *Shooting video (WB)*

**Thursday, Nov. 7**

- Lab: *Editing video (WB)*

## **WEEK 13:**

**Tuesday, Nov. 12**

- Lab: *Editing video (WB)*

**Thursday, Nov. 14**

- Lab: *Editing video (WB)*

## **WEEK 14:**

**Tuesday, Nov. 19**

- Lecture: *Multimedia tools (KRG)*

**Thursday, Nov. 21**

- Lecture: *Multimedia tools (KRG)*

**Tuesday, Nov. 26**

- Lecture: *Content promotion (KRG)*

**Thursday, Nov. 28 – Thanksgiving Break. No Class.**

## **WEEK 15:**

**Tuesday, Dec. 3 – Final Project Work Day**

**Thursday, Dec. 5 – Final Project Work Day**

**Thursday, Dec. 12 – Final project due by 10 a.m.**

## **Mass Communications Departmental Policies**

LATE WORK:

- No late work will be accepted for full credit without prior arrangement with the instructor.
- Work is due at the beginning of the class session.

#### EXAMINATIONS:

- No makeup examinations will be given unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.
- NO FINAL EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN EARLIER THAN ANNOUNCED BY THE INSTRUCTOR. NO EXCEPTIONS. Students who make travel plans without confirming the scheduled finals date for this class do so at their own risk. Students who travel prior to the scheduled final exam will be unable to take the examination and must accept a zero test score.

#### INCOMPLETE:

Incomplete grades are not a student option except under extreme circumstances. Students seeking an incomplete must submit a written request supported by documentation verifying the need for this extension. The student must be performing at a passing level and have a legitimate reason to receive an "I." Students cannot be assigned an "I" because they have excessive unexcused absences or because they are failing the course. If an incomplete is given, the instructor will submit information which specifies what work must be done to remove the "I" and the grade to be assigned if the work is not complete. The student is responsible for submitting the work by the deadline assigned by the instructor. Incompletes are given for a limited period of time, not exceeding one year.

#### TARDINESS/ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to be in class on time. Entering the classroom late is unprofessional and disruptive. Repeated tardiness is unacceptable. Students should be punctual and prepared, since these are the qualities expected by the business community. Attendance will be taken at each class session. Students are expected to attend all class sessions.

#### GRADING SCALE:

93.0 - 100	=	A	
90.0 - 92.99	=	A-	
87.5 - 89.99	=	B+	
82.5 - 87.49	=	B	
80.0 - 82.49	=	B-	
77.5 - 79.99	=	C+	
72.5 - 77.49	=	C	
70.0 - 72.49	=	C-	
67.5 - 69.99	=	D+	
62.5 - 67.49	=	D	
60.0 - 62.49	=	D-	
Below 60.0	=	F	Not I or W

#### CHEATING/PLAGIARISM:

#### STANDARD OF RESPONSIBILITY

Oklahoma City University was founded upon strong values and high standards. Honesty in academics is a priority. Students should be advised that cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. The Academic Honesty Policy can be found online at <http://starport.okcu.edu/ad/aa>

Cheating is defined as using, or supplying information that is not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or completing any other assignment. Cheating also includes turning in another's work and representing it as being your own.

Plagiarism is defined as a unique form of cheating where persons turn in another's work and represent it as being their own. This would include: 1) purchasing term papers and turning them in as if they are original work; 2) using a paper that has previously been turned in; 3) copying passages verbatim from books, articles, etc.; 4) submitting material for grades in which the student has not done the work required; 5) collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person; 6) misrepresentation of actions and 7) falsifying information.

Every student is expected to observe the highest standards of conduct, both on and off the campus. The University cannot accept the responsibility for the education of any student who is not in sympathy with the purposes and the regulations of the University.

Mass Communications students should be aware that this department considers the above-described conduct to be dishonorable and dishonest. Students found cheating or plagiarizing will receive a grade of "0", which is an "F", on the involved examination, project or paper and, at the professor's discretion, may receive a failing grade for the entire course.

#### EXAMINATION EQUIPMENT:

Students are not permitted to use or access the following items during an examination:

- Dictionaries
- Electronic spellers, translators, dictionaries or calculators
- Computers
- Class notes, books

Once any examination has begun, if a student wishes to leave the room they must be prepared to turn in their examination paper and/or blue book. And, it will not be returned to them for additional work.

#### DISABILITY STATEMENT:

If you believe that you need accommodations for a documented physical, psychiatric, or learning disability, please contact the Disabilities Services Coordinator at (405) 208-5090 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. The Student Disabilities Services Coordinator is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students a documented Access Plan, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact the Student Disabilities Services Coordinator as soon as possible. To speak with the coordinator about other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case of a building evacuation, please make an appointment as soon as possible. Contact

Brenda Johnston (bjohnston@okcu.edu), director for Campus Health and Disability Services, located in the Panhellenic Quadrangle, just north of the Methodist Hall dormitory.

#### PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds, including federal loans and grants. Title IX also prohibits student-to-student sexual harassment. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk with your professor or with the Title IX Coordinator at 405-208-5075. Visit <http://www.okcu.edu/hr/titleIX/> for more information.

#### EVACUATION POLICY:

The evacuation plan for Walker Center is as follows: Everyone on the first floor proceeds out the north doors to the north parking lot. Everyone on the second floor must exit down the north stairway, out the north doors to the parking lot. The shelter locations for Walker Center are as follows: WC 143, WC 144, and the men's and women's restrooms on the first floor. These rooms are on the east side of the first floor.



POLICY STATEMENT

I have read the above stated policies for the academic year 2013-14 for the Mass Communications Department.

I understand the policies and agree to abide by them.

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Name

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Student ID# or SSN#

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Date

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Course Name and Number