

Victims in Media

Oklahoma City University
Fall 2016
MCMJ 4163 - 3 credit hours
1-2 p.m. W
Walker Center, Room 122

Professor

Dr. Kenna Griffin

Office: WC 117

Office phone: 208-5043

Website: www.profkrgr.com

Email: kgriffin@okcu.edu

Office hours: Posted

Twitter: @profkrgr

Facebook: www.facebook.com/profkrgr

I have an open-door policy and am happy to discuss the course with you at any opportunity. You do not have to schedule an appointment to discuss course-related matters with me. However, if you want to guarantee an uninterrupted one-on-one that will take longer than 15 minutes, I encourage you to schedule time to ensure we can provide one another our undivided attention.

Required texts & course materials

Buchanan, E. (2009). *The Corpse Had a Familiar Face*. New York, NY: Pocket Books.

Cullen, D. (2009). *Columbine*. New York, NY: Twelve Books.

Krakauer, J. (2015). *Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town*. New York, NY: Anchor Books.

Simpson, R. and Cote', W. (2006). *Covering Violence: A Guide to Ethical Reporting About Victims and Trauma*. Second edition. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Provided handouts

Materials posted in the course Facebook group, which I will invite you to join.

Course description

In this course you will study the interpersonal and psychological effects of trauma on journalists, their sources and the general public. You will learn these aspects of journalism through participating in regular readings, classroom lectures, discussion posts, and writing assignments. Because of the nature of the course, most of your writing will be based on mock scenarios. However, should a "traumatic" event occur on campus, it is likely that you will be called upon to cover such event for the class and for Student Publications. You must be able to accept and learn from criticism of your writing. You also will be expected to critique writing about traumatic events, and ethical decisions made by those who report on this type of news. Upon completion of this course you will know the fundamentals of victims reporting, covering traumatic events and emotional trauma.

Grading

I will attempt to grade all class assignments and return them to you within a week of submission. You are encouraged to visit my office 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 three categories:

- Writing assignments – 60%
- Attendance/participation – 10%
- Book discussions/responses – 30%

Writing assignments

You will complete a variety of writing assignments during the course. I will provide a detailed handout explaining each assignment, its value and its due date.

Reading discussions

You will read three “mainstream” (non-textbook) books written by journalists: 1) *The Corpse Had a Familiar Face* by Edna Buchanan, 2) *Columbine* by David Cullen and 3) *Missoula* by Jon Krakauer.

These books can be purchased through the university or local bookstores, online, and in eBook format. There also should be one copy of each book in the university library.

You will participate in online discussions based on this reading.

First, you will post a reading discussion in the course Facebook group each week. The discussion post should address:

- What surprised you or caught your attention in the readings and/or,
- Questions you have after completing the reading, and/or
- A reflective paragraph that ties the readings back to the course, your understanding of trauma and/or your future role as a media practitioner.

You must post your discussion **by midnight Sunday**. Each discussion post is worth 100 points.

The second posts each week should be thoughtful responses to **two** other students’ discussion posts. These responses should include specific references to the readings or links to any legitimate outside materials relevant to the discussion. You are welcome to pose additional questions to myself or others in your responses. Each of these posts is worth 50 points for a total of 100 possible. These posts are **by midnight Friday**.

Discussions are “all or nothing” credit. There is no required length for response posts. However, you will not receive credit for a response that isn’t well considered and prepared. You also will not receive credit for a personal rant or a poorly written post.

Discussion posts are subject (to some extent) to your schedule. You are welcome to submit discussion posts before the deadline. However, I encourage you to actively participate in subsequent posts. Please feel free to keep the discussion going on any post beyond what is required. We can use the posts as an opportunity to learn from one another and others in the community who choose to comment.

I may not respond to every response you post. However, I will read every post. I also will be an active participant in each overall post. I encourage you to do so as well.

It is critical that you respect the discussion posts and responses as a learning tool. It is acceptable to have an academic discussion that includes opposing viewpoints. However, you must always debate facts and avoid personal attacks or derogatory remarks. Discussion of things unrelated to the post topic or class content is prohibited. I reserve the right to remove any original post or response for any reason. If I remove your response, you will not receive credit. Repeated inappropriate responses will result in forfeiting the discussion post portions of your grade.

Please also feel free to discuss these readings, quotes that stand out to you, etc. in the course Facebook group.

Deadlines

Deadlines are critical in the media industry. Do not attempt to submit work after the deadline. I will not accept it.

Missed assignments

Missed assignments cannot be made up without my approval. I 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. I will not contact you regarding your absence. I also will not save copies of course materials distributed during individual class sessions. If you need an extension on an assignment because of an absence, you must schedule a time to discuss it privately with me. 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. 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 attendance/participation grade.

If you cannot avoid missing class, you must notify me prior to the class session. Do not assume that I know you will be absent. Communicate with me regarding every necessary absence. Notification of an absence from anyone but you is inadequate. Do not send word of your absence via another classmate. I 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.

You must always attend class prepared to participate. This includes having paper, writing utensils, etc.

Technology

You may use a laptop or tablet to take notes during course sessions.

You are not allowed to have your cell phone ringer or alert notifications on during class.

Students found texting or using computers for anything other than note taking during class will be asked to discontinue the practice or leave. Repeated issues will result in the lowering of your attendance/participation grade.

Printing

Writing assignments must be completed outside of class, unless otherwise directed. All 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 me. 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 do not constitute an excuse for a late assignment. Also, the lab does not open or close at any specific time. Plan accordingly.

Course schedule

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. Please complete the readings before the class session for which they are assigned. I will move ahead in the lecture if we complete a subject early.

Wednesday, Aug. 24

- Course introduction
- Read :
 - Simpson & Cote', Introduction & Chapter 1: *Trauma: Assault on an Essential Human System*
 - Buchanan, Chapters 1 & 2
- Lecture: *Introduction to trauma*

Wednesday, Aug. 31

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 2: *The Journalist: At Risk for Trauma*
 - Buchanan, Chapters 3 & 4
- Lecture: *Journalists and trauma*

Wednesday, Sept. 7

- Read:

- Simpson & Cote', Chapter 3: *9/11: Lessons from a Sunny Morning*
- Buchanan, Chapters 5 & 6
- Lecture: *Reporting on large-scale trauma*

Wednesday, Sept. 14

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 4: *Reporting at the Scene*
 - Buchanan, Chapters 7 & 8
- Lecture: *Trauma reporting*

Wednesday, Sept. 21

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 5: *The Interview: Assault or Catharsis*
 - Buchanan, Chapters 9 & 10
- Lecture: *Interviewing victims*

Wednesday, Sept. 28

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 6: *Writing the Trauma Story*
 - Buchanan, Chapters 11 & 12
- Lecture: *Writing about trauma*

Wednesday, Oct. 5

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 7: *Pictures and Sounds of Trauma*
 - Buchanan, Chapters 13 & 14
- Lecture: *Visual trauma*

Wednesday, Oct. 12

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 8: *Reporting about Children*
 - Cullen, Chapter 1
- Lecture: *Trauma and youth*

Wednesday, Oct. 19 – ACP in DC. No class.

- Read Cullen, Chapter 2

Wednesday, Oct. 26 – CMA in Atlanta. No class.

- Read Cullen, Chapter 3

Wednesday, Nov. 2

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 9: *Columbine: A Story that Won't Let Go*
 - Cullen, Chapter 4
- Lecture: *School violence*

Wednesday, Nov. 9

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 10: *Reporting on Rape Trauma*
 - Cullen, Chapter 5
- Lecture: *Reporting on sexual assault*

Wednesday, Nov. 16

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 11: *Using the Searchlight with Precision and Sensitivity*
 - Read Krakauer, Part 1 & 2
- Lecture: *"If it bleeds, it leads"*

Wednesday, Nov. 23 – Thanksgiving Break. No class.

Wednesday, Nov. 30

- Read:
 - Simpson & Cote', Chapter 12: *Oklahoma City: "Terror in the Heartland"*
 - Read Krakauer, Part 3 & 4
- Lecture: *Trauma at home*

Wednesday, Dec. 7

- Read Krakauer, Part 5 & 6

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	72.5 - 77.49	=	C
90.0 - 92.99	=	A-	70.0 - 72.49	=	C-
87.5 - 89.99	=	B+	67.5 - 69.99	=	D+
82.5 - 87.49	=	B	62.5 - 67.49	=	D
80.0 - 82.49	=	B-	60.0 - 62.49	=	D-
77.5 - 79.99	=	C+	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) 208-5895 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.

The Disabilities Services Coordinator is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with a documented Letter of Accommodation, as appropriate.

Since accommodations may require early planning and are not provided retroactively, please contact the Disabilities Services Coordinator as soon as possible.

Students with approved accommodations should meet with me during my office hours so that we can discuss how to meet your needs this semester. Additionally, I am available during my office hours to speak with students about other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case the building must be evacuated. My office location and hours are at the top of the syllabus.

SEX AND GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION:

Under Title IX, you have the right to an education free of sex or gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence. Issues addressed by Title IX include acts of discrimination, pregnant or parenting status, sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sex or gender-based hate crimes. Title IX applies to students, faculty, staff, guests, and anyone accessing OCU programs and services.

As OCU employees, all faculty members are required to report form of discrimination, harassment, or violence addressed by Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator within 24 hours. After receiving a report, you will be contacted by one of OCU's Title IX administrators to discuss your report, the support the university can provide, and your options for pursuing a resolution to the issue through the university.

If you would like to make a report or learn more, please contact OCU's Title IX Coordinator by calling (405) 208-5075 or visit <http://www.okcu.edu/admin/hr/titleIX/index>. That website also contains links to other local resources, OCU's non-discrimination policies and procedures, and contact information for the University's Title IX administrators.

For emergencies, you can contact OCU's police department at (405) 208-5911. For free and confidential support on campus, you can contact University Counseling by calling (405) 208-7901. For medical issues, you can contact the Campus Health Center at (405) 208-5090. They are confidential as well.

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 2016-17 for the Mass Communications Department.

I understand the policies and agree to abide by them.

Name

B#

Date

Course Name and Number