COMM 2350.001  MEDIA WRITING & PERFORMANCE  Spring, 2013

Ruth Aipperspach, Instructor
Office: Bay Hall, Room 372
825-2586, #89052  Office Hours:  Tuesday:  12:45 – 1:45 p.m.
                                         3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m...
                                         Wednesday  3:00 – 4:30  p.m
                                         Thursday  12:45 p.m. –1:45 p.m., 6 - 7 p.m.

Or by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:  This course is designed to teach students pronunciation, effective
writing and on-air performance techniques for all kinds of media environments with videotaped
presentations.

COURSE MATERIALS
       Thomson-Wadsworth, Boston, 2009

Note cards
Cue cards ( 2 packets of 14 x 22 inch posters)
Writing paper for in-class writing
2 Blue Books for exams
1 Folder with pockets (with name on front- develop a portfolio)

GOALS:  To introduce the student to media environments where both writing and oral skills
are critical.  This includes pronunciation exercises, understanding audiences, learning media
formats.  In addition, students will achieve oral skills and performance by participation with on-camera
assignments.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. Students will gain experience using media formats, writing skills and oral presentations
   for entry level positions in media environments.  These include, but not limited to radio,
   television, the Internet, public relations/marketing positions in corporations and other media
   entities.
2. Instructor will give students critiques on writing abilities for future media-related positions.

ATTENDANCE ( & absences): This is both a writing intensive course and performance based course with videotaped presentations. There are no make-ups without proper documentation and informing the Instructor within 24 hours before performance or within 24 hours after scheduled performance. We have a tight schedule to adhere to get everyone taped. Three absences will incur three points off the final grade. Anyone absent for the mid-term and/or final exams, contact the Instructor within 24 hours of the exam.

CLASS CONTENT:
1. Lecture, oral participation, in-class writing assignments, delivery skills and pronunciation, and gestures are critical for effective delivery.
2. Students will write and deliver copy on videotape (and/or in-class presentation) on Assignments scheduled for the course.
3. Solo performances include PSAs, Promotional announcements, commercials, a weathercast for K-BREEZE, and serve as interviewer in an interview setting.
4. Each student will complete a final written media project
5. Mid-term and final examinations will test competency, proficiency and understanding of both Writing principles and oral skills for future applications.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS: All writing assignments must be ready by deadlines in order for the Instructor to review copy before performance. That means students will need to come by the Instructor’s office to check timing and writing of presentations before on-camera performance.

Note: Do not e-mail the Instructor copies of your work or assignments. Hard copies are needed for your performance; plus for grading purposes. The only copy you can e-mail the Instructor will be critiques from viewing videotaped assignments.

DELIVERY: Instructor critiquing will include mood, tone, inflection, pauses, rate, delivery, and pronunciation. Writing skills will also be evaluated.

DRESS: Dress is important for on-air camera presentations. (See handout)

OPTIONAL: Students can review their videotaped presentations and turn in a one-half page evaluations for assessing performance for 5 pts extra credit. Videotaped evaluations include review of: PROMOTION, COMMERCIAL and the INTERVIEW. Evaluations must be completed within two weeks of your presentation.
Note:
1. To avoid distractions in the classroom at all times, please turn off cellular phones, ipods, CDs, Earphones, and other technology at the beginning of class and put them in your bag. These are a distraction to both the Instructor and the other students. Do not send or read text messages during.
2. Do not check your phone during class, and don’t leave the classroom to make or answer a call. That can wait until you leave the room at the end of the class period.
3. Do not bring cell phones or other technological equipment into the classroom during Videotaping, or during mid-term and final exams. During exams, anyone using a Cell phone or other equipment, the Instructor will remove that student’s Exam and consider it finished.
4. Anyone using a laptop must sit near the front to avoid distractions. Laptops are for taking lecture notes, or reading the textbook on-line so please let the Instructor know.
5. DO NOT BRING FOOD OR DRINK INTO THE CLASSROOM
6. Preferred Method of scholarly citations where appropriate will be MLA style

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY/PLAGIARISM: University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work). In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero.

CLASSROOM/PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a break of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

ACADEMIC ADVISING: If you are majoring, or planning to major, in a field taught in the College of Liberal Arts, and if you have not yet obtained a signed degree plan, you should see your Academic Advisor immediately. Degree plans are important and useful to successful progress towards graduation. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at (361) 825-5816 or visit the office in CCH 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

DROPPING A CLASS: I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. (...............) is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W”.

GRADED APPEAL PROCESS: As stated in University rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as Outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the Instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parts involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99C.2. Student Grade Appeals and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01 Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm. For assistance and guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

This Syllabus describes the day to day class schedule. If any changes are made due to illness, inclement weather, or other reasons, etc., the Instructor has the right to make alterations and those changes will be announced in class.
Jan 29  Introduction to course (ch.1)
Week 1  Introduction to Writing (ch. 2)
         Delivery techniques & articulation
Feb  5  Copywriting style , continued (ch. 2)
Week 2  Consumer Behavior and Motivation (ch. 4-5)
         Introduction to writing PSAs in format for Radio, TV and print. (ch. 13)
12  Bring PSA information to class to work on print PSA as well as copy for
Week 3  Radio and television PSAs.
         Bring copy to next class for TAMUCC Promotional announcements
19  Introduction to writing TAMUCC Promotional Announcements: Practice reading
Week 4  copy & discussion on cue cards.
26  All students describe and show their print PSA in class .
Week 5  On-camera videotaping Promotional announcements with cue cards (all students)
         Turn in all 3 PSA copy amd 2 TAMUCC promotional copy
         Introduction to writing commercial copy (ch. 6)
Mar  5  Writing commercials; principles, practices; and audiences (ch. 6-11)
Week 6  Explain Copy Platform. Practice writing skills for commercials & formats.
Mar 11-15  ---------------------SPRING BREAK ---------------------
19  Bring information to write TV commercial in class.
Week 7  Discuss use of cue cards & prop integration
         
26  MID TERM EXAM  (Blue Book – subjective/objective questions
Week 8  
April 2  On-camera videotaping commercials with prop + cue cards (all students)
Week 9  Turn in copy for TV and Radio commercials. (total of 4 copies)
         Writing for PUBLIC RELATIONS and introduce writing assignment for PR in
         radio format (check prnewswire.com,Or PRweb.com)
         
9  Students to read PR copy in class (Radio format).
Week 10 Introduction to Final Written Project + Proposal. In-class PR written assignment
16
Week 11
Introduction to writing principles for features for print magazine using 2-column format. (Instructor to give details on take home feature writing assignment)
Writing on the Web and Advertising on the Web (ch. 16)

Apr.23
Week 12
PROPOSAL due
Assign Weathercast guidelines
***Interviews (4-6 min) (half the class)

Apr 30
Week 13
***Interviews (4-6 min) (half the class)
Legal/Ethical issues; Trademarks
Due” feature writing assignment

May 7
Week 14
Final class; 2-3 min. Weathercast (all students)
Final Writing Project due at the beginning of class

May 14
Week 15
FINAL EXAM (7:15 - 9:45 p.m.)
(Blue Book- subjective/objective questions)
(No exams will be given ahead of the scheduled exam time)

Grading:

Writing Assignments & Final Written Project 50%
On-camera & in-class performances skills 25%
Mid-term and Final Exams 25%

A = 90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F= don’t ask

“If people can’t write well, they cannot think well, and if they cannot think well, others will do their thinking for them.” (George Orwell).
WRITING ASSIGNMENTS  (50%)  

Writing Skills:
- PSA (Radio format) ___ /20
- PSA (TV format) ___ /20
- Print PSA (print format) ___ /20
- TAMUCC Promo (Radio) ___ /20
- TAMUCC Promo (TV) ___ /20
- Copy Platform ___ /10
- Commercial (Radio format) ___ /20
- Commercial (TV format) ___ /20
- PR copy (radio format) ___ /20
- Magazine Print copy ___ /30
- In-class print magazine copy ___ /20
- Health News ___ /20
- Final Writing Project ___ 100

On-Camera/in-class PERFORMANCES (25%)  

- PSA (non-taped) ___ /20
- Oral description of print PSA ___ /15
- TAMUCC Promotion ___ /30
- Commercial, ___ /30
- PR reading in class ___ /15
- Weathercast (non-taped) ___ /30
- Interview ___ /50

EXAMS (25%)
- Mid-term ___ /100
- Final Exam ___ /100