COMM 2350.001 MEDIA WRITING & PERFORMANCE Spring, 2014

Ruth Aipperspach, Instructor
Office: Bay Hall, Room 372
825-2586, 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.,
5:45 p.m. – 6:45 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

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

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):
1. This is both a writing intensive course and performance based course with taped presentations.
2. There are no make-ups without proper documentation and inform the Instructor within 24 hours before or within 24 hours after the scheduled performance. We have a tight schedule to adhere to get everyone taped.
3. Three absences will incur three points off the final grade.
4. 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 tape (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 both interviewer and interviewee in interview settings.
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 taped 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 taped 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. Check with Instructor about procedure.
Note:
1. To avoid distractions in the classroom at all times, please turn off cellular phones, 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 class.
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 taping, 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 or tablet must sit near the front to avoid distractions.
   Laptops and tablets 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. Refrain from using e-cigarettes or other tobacco products during class time.
7. Preferred Method of scholarly citations where appropriate will be MLA style

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**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 APPEALS PROCESS:  Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

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.
Week 1
Jan 28  Introduction to course (ch.1)
   Introduction to Writing (ch. 2)
   Delivery techniques & articulation

Week 2
Feb 4  Copywriting style , continued (ch. 2)
       Consumer Behavior and Motivation (ch. 4-5)
       Introduction to writing PSAs in format for Radio, TV and on-line. (ch. 13)

Week 3
Feb 11 Bring PSA information to class to work on PSA copy for
       Radio and television PSAs., and discuss on-line PSAs
       Bring copy to next class for TAMUCC Promotional announcements

Week 4
Feb 18 Introduction to writing TAMUCC Promotional Announcements: Practice reading copy & discussion on cue cards.

Week 5
Feb 25 All students describe and show their on-linet PSA in class. .
       On-camera tape one Promotional announcement with cue cards (all students)
       Turn in all 2 PSA copy and 2 TAMUCC promotional copy
       Introduction to writing commercial copy (ch. 6)

Week 6
Mar 4  Writing commercials; principles, practices; and audiences (ch. 6-11)
       Explain Copy Platform. Practice writing skills for commercials & formats.
       Practice reading CA. copy

Mar 11  --------------SPRING BREAK -----------No class

Week 7
Mar 18 Bring information to write TV commercial in class.
       Discuss use of cue cards & prop

Week 8
Mar 25 MID TERM EXAM (Blue Book – subjective/objective questions

Week 9
April 1 On-camera taping commercials with prop + cue cards (all students)
       Turn in copy for TV and Radio commercials.( total of 4 copies), + Copy Platform
       Go to PRNewswire.com & click on News Releases. Bring one copy to next class..
Week 10
April 8
All Students to rewrite News Release in class (Radio format).
Introduction to Final Written Project + Proposal.
Explain guidelines for interviewing assignment

Week 11
Apr. 15
Introduction to writing principles for features.
(Instructor to give details on take home feature writing assignment radio format)
Writing on the Web and Advertising on the Web (ch. 16)
Proposal due

Week 12
Apr. 22
*** Interviews (4-6 min). (half the class)
Assign Weathercast guidelines

Week 13
Apr 29
*** Interviews (4-6 min) (half the class)
Legal/Ethical issues; Trademarks
Due” feature writing assignment

Week 14
May 6
Final class; 2-3 min. Weathercast (all students)
Final Writing Project due at the beginning of class

Week 15
May TBA
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
- On-line PSA ___ /20
- TAMUCC Promo (Radio) ___ /20
- TAMUCC Promo (TV) ___ /20
- Copy Platform ___ /10
- Commercial (Radio format) ___ /20
- Commercial (TV format) ___ /20
- Feature copy (online format) ___ /30
- News Release ___ /20
- Final Writing Project ___ 100

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

- PSA (non-taped) ___ /20
- Oral description of on-line PSA ___ /15
- TAMUCC Promotion ___ /30
- Commercial ___ /30
- News Release reading in class ___ /20
- Weathercast (non-taped) ___ /30
- Interview ___ /50

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