COMM 4390:002 SPECIAL TOPICS: SPORTS WRITING
(R. Aipperspach)

Instructor: Ruth Aipperspach
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361-825-2586
Bay Hall, office 372

Hours: Tuesday: 12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. [3:30 p.m. – 4 p.m.]
       Wednesday: 3:00 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.
       Thursday 12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. [5:45 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.]

Or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to teach students the elements of sports writing and reporting to include covering issues, interviewing, writing, editing, and some play by play for print, Television, Radio and the Internet.

COURSE MATERIALS
Textbook
Writing paper
1 folder with pockets & name on the front cover

GOALS: To introduce the student to television and radio (audio) and print/internet writing and learn the techniques used to select and write copy for broadcast in appropriate format and understand print and internet styles of sports reporting. Reporting of sports stats and summaries will be an integral part of the course.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: By the end of semester, students will:
1. Recognize the basic elements that make up a broadcast, print, and internet sports story and select what are the integral parts of the sporting event to be reported.
2. Recognize and interpret media ethics, libel/slander issues affecting sports assignments:

ATTENDANCE This course is an intensive writing course with participation both in class and outside the classroom. Absences for medical, work-related (i.e. attending seminars, workshops. Etc.) with documentation will be excused; otherwise three or more absences (including tardiness and leaving class early) will incur a three point deduction off the final grade.
CLASSROOM METHODS AND POLICIES: Classroom discussion, writing assignments, discussion on sports, analyses of various Oral Reports, an interview and one play-by-play assignment.
1. All assignments are due at the beginning of class (due dates are on the Syllabus)
2. Do not email copy to the Instructor
3. Late assignments will not be graded
4. Students will sign up for various assignments so you will have adequate time to complete them.
5. There will be no schedule changes during the week leading up to Spring Break and the week after Spring Break. These are official class days. All deadlines will be adhered to
6. If a student misses an exam, please notify the Instructor within 24 hours. No exams will be given in advance of the date as shown on the Syllabus.

NOTE:
1. Please turn off all cellphones, and other technology and put them in your bag. That means no texting, making or answering calls in the classroom. Students will be free from distractions to focus on the subject matter.
2. Anyone using a laptop or tablet must sit near the front row to avoid distractions. Laptops and tablets are for reading the textbook on line, and/or taking Lecture Notes, only, so please inform the Instructor
3. Do not bring food or drink into the classroom
4. Refrain from using e-cigarettes and other tobacco products during class time.
5. 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 any 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 ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary action 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 The college of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The college’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

Notice to students with disabilities:  
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible. Please have your accommodation letter from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Disability Services (DS) Office with you when you come see me. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Disability Services Office located in 116 Corpus Christi Hall at (361) 825.5816. 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.

FYI: All students are encouraged to sign up for an Islander email account. Islander email is critical for university communication in any weather related situations, or other emergencies. Students may contact the Instructor by phone, Islander email, or visit in my office in Bay Hall 372.
Week 1
Jan 23 R Introduction to course (ch. 1)
Compare sports summaries and discussion on writing summaries

Week 2
Jan 30 Leads (ch. 2)
Go through radio-audio formats, TV formats, print and online

Week 3
Feb 6 Interviewing (ch.3) and guidelines for writing story
Football guidelines p. 140
Writing assignment TBA

Week 4
Feb 13 Sports and storytelling (ch.5, p.42)
Write short sports story in class (300 words)

Week 5
Feb 20 Basketball guidelines (p, 85, p. 292,196)
Writing assignment TBA

Week 6
Feb 27 Baseball guidelines/softball (p, 69, 205)

Week 7
Mar 6 Mid term = 4-6 min. Oral Reports over Sports Journal entries

Week 8
Mar 13 SPRING BREAK – no class

Week 9
Mar 20 Broadcasting games on radio
Bring game details pf a game you listened to on radio to write a 2 min summary.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Mar 27</td>
<td>Features ch.5</td>
<td>Writing assignment on player or coach TBA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Apr 3</td>
<td>Ethics p.274</td>
<td>No cliches Tennis p.275 Writing assignment TBA</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Apr 10</td>
<td>Guest speaker</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Apr 17</td>
<td>Track &amp; Field (p. 234)</td>
<td>In-class writing assignment</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Apr 24</td>
<td>In-class writing assignment Sports Profile and interview</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>10 min. 3-person Sports Report for K-BREEZE Sports</td>
<td>Last class day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 16</td>
<td>May TBA</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM 7:15 p.m. – 9:45 p.m.</td>
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Grading: Writing assignments/reports: 50%
Major sports assignments 25%
Exams 25%
Grading criteria

Written Reports (50%)

1. Semester Sports Journal ___/50
2. 4 tweets about sports over the semester ___/20.
3. 4 Written summaries over various sports events:
   - Print Newspaper ___/30
   - Audio/Radio format ___/30
   - TV format ___/30
   - On-line ___/30
4. 1 feature on a sports player for a sports magazine (400-500 words) ___/40
5. a 2-3 min. feature on a coach (audio/radio/TV format or on-line ___/40

Major Sports assignments: (25%)

a. Play by Play. 15 min. of audio only ___/50
b. Written Analysis: assess how it went and include reference to role of
   Color Assistant & Spotter ___/20
c. 1 Tweet to Instructor after the game indicating results ___/5
d. Written report (any format) within 24 hours of the game ___/25

a. Color Assistant & Spotter
b. Submit stats.chart ___/25
   c. Written summary of your role and how you viewed the game ___/25
Oral Sports Report ___/50

Exams (25%)

Mid term Exam /50
Final Exam /50