COMM- 4390_002  SPECIAL TOPICS:  SPORTS WRITING  Spring, 2015  (R. Aipperspach)

Bay Hall, 207  
Thursday 7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Instructor: Ruth Aipperspach  
Ruth.aiperspach@tamucc.edu  
361-825-2586  
Bay Hall, office 222-B

Hours:
- Monday: 4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- Tuesday: 12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.
- Wednesday: 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. (or by appointment)
- Thursday: 12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.
  5:45 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION  This course is designed to teach students the elements of sports writing and reporting to include covering issues, interviewing, writing coverage of sporting events, summaries, interpreting stats and photography coverage of sports. The types of assignments will include sports profiles and features, reviews of sports talk shows and an extra credit assignment of play-by-play for game coverage. Campus related sports assignments will be eligible for publication in the campus newspaper and its accompanying website.

Textbook:

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

GOALS: To introduce the student to television and radio (audio) and print/ internet writing and learn the techniques used to select and write copy in appropriate format for television, radio 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 sports events, Oral Reports, an interview and one play-by-play written 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 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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Disabilities Accommodations: 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 call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #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”.
Statement of Academic Continuity:
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, websites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

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 222-B.
Week 1
Jan 22 R  Introduction to course (ch. 1)
Compare sports summaries and discussion on writing summaries

Week 2
Jan 29  Leads (ch. 2)
Go through radio-audio formats, TV formats, print and online

Week 3
Feb 5  Interviewing (ch.3)and guidelines for writing story
Football guidelines p. 140
Writing assignment TBA on SuperBowl – video format

Week 4
Feb 12  Sports and storytelling (ch.5, p.42)
Write short sports story in class (print 300 words)

Week 5
Feb 19  Basketball guidelines (p. 85 ,p. 292,196)
Writing assignment TBA – audio format

Week 6
Feb 26  Broadcasting games on radio
Bring game details of a game you listened to on radio to write a 2 -3 min. summary  Writing assignment TBA

Week 7
Mar 5  Analyze stats; and everyone bring one sports photo from newspaper or Magazine to class for discussion

Week 8
Week 9
Mar 19  SPRING BREAK – no class

Week 10
Mar 26  Photojournalism – review sports photos in newspapers and magazines.
        Features ch.5  Writing guidelines and assignment on player or coach
              (400-500 words) for magazine

Week 11
Apr 2   Ethics p.274 (Bring an article on sports ethics to class)
        No clichés
        Baseball guidelines/softball (p. 69, p.205)
        Writing assignment TBA  TV Talk Show Host analysis/review (200-300 words)

Week 12
Apr. 9  Tennis; watch taped match; write report (See textbook p.275 --for guidelines)

Week 13
Apr. 16 Track & Field (p. 234) & Lacrosse (see textbook)
        In-class writing assignment TBA (on-line with two photos)

Week 14
Apr 23  DUE: Sports Profile and interview for 2 col. (500-600) words
        TBA class assignment

Week 15
Apr. 30 8-10 min. 3-person Sportscast for K-BREEZE Sports  (taped)
        Last class day
Week 16
May 7  FINAL EXAM  7:15 p.m. – 9:45 p.m.

No exams will be given in advance of the Final Exam date as scheduled on the TAMUCC Final Exam Schedule. Please schedule your travel plans including domestic and/or international flights after the examination time. **No exceptions.**

Grading:
- Writing assignments/reports: 50%
- Major sports assignments: 25%
- Exams: 25%

(A = 100-90; B = 89-90; C = 79-70; D = 69-60; F= don’t ask)
K-BREEZE SPORTS

Written Reports (50%)

1. Semester Sports Journal ___/50 (weeks 1-6)
2. 4 tweets about sports over the semester __ /20.
3. Written summaries over various sports events:
   - Print Newspaper ___/30 (tennis - 200-300 words)
   - Audio/Radio format ___/30 (basketball)
   - TV format ___/30 (tba)
   - Review of TV Sports Talk Show host(s) ___/30 (print - 200-300 words)
   - On-line + 2 photos ___/40 (your choice)
4. Magazine feature on a local sports person ___ /40
   (500-600 words, 2 col.) + photo
5. 2-3 min.feature on a coach (audio/radio/TV format) __/40
6. Oral Sports Report copy (Sportscast) (taped) __/25

Major Sports assignments: (25%)
   a. 2-page written Analysis: assess how it went and include reference to role of
      Color Commentator ____/30
   b. 1 Tweet to Instructor after the game indicating results ____/5
   c. On-line written report or audio within 24-48 hours of the game____/30

Exams (25%)
Mid term Exam /50 & Final Exam /50
EXTRA CREDIT

1
Extra credit of 30 points for ISLAND WAVES Islander sports story factored in to student’s grade only if the student completes the assignment. This would have to be within a couple of days of the event to keep the sports story fresh and current (one time grade only). Must be proofread and approved by the Instructor and submitted.

April 16, 2015 is the last day to submit any sports copy for the semester editions.

e.g. Check with Instructor for DEADLINES FOR ISLAND WAVES:

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

2
Extra Credit for play by play audio of a sports event and submitted to the Instructor on a flashdrive. (See detailed handout for guidelines).

(worth up to 50 points) This is over and above the written report required for covering an event. DUE: on or before May 1, 2015

……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

…..