

Spring 2017

Syllabus



COMM 2315: News Reporting – M/W 1 – 215 PM

Department: Communications

Available Formats: Conventional

Campuses: Levelland

Instructor: Margaret Kirby **Office:** CM 154 **Phone:** 716-2451

e-mail: mkirby@southplainscollege.edu The fastest way to reach me, other than coming to my office during office hours, is to e-mail. Please do **NOT** e-mail me using the Blackboard system. I do not check that regularly.

Instructor Office Hours: Mon & Wed 830 – 930 am; 11 a.m. - 1230 p.m.
T & TH 830 – 930 a.m.; 1215 – 230 p.m.
Fri 830 – 12 p.m. or by appointment

Prerequisites: None

Credit: 3 credit hours with a lab

Course Description: this course focuses on advanced news-gathering and writing skills. It concentrates on the three-part process of producing news stories: discovering the news, reporting the news, and writing the news in different formats.

No Required Textbook

Course Evaluation: Students' grades in this class will be determined by the following:

Class projects+ homework: 545 points

Participation (see grid below): 100 points

Final package + exam:200

845 points are available for the final grade.

761 -845 = A

676 - 760= B

592 - 675 = C

507 - 591 = D

Below 507 = F

Sometimes the final number of points available for the course will not reach the number planned. If that is the case, the scale will be recalibrated and you will be notified.

Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Evaluate newsworthiness of information
2. Demonstrate an understanding of story idea creation
3. Comprehend the basic structure and format of a news story (lead, body, and conclusion)
4. Demonstrate an understanding of beat reporting and feature writing
5. Demonstrate an understanding of multimedia journalism and alternative story forms
6. Demonstrate an understanding of journalistic ethics.

Tardiness and Attendance Policy: I generally will not allow you to enter class after the first 5 minutes because it is disruptive. I will take attendance after the first 5 minutes of class. If you repeatedly come to class after the 5 minute cut off, you will be asked to leave. Attendance in this class is required. Students are expected to attend all classes in order to be successful in a course. The student may be administratively withdrawn from the course when absences become excessive as defined in the course syllabus.

When an unavoidable reason for class absence arises, such as illness, an official trip authorized by the college or an official activity, the instructor may permit the student to make up work missed. It is the student's responsibility to find out about and complete work missed within a reasonable period of time as determined by the instructor.

Some work cannot be made up. I generally do not allow exams to be made up. In the event that a makeup exam is allowed, the highest grade available on it will be an 89.

Students with more than 4 absences *in a row* automatically will be dropped from the class with an F or X without further warning. If a student misses more than 4 classes *throughout the semester*, I consider that number to be "excessive" and reserve the right to drop the student with an X or an F. I will warn you if you reach the 4 class limit. That will be your only warning.

Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of "X" or "F" as determined by the instructor. Instructors are responsible for clearly stating their administrative drop policy in the course syllabus, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of that policy.

It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences through MySPC using his or her student online account. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

ADA Statement

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office at Levelland Student Health & Wellness Center 806-716-2577, Reese Center (also covers ATC) Building 8: 806-716-4675, Plainview Center Main Office: 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611, or the Health and Wellness main number at 806-716-2529.

Diversity Statement- In this class, the instructor will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

Deadlines- ALL deadlines are absolute. All assignments are due at the beginning of each class. Late work may or may not be accepted depending on the assignment. If accepted, late assignments will be penalized harshly.

Civility Code:

- As future professionals, you are to communicate with each other in a professional and civil manner. At all times we will treat each other with dignity and respect. That means no profanity or conversations that I feel are inappropriate. As the professor for the class, I have the final say for what may be considered “inappropriate”. If there are problems in this area, you may be asked to leave.
- Disruptive behaviors such as cell phones ringing, leaving and returning to class while in session, arriving late to class, talking with others during lectures/discussions, checking your r-mail or Facebook, sending/receiving text messages, eating or drinking in class, etc... may result in a request that such students leave the class. Cell phones must either be turned off or put on vibrate only.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism and other forms of cheating behavior.

Academic dishonesty is unacceptable. Students committing acts of academic dishonesty will be penalized with failing grades on assignments and/or for the entire course, depending upon the instructor’s evaluation of the severity of the dishonest act.

What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own. The following are all examples of plagiarism-
 - Quoting or paraphrasing material without citing the source of that material. Sources can include Web sites, magazines, newspapers, textbooks, journals, TV and radio programs, movies and videos, photographs and drawings, charts and graphs; any information or ideas that are not your own.
 - Quoting a source without using quotation marks—even if you do cite it.
 - Buying a paper online or downloading a paper from a free site.
 - Copying or using work done by another student.
 - Citing sources you didn’t use.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

You are expected to contribute to class discussions. Mere attendance is not enough. Basic grading criteria:

Attendance (Missed Classes for semester)	Class Contributions	Grade Range
0-2	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	90-100
0-2	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	80-90
0-2	Rare or no comments	70-80
2-3	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	70-80
2-3	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	60-70
2-3	Rare or no comments	50-60
3-4	Frequent contributions; well considered comments	50-60
3-4	Infrequent contributions or ill-considered comments	40-50
3-4	Rare or no comments	30-40
More than 4		30