Course Description

A course designed to enable students to write newspaper and magazine feature and editorial material with emphasis on marketing of articles and research methods for article writing. Students study philosophy of news selection, ethics of communication, and responsibility in reporting. Work on the student newspaper or magazine is required. Prerequisite: Comm 2311 or consent of instructor.

Textbook References and Supplies


Supplementary Resources: *Elements of Style*, Strunk and White
Selected Handouts from instructor
*The Associated Press Stylebook*

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course the student will:

1. Develop improved writing and reporting skills to cover public affairs events and issues.
2. Acquire heightened awareness of news values.
3. Develop understanding of newspaper and magazine operations.
4. Acquire the discipline of meeting deadlines and honoring commitments.
5. Apply news values to researched articles.
7. Use adapted interview techniques for information gathering.
8. Experience the environment of a commercial news gathering organization.
9. Use publication editing and design software.

Student Contributions and Policies
Students will be expected to:
1. Contribute a minimum of eight comprehensive stories for the *El Paisano* or *Chaparral* magazine for a total output of 150 inches or more of copy. Required stories include a personality profile, a news feature story and a column. At least 60% of the copy must be source-based material. All published material must be submitted in scrapbook form (stringbook) at semester’s end. All first drafts of stories and opinion pieces must be edited by instructor.
2. Attend one city council and one school board meeting locally and write a story from at least one of those meetings. A one-page report from the other meeting is required.
3. Attend one courtroom trial (as a group) and write a story about the proceedings.
4. Continue current events activities by reading regularly the *Dallas Morning News* and the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* or *Odessa American*.
5. Complete the review questions to all assigned chapters.
6. Take three AP style tests during the semester.
7. Attend all classes, if not a Web class. Three absences in a row or six during semester results in a drop.
8. Complete a one-shift reporting or desk internship at the *Midland Reporter-Telegram* or the *Odessa American* newspapers. These will be shadow experiences arranged by the instructor.

**Evaluation of Students**

The semester grade will be determined as follows:

- Stringbook....................45%
- Meeting Assignments...15%
- Style tests......................15%
- Final Exam...................20%
- Class Participation...........5%
- Total..........................100%

**Course Schedule**

This class meets for 3 lecture hours per week as follows:

Weeks 1-2: Orientation and review of basic writing techniques, news values and interview skills; textbook, chapters 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 26, 27 tips handout.

Week 3: Style Emphasis (3 style tests); Appendix A, pp. A3-A18; **Style test 1**.

Weeks 4-5: Qualities of good writing and features; textbook, chapter 3, 9.
Weeks 6-7: Governmental meetings and coverage; textbook, chapter 20; **style test 2**.

Weeks 8-9: Police and Fire/Courts; **courtroom visit**, textbook, chapters 21, 22.

Weeks 10-11: In-depth Reporting; textbook, chapter 24; **style test 3**


Week 16: Final and submission of stringbook.

**Instructor Information**

**Name:**  
**Office phone:**  
**Office hours:**  
**Office location:**  
**E-mail address:**  
**Division Secretary:** Lula Lee, 141 AFA  
**Office phone:** 685-4624  
**Note:** Students are encouraged to contact the instructor at any time; however, making an appointment will guarantee the instructor’s availability at a specific time.