Midland College
Syllabus
COMM 2315
News Gathering and Writing II
Semester and Year
SCH (3-0)
Instructor Name

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.

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.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS (Text may vary)
Required

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

Adobe Reader (Links to an external site)
Student Contributions and Class 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.

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. **DROP / WITHDRAWAL**

The student is responsible for initiating a drop or withdrawal, not the instructor.

**EVALUATION OF STUDENTS**

Semester grades will be determined as follows:

The semester grade will be determined as follows:

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

**DROP / WITHDRAWAL**

The student is responsible for initiating a drop or withdrawal, not the instructor.

**Withdrawal from course**: The instructor is not able to withdraw a student from the course after the census date. A student wishing to withdraw must fill out the withdrawal form (Links to an external site) online.

**2018-2019 WITHDRAWAL DATES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>November 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall First 8-Week Session</td>
<td>October 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Second 8-Week Session</td>
<td>November 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>December Mini-Semester</td>
<td>December 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>April 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring First 8-Week Session</td>
<td>February 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Second 8-Week Session</td>
<td>April 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>May Mini-Semester</td>
<td>May 23</td>
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<td>Summer I</td>
<td>June 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer II</td>
<td>August 6</td>
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**ACADEMIC RESEARCH**

For Research information, tutorials, library information, web links and more, access the Distance Learning Webpage for the [Midland College Fasken Learning Resource Center](Links to an external site).
Academic Database Access

EBSCO (Links to an external site)
User name: mc72cc
Password: mc#chaps1mc

For the Gale Database use this username/password combination:
User name: txshracd2528
Password: chaps

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you experience technical difficulties with Canvas, click the Help link at the bottom of the Canvas login page (Links to an external site), or in the top-right green toolbar from any page within Canvas, select Report a Problem, provide details, and submit the ticket. Your request will automatically be sent to the Midland College information technology support center. Check your email for support updates.

FREE ACCESS TO MICROSOFT 365

All Midland College students have a free Microsoft Office 365 account via the Midland College website https://www.midland.edu/audiences/current-students/office365.php. Students should go to that website for instructions for accessing their account to create Word, Excel, and other Microsoft documents.

INSTITUTIONAL ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

ADA Statement-- The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by an institution or entity receiving federal financial assistance. It is this Section 504 mandate that has promoted the development of disability support service programs in colleges and universities across the country. Subpart E of Section 504 deals specifically with this mandate for institutions of higher education. While it does not require that special educational programming be developed for students with disabilities, it does require that an institution (public or private) be prepared to make appropriate academic adjustments and reasonable accommodations in order to allow the full participation of students with disabilities in the same programs and activities available to nondisabled students.

Midland College provides services for students with disabilities through Student Services. In order to receive accommodations, students must place documentation on file with the Counselor/Disability Specialist. Students with disabilities should notify
Midland College prior to the beginning of each semester. Student Services will provide each student with a letter outlining any reasonable accommodations. The student must present the letter to the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

Phone, Midland College Special Needs Counselor: 432-685-5598
Midland College Disability Services (Links to an external site)
Microsoft Accessibility (Links to an external site)
Canvas Accessibility (Links to an external site)
Turnitin Accessibility (Links to an external site)
Adobe Reader Accessibility (Links to an external site)
Google Reader Accessibility (Links to an external site)

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Academics and Student Services (Links to an external site)

Phone, Midland College Testing Center: 432-685-4735

Phone, LanguageHub, Midland College On-Campus Writing Center: 432-685-4811, 182 TC
Language Hub Online (available to all students in Canvas)

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUE PROCESS
Midland College Student Rights and Responsibilities (Links to an external site)

PRIVACY POLICIES
The below privacy policies apply to this course, as they are applicable to your conduct on this online platform.

Midland College Website Privacy Policy (Links to an external site)
Canvas Privacy Policy (Links to an external site)
YouTube Privacy Policy (Links to an external site)
Canvas Student Guide (Links to an external site)
Turnitin Privacy Policy (Links to an external site)
Instructor Information:

Instructor Name:  
Email: 
Office Location:  
Office Phone:  
Office Hours:  
Fine Arts and Communications Division Dean: Dr. William Feeler  
Secretary: Ms. Lula Lee  
Division Office: 141 AFA  
Phone: 432/685-4624  
Division Office hours: 8-5, M-F

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Midland College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Tana Baker  
Title IX Coordinator/Compliance Officer  
3600 N. Garfield, SSC 242  
Midland, Texas 79705  
(432) 685-4781  
tbaker@midland.edu

Or

Natasha Morgan  
Human Resources/Payroll Director  
3600 N. Garfield, PAD 104  
Midland, Texas 79705  
(432) 685-4534  
nmorgan@midland.edu

For more information on notice of non-discrimination, visit the Office of Civil Rights website for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

UPDATED AUGUST 2018