

COMM 4536: MAGAZINE PUBLICATION

Syllabus: Fall Semester 2013

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Office hours: T and TH, 11 a.m. – noon
or by appointment

Class meets: Monday, 9-11:50 a.m., Bayou Building, Room B1239

Prerequisites: COMM 3231 – Writing for the Media (or a similar class at another university)
COMM 3534 – Gathering Information
Successfully passed the GSP test

Required text:

- The Associated Press Stylebook
- The Signal Handbook (available for free on coursesite, see above)

Supplies:

- Each student is required to bring a flash drive to class to store work.

Course description:

This course is designed to introduce you to magazine/newspaper feature/news/opinion writing and the various phases of magazine/newspaper production. Over the course of the semester you and your fellow classmates will participate as staff members for the university's very first New Student Orientation publication. You, the staff, will be responsible for coming up with story ideas, writing the articles, copy editing the material, taking the photographs, shooting and editing the videos, designing the graphic design elements and recruiting advertisers.

Objectives:

During the course of the semester, you will strengthen your oral, visual, writing and editing communication skills while gaining a solid understanding of magazine/newspaper production, a technique closely related to other media applications, such as the production of newsletters, brochures, annual reports, etc. The expertise you acquire in this class should enhance your professional potential in the media industry. (For non-communication majors, the expertise you acquire in this class should still enhance your professional potential as good communication skills are an asset in any profession.)

Course format:

As a student in the class, you will become a member of the editorial staff for the New Student Orientation publication. Each student will be required to write three articles and produce one visual project during the course of the semester. So in addition to being reporters, you also have the opportunity to become a staff editor, designer, photographer or videographer. Every student will contribute to story ideas and provide input toward the content of the magazine, however once assignments have been assigned, no substitutions will be allowed. The entire class will also serve as copy editors and, therefore, share responsibility for the quality of the final project.

Deadlines are sacred in the field of communication, especially publication. A full letter grade will be deducted for every day that an assignment is submitted late.

Changes in schedule or material:

I reserve the right to make any changes to the class schedule or material deemed necessary in order to make the class flow better. Any such changes will be announced in class. Absence from class on the day such a change is announced is no excuse for ignorance of it. If you must be absent, you are responsible for finding out what you missed.

Accommodations:

The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustment/auxiliary aid, please contact UHCL's student disability services center in the Student Services Building, 281-283-2648, and then discuss the accommodation with me. I will make every effort to see that you are comfortable in the classroom. A disability form should be turned in to me by the second week of class.

Grading Policy:

Attendance/ Participation	–	10%. The classroom work you contribute toward publishing this year's issue of <i>The Signal Relay</i> is worth 20 percent of your grade. This includes participation in selection of material, contribution to its visual design, copy editing and fulfillment of other responsibilities as assigned. It also includes attendance because if you are not here, you are not contributing. As a lab course, much of the work takes place in class. If you have to miss class for any reason, you are still responsible for making sure that the work is submitted on time, so be sure to get with professor prior to the next class session to make arrangements.
Quizzes	–	10%. There are 2 quizzes (5% each) based on reading assignments.
Assignments	–	80%. Each student will receive four assignments, 3 writing/1 visual. The assignments are each worth 20% of your final grade. This includes timely submission of work; deadlines are sacred in the field of communication.

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Do not turn in an article based on a press release, wire story or something you found in another publication or on the Web for a grade. Do not take quotes from other publications or websites. Plagiarized work will result in an F for the assignment and possibly for the course. Please refer to the UHCL catalog for the academic Honesty Policy.

Schedule

WEEK 1: AUGUST 26

- Go over syllabus/handouts and expectations. Everyone will be expected to write 3 articles and produce 1 visual project during course of semester. Review staff job applications and staff responsibilities.

BREAK

- Come up with a list of potential story ideas – make initial decisions for semester.
- Collect job applications.

HOMEWORK: Read sections on Interviews, Headlines, Cutlines and Leads in *The Signal Handbook* (handwritten notes allowed when taking quiz – no typed or copied notes allowed).

WEEK 2 September 2
HOLIDAY – NO CLASS

WEEK 3 September 9

- Announce staff positions.
- Hand out and review Assignment #1 (due in class next Monday).

BREAK

- Lecture on How to Gather Information, Interview, Fact Check.
- Quiz #1 – On Interviews, Headlines, Cutlines and Leads from The Signal Handbook (handwritten-only notes allowed during quiz).

HOMEWORK:

- Work on Assignment #1 (due next week).

ANNOUNCEMENT: Next week representatives from Student Services (the office responsible for new student orientation at UHCL) will meet with us. Please come to class on time and prepared.

WEEK 4 September 16

- Collect Assignment #1, due at beginning of class.
- Hand out and review Assignment #2. Assignment #2 involves Student Services, so students should take notes during Student Services Meeting scheduled for 9:30 a.m.
- Meet with Student Service Reps, they will offer insight into New/Transfer Student Orientation and their respective offices (9:30 – 11 a.m.). The class will present their story ideas to Student Service reps.

BREAK

- Review potential changes in assignments as a result of meeting with Student Services.

HOMEWORK:

- Work on Assignment #2.
- Read sections on Story/Photo/B-cast/Video/Graphic Guidelines in The Signal Handbook (handwritten-only notes allowed when taking quiz – no typed or copied notes allowed).

WEEK 5 September 23

- Check on Progress for Assignment #2.
- Quiz 2 on Story/Photo/B-cast/Video/Graphic Guidelines in The Signal Handbook (handwritten-only notes allowed).

BREAK

- Assignment #1 returned, revise in class. Collect revisions on thumb drive and place files on designers' computers. (Students who finish early can leave class early. Students who do not finish by end of class will be required to finish on own time and email to professor by 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.)

HOMEWORK

- Work on Assignment #2, due next week.

WEEK 6 September 30

- Collect Assignment #2, due at beginning of class.
- Hand out and review Assignment #3.

BREAK

- Guest speakers, staff from UHCL offices/departments not included in earlier meeting (10:45 – 11:45).

HOMEWORK

- Work on Assignment #3.

WEEK 7 October 7

- Check on progress for Assignment #3.
- Assignment #2 returned, revise in class. Collect revisions on thumb drive and place files on designers' computers.

BREAK

- Continue to work on revisions for Assignment #2. (Students who finish early can leave class early. Students who do not finish by end of class will be required to finish on own time and email to professor by 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.)

HOMEWORK

- Work on Assignment #3, due next week.

WEEK 8 October 14

- Collect Assignment #3, due at beginning of class.
- Hand out and review Assignment #4.

BREAK

- Copy edit designed pages for Assignment #1. I will copy edit alongside of class and we will review the copyedited pages together.

HOMEWORK

- Work on Assignment #4.

WEEK 9 October 21

- Check on progress for Assignment #4.
- Assignment #3 returned, revise in class. Collect revisions on thumb drive and place files on designers' computers.

BREAK

- Continue to work on revisions for Assignment #3. (Students who finish early can leave class early. Students who do not finish by end of class will be required to finish on own time and email to professor by 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.)

HOMEWORK

- Work on Assignment #4, due next week.

WEEK 10 October 28

- Collect Assignment #4, due at beginning of class.
- Copy edit designed pages for Assignment #2. I will copy edit alongside of class and we will review the copyedited pages together.

BREAK (We may finish class early; if it doesn't look like we're going to, a break will be provided).

HOMEWORK

No outside homework this week.

WEEK 11 November 4

- Assignment #4 returned, revise in class. Collect revisions on thumb drive and place files on designers' computers.

BREAK

Continue to work on revisions for Assignment #4. (Students who finish early can leave class early. Students who do not finish by end of class will be required to finish on own time and email to professor by 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.)

HOMEWORK

No outside homework this week.

WEEK 12 November 11

- Review Student Services feedback for Assignment #2 Designed Pages. Make any necessary adjustments to stories/pages.

BREAK

- Copyedit designed pages for Assignment #3. I will copyedit alongside of class and we will review the copyedited pages together.

HOMEWORK

No outside homework this week.

WEEK 13 November 18

- Copyedit designed pages for Assignment #4. I will copyedit alongside of class and we will review the copyedited pages together.
- Remind students – no class next week for Thanksgiving, but please remember to be on time the next time class meets because the Student Services staff will be coming back and we want to look professional.

BREAK (We may finish class early; if it doesn't look like we're going to, a break will be provided)

HOMEWORK

No outside homework this week.

WEEK 14 November 25 (Thanksgiving Week)

No class meeting this week. Enjoy your Thanksgiving.

Week 15 December 2

CLASS

- Hand out Student Evaluations (students please arrive to class on time).
- Student Service Staff will meet with students to provide feedback on final project. (9:30 – 10:30 a.m.)

BREAK

- Review what Student Service staff had to say.
- Put finishing touches on New Student Orientation Issue.

HOMEWORK

Homework will depend on feedback from Student Services staff.

Week 16 December 9

FINAL EXAM WEEK – There is no final exam in this class.

Whether the class meets today or not depends on how well our meeting went with Student Services during Week 15.