PELLISSIPPI STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
MASTER SYLLABUS  

NEWSWRITING  
JOU 2000  

Class Hours: 3.0  
Credit Hours: 3.0  
Laboratory Hours: 1.0  
Revised: Spring 2011  

Catalog Course Description:  
Writing for print and electronic media under deadline. Gathering information by using records, documents, observation and interviewing. Emphasis on library resources and current events. Basic style and editing based on AP Stylebook and Libel Manual.  

Entry Level Standards:  
Minimal typing skills are also required (student cannot have others do the typing). Unless otherwise specified for a given assignment, all work must be done on computer; some assignments may be handed in on disk, but computer printouts will be the usual means of completing an assignment.  

Prerequisites:  
CMN 1500 and ENGL 1020 and keyboarding skills  

Textbook(s) and Other Course Materials:  
J.J. Yopp & K.C. McAdams, Reaching Audiences: A Guide to Media Writing, 2nd ed. (Allyn & Bacon, 1999); and the latest edition of the AP Stylebook & Libel Manual are the required textbooks for the course. Students should also have a copy of Webster's New World Dictionary and two standard 3.5 inch floppy disks.  

I. Week/Unit/Topic Basis:  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Writers and journalists on the job. An overview of professional demands. Introduction to basic computer and word processing procedures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Journalism as the basis for mass media writing. Use of stylebook. Grammar review. Chapter 1.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Connecting with media audiences. Chapter 2.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Story structures and organization. Chapter 4.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>The elements of good writing. Clarity. Chapter 5.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Rewriting, editing, copyediting. Chapter 6.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Overcoming bias and stereotyping in writing. Chapter 7.</td>
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II. Course Goals*:

The course will:

A. Help students understand the news industry. III, IV
B. Give students a background in the history of the news industry. IV
C. Enhance students’ understanding of the psychology of the reader/viewer. III. 2,3,4
D. Train student in methods of gathering news. I. 1,4,6,7
E. Develop students’ skills for writing news stories and feature stories for print, broadcast and the Web. I. 1,2,3,4,5,6,7
F. Enhance students’ skills for writing copy for public relations use. I. 1,2,3,4,5,6,7
G. Expand students’ understanding of legal and ethical considerations of writing for the news media. III. 1,2,3,4,6

*Roman numerals after course objectives reference TBR general education goals.

III. Expected Student Learning Outcomes*:

The student will be able to:

1. Explain the nature and structure of the news industry. A
2. Describe the historical background of the news media. B
3. Identify special interest newspapers. A
4. Explain the role of the reader/viewer in shaping the news industry. C
5. Explain the importance of news values in shaping story selection, focus, and organization. C
6. Demonstrate news gathering skills. D
7. Interview story sources with confidence. D
8. Write stories that are clear, concise, and concrete. E
9. Write news copy according to accepted journalistic conventions as exemplified in the *AP Stylebook*. E
10. Demonstrate basic editing skills. A, E
11. Adapt newswriting skills and formats to produce news releases. F
12. Write a standard news release. F
13. Research, write, and present a news broadcast. A, E
15. Describe defenses against libel actions. A, G

* Capital letters after Expected Student Learning Outcomes reference the course goals listed above.

**IV. Evaluation:**

A. Testing Procedures: 40-50% of grade

There will be a comprehensive final exam constituting 20 to 30 percent of the student’s final grade.
Grammar, style, and current events quizzes and quizzes on the reading assignments constitute 20 percent of the student’s final grade.

B. Laboratory Expectations: 40-50% of grade

Writing assignments constitute 40 to 50 percent of the student’s final grade. The instructor will designate at least one writing assignment per month to be submitted to the school’s student newspaper for consideration for publication.

C. Field Work: 10% of grade

Participation in class, including discussion groups and teams, constitutes 10 percent of the student’s final grade.

**V. Policies:**

A. Attendance Policy:

Pellissippi State expects students to attend all scheduled instructional activities. As a minimum, students in all courses (excluding distance learning courses) must be present for at least 75 percent of their scheduled class and laboratory meetings in order to receive credit for the course. Individual departments/programs/disciplines, with the approval of the vice president of the Learning Division, may have requirements that are more stringent. In very specific circumstances, an appeal of the policy may be addressed to the head of the department in which the course was taken. If further action is warranted, the appeal may be addressed to the vice president of the Learning Division.

B. Academic Dishonesty:

Academic misconduct committed either directly or indirectly by an individual or group is subject to disciplinary action. Prohibited activities include but are not limited to the following practices:
• Cheating, including but not limited to unauthorized assistance from material, people, or devices when taking a test, quiz, or examination; writing papers or reports; solving problems;
or completing academic assignments.
• Plagiarism, including but not limited to paraphrasing, summarizing, or directly quoting published or unpublished work of another person, including online or computerized services, without proper documentation of the original source.
• Purchasing or otherwise obtaining prewritten essays, research papers, or materials prepared by another person or agency that sells term papers or other academic materials to be presented as one’s own work.
• Taking an exam for another student.
• Providing others with information and/or answers regarding exams, quizzes, homework or other classroom assignments unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.
• Any of the above occurring within the Web or distance learning environment.

C. Accommodations for disabilities:

Students who need accommodations because of a disability, have emergency medical information to share, or need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated should inform the instructor immediately, privately after class or in her or his office. Students must present a current accommodation plan from a staff member in Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) in order to receive accommodations in this course. Services for Students with Disabilities may be contacted by going to Goins 127, 132, 134, 135, 131 or by phone: 539-7153 or TTY 694-6429. More information is available at www.pstcc.edu/departments/swd/