Communication 165: Print and Online Newswriting and Reporting

Fall 2019 Room: Fell 108 T/R 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Instructor:John Plevka

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Office phone: 309-438-7688

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 9 to 11 a.m. Other hours by appointment.

Required Texts:

Carole Rich (8h Edition) *Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

*The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law* (2018 or 2019 edition), Basic Books.

Students will be also responsible for keeping abreast of current events via local and national newspapers and websites.

Course Description:

This course designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of newsgathering and news writing. Students will also be exposed to using social media, with special emphasis on Twitter, as a news-sharing and news-sourcing tool. Accuracy, AP Style and ethics will be emphasized through all facets of this course.

Expectations:

 Attendance, punctuality and participation are vital. Exceptional participation will be rewarded with extra credit at the discretion of the instructor. Three unexcused absences can result in a letter grade deduction. Current events and style quizzes may occur at beginning of some classes. If you are late, you will not be eligible for the potential points.

 Maintain a professional demeanor when working with classmates and news sources.

 Develop unique and compelling news and feature story ideas.

 Develop sound habits when applying grammar and Associated Press style to all writing assignments.

 Produce clear and error-free writing.

 Establish and maintain a WordPress (free) account for class-related blogging.

 Establish and maintain a class-related Twitter account.

Assignments:

All reporting assignments are to be submitted as an attached Word document via ReggieNet email. Documents should be double-spaced in 10- to 12-point type. Links to WordPress blog and Twitter accounts will need to be provided to the instructor.

Scoring system:

Project I: Campus event story(450 words) 7.5%

Project II: Local organization meeting or speech story (600 words, 1 photo) 7.5%

Project III: Live tweets from news or sports event (minimum 8 tweets, 1 photo) 5.0%

Project IV: Profile story (600-750 words) (Photo required) 7.5%

Project V: Final -- Multi-source, news feature story (750-900 words) 22.5%

Twitter account maintenance(as assigned) 5.0%

Blog account maintenance (as assigned) 5.0%

Quizzes(AP style, current events other relevant issues) 5.0%

Homework projects20%

Class assignments and participation 15%

100%

***Note:*** *Extra credit can be had for exceptional classroom participation and/or for course-related use of Twitter, or multi-media projects beyond assigned work.*

Grading System:

90%+ A 80%+ B 70%+ C 60%+ D 59%- F

Using Technology in Class:

During class, computers and/or personal devices should be used for assignments and class-related discussions only. **Period.**

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic dishonesty is an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences. Those consequences range from probation to expulsion. If the student is unclear about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quotes or collaborations, the student should consult the instructor. Plagiarism will result in a zero grade for the assignment, and the incident must be reported to the Office of the Provost.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability and/or medical/mental health condition should contact Student Access and Accommodation Services at 350 Fell Hall, (309) 438-5853, or visit the website at StudentAccess.IllinoisState.edu.