

COM 396: MASS MEDIA CAPSTONE
WEDNESDAYS, 5:35 – 8:25
FELL 280

SPRING 2024
SECTION I
JAN 17 – FEB 14

Dr. Lauren Bratslavsky
Email me: lbrats@ilstu.edu

Office hours: Tues + Thurs, 12:30-1:30 in Fell 451 + by appointment

**** When emailing, please include **COM396 and the purpose of your email in the subject line** ****

Capstone goal: A culminating capstone experience for Mass Media majors, producing a professional portfolio and defending the knowledge and skills acquired.

Intended Student Outcomes

- ⇒ demonstrate ability to write and present professionally
- ⇒ Synthesize knowledge and skills across the curriculum of the Mass Media major via a presentation
- ⇒ Create professional materials, including targeted and adjustable resumes and cover letters as well as digital portfolio
- ⇒ Practice skills for job interviews
- ⇒ Defend one's creative and content expression in an interview setting

Readings / Course Material

See Canvas Modules for links to articles and resources

Summary of Course Work Products

- 20 Draft Resume and Cover Letter
- 10 Professional Portfolio: *Final* Resume, Cover Letter, Personal Website/Online Presence
- 10 Mass Media Capstone Portfolio
- 15 Mock Interview / Executive Presentation* (*cannot earn higher than a 'D' for course if skipped*)
- 5 Mass Media Comprehensive Exam (*full points for completion, not graded*)
- 20 Symposium Presentations (Group Project)
- 20 Reflection Paper

Grade Scale
A: 90-100
B: 80-89
C: 70-79
D: 60-69
F: < 60

All assignments will be explained during the first class session.

About Turning in Your Work:

- **Always follow the file name convention:** Lastname_[descriptor].
- Most documents are to be submitted as PDFs, see specific assignment directions.

About Evaluation:

- Group Presentation and Reflection Papers are evaluated based on your research, knowledge, and communication skills.
- For all other work, you will automatically earn full points so long as work is on time and follows file name protocols.

Schedule

Week	Month	Plan of Work	Items Due
1	Jan 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Discuss w/ guest presenter: Resumes + Cover Letters • Explain Symposium 	
2	Jan 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Discuss On-Line Portfolios 	Due: Draft of your resumes and cover letters (cover letter tailored to a position you are / would like to apply to) – submit to Canvas

3	Jan 31	Symposium About the State of Media and Culture/Society/Politics/Economy	Select 1 group member to submit to Canvas by 5:15 pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - link / copy of their presentation - 1 page presentation outline
4	Feb 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mock Job Interviews • Capstone Exam (bring a laptop or can use computer in Fell 280) 	By MONDAY Feb 5, NOON, please submit the updated, most current version of your resume + cover letter to Canvas (this is so that I can share your best version of your professional material with the guests leading the mock interviews)
5	Feb 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief Course 	Due: Upload all requested writing samples to the Canvas: Mass Media Capstone Portfolio Due: Reflection Essay (48 hour grace period to complete by Fri, Feb 16)

Policies

Emails: Please include COM 396 + the PURPOSE of your email in the subject line of every email. This helps me manage your emails in a timely manner.

Please be respectful and professional in your communication and I will do the same. You may begin emails with "Hi Dr.B" or "Hi Professor"

Need some advice? See: "How to Email Your Professor (without being annoying AF)" by @portwoodstacer <http://bit.ly/2bPUCxS>. Or ... for the world beyond the university, [see this one](#).

Assignment Due Dates: Assignments are happily accepted early. I will only offer half credit for the resume and cover letter draft assignment if submitted within 48 hours of deadline.

Attendance: As a condensed class, each class is the equivalent of a third of the course (three weeks of classes in the regular semester). Each absence is an automatic letter grade reduction.

Academic Integrity: Don't plagiarize. Don't pass off someone else's work as your own. Not only is it against the Academic Integrity policies of ISU's Code of Student Conduct, any form of plagiarism and/or other forms of dishonesty are grossly unethical and unprofessional behavior.

Students who have questions regarding issues of academic dishonesty should refer to the University regulation that outlines unacceptable behaviors in academic matters. In certain circumstances (such as cheating or plagiarism) faculty may be required to refer a student(s) to Community Rights & Responsibilities for a violation of Illinois State University's Code of Student Conduct. (Quoted from "Community Rights and Responsibilities at Illinois State University".)

On that note: A gracious thank you to Dr. Brent Simonds, Dr. John McHale, and Dr. Maria Moore for their iterations and contributions to the content of this capstone course.

Special Needs or Accommodation: If you need to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability, contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TDD) to register and establish a record of your situation. Please speak with me privately regarding any course adaptation or accommodations you may require.

Absences due to Student Bereavement: Students who experience the death of an immediate family member or relative as defined in the University Student Bereavement Policy will be excused from class for funeral leave, subsequent bereavement, and/or travel considerations. Students are responsible for providing appropriate documentation to the Dean of Students office and for contacting the instructor as soon as possible to make arrangements for completing missed work. More info: Student Bereavement Policy at <http://www.policy.illinoisstate.edu/2-1-27.shtml>.

Absences / grace periods needed for COVID-related issues: we have some flexibility... please email me if this is necessary.

Mental Health Resources: School and life in general can include anxiety, depression, etc. Know that you are not alone and resources are available... free and confidential resources through the Student Counseling Services (SCS). More info: <http://www.counseling.ilstu.edu> (309) 438-3655. During the first appointment, a professional counselor will work with you to help you clarify your concerns and explore if ongoing counseling or other services are needed. All counseling services are confidential and provided without charge. Also – check out <https://studentaffairs.illinoisstate.edu/keepthriving/> for more mental health resources.

If you are having trouble meeting the deadlines and expectations of the course, please come talk to me ... before deadlines.

Need an inspiring quote to end your syllabus read? Go here: <https://inspirobot.me/>.