

COM161 – Convergent Media Writing

Fall 2019, School of Communication, Illinois State University

Lab Instructor: Becky Fletcher

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Office: Fell 053

Office Hours: M,W: 12 – 1:30 p.m.

T,R: 2-4 p.m.

Teaching Times: Section 006 – Friday, 1 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.

Section 007 – Friday, 2 p.m. – 2:50 p.m.

Learning Objectives:

Convergent Media Writing will prepare students:

- To develop a critical understanding of quality print, radio, television and feature film writing.
- To develop writing skills enough to write for print, radio, television or film.
- To acclimate students to the demands of writing for a living. Toward the end, students will be faced with seemingly incessant and fast approaching deadlines and will be upheld to professional rigor.

Assignments and Evaluation Opportunities:

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Assignment 1: (Straight Print) News Story or Press Release	100 points
Assignment 2: (Feature Print) News Story or Press Release	100 points
Assignment 3: Radio News Story	100 points
Assignment 4: Television News Story (VO/SOT)	100 points
Assignment 5: PSA or Advertisement	100 points
Out-of-class Exercises	100 points
Exams (Midterm/Final)	100 points
Final Project	200 points
Participation/Attendance	100 points
Total:	1000 points

Scale:

A: 900-1000 points

B: 800-899 points

C: 700-799 points

D: 600-699 points

F: <600 points

Academic Policies

Grading: Excluding exams and quizzes, I assign and grade everything for the course. Dr. McHale, other lab instructors and undergraduate TAs are all great resources to use, but always come to me for questions about grading. You'll likely hear about assignments and policies in other lab sections, but because those sections have their own rules, focus only on the guidelines from me and the course textbook.

Attendance / Participation: Attendance for lab is mandatory. Think of Fridays as your third day of COM 161 for the week, just at a different time and with a different instructor. You'll earn 5 points for coming to lab each week, but you can make up those points if need be. Please make sure to let me know in advance and we can work something out together. Attendance counts for 80 points total, and the remaining 20 participation points are based on lecture attendance and the grade defense (I'll discuss the grade defense at the end of the semester).

Major Writing Assignments: You'll submit all these assignments at the beginning of lab the day it's due, and I will be the one grading them. These assignments must be typed with the following guidelines:

- 1-inch margins; 12-point font in Times New Roman **only**. Everything is double-spaced, except for the information in the upper left corner (Name, Date, Assignment #, Section #). That information is single-spaced. Also be sure to **staple** your assignment when you turn it in.
- Carefully review the "Grading Criteria and Evaluation Guidelines" on page 241 of the course textbook. It applies to all major writing assignments and is different from those in other writing courses. Thoroughly understanding each of those guidelines is essential to passing the course.

Exercises: I will usually assign exercises the week before a major writing assignment is due. You'll submit these on the lab's Reggienet page before the specified deadline.

Late Policy: All major writing assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. Unless I have granted an extension, I will deduct 10 points each day an assignment is late (this includes Saturday and Sunday). Predictable problems, such as printer glitches or running out of paper, are not excuses for turning in work late. Also, because exercises and makeup assignments are meant to prepare you for the major writing assignments, those cannot be turned in late unless we have made other arrangements.

Miscellaneous Lab Policies

- I usually have extended office hours the weeks major writing assignments are due. I'll demonstrate in lab how to sign up for them. Please arrive at my office hours with specific questions so we can make the most of the time we have.
- Questions via email are always encouraged. I usually respond within an hour or two, but I will always get back to you within a 24-hour period.

Other Helpful Resources

Campus Safety and Security: If you haven't already, take a minute to sign up for ISU Emergency Alerts at IllinoisState.edu/EmergencyAlert.

Mental Health: Life at college can get complicated. If you're feeling stressed, overwhelmed, lost, anxious, depressed or are struggling with personal issues, do not hesitate to call or visit [Student Counseling Services](#) (SCS). These services are free and completely confidential. SCS is located at 320 Student Services Building, 309-438-3655.

Absence Due to Illness or Bereavement: If you have to miss class due to an [extended illness](#) (3 or more consecutive class days) or a [bereavement](#), the [Dean of Students Office](#) can help. It's located in Room 387 in the Student Services Building.

Tentative Lab Schedule	
Week 1 Friday, Aug. 23	Review Syllabus Course goals Dramaturgical Theory and AP Style Student introductions (time pending) Assigned: AP Exercise 1
Week 2 Friday, Aug 30	Due: AP Exercise 1 View Situation Comedy Assigned: AP Exercise 2 Assigned: Bring in an IP news story for next class
Week 3 Friday, Sept. 6	Due: AP Exercise 2 Review AP Exercise 2 Inverted Pyramid Activity Discuss Assignment 1 Assigned: Assignment 1 Outline
Week 4 Friday, Sept. 13	Review Assignment 1 – May bring draft to share in class Straight print exercise Preview Feature Print Ex. Pg. 278 Assigned: Bring example of Feature story to next lab
Week 5 Friday, Sept. 20	Due: Assignment 1 Due: Feature Story Link Copyediting Assignment, p. 258 Preview Assignment 2 Assigned: Feature Outline Exercise, p. 278 Reminder: Read Chpt. 7 of textbook
Week 6 Friday, Sept. 27	Due: Feature Outline Exercise Discuss ethics, legal considerations Creative Sentence Structure Activity

	Optional Assignment: Print Opinion Extra Credit p.280 Assignment 2 Due Next Week
Week 7 Friday, Oct. 4	Due: Assignment 2 Preview Assignment 3 Broadcast vs. Print Interviewing Exercise, p.281 Assigned: critically consume NPR radio news Assigned: Bring Assignment 1 to next lab
Week 8 Friday, Oct. 11	Discuss Assignment 3 Radio News Exercise Broadcast News discussion Assigned: Assignment 3
Week 9 Friday, Oct. 18	Due: Assignment 3 Writing for Visual Media – TV News Discuss Assignment 4 Inception tutorial Assigned: TV News exercise
Week 10 Friday, Oct. 25	Due: TV News exercise Discuss TV news story assignment Inception tutorial / Inception work
Week 11 Friday, Nov. 1	Television News Story: editing Reminder: assignment 4 due next week
Week 12 Friday, Nov. 8	Due: Assignment 4 Television storyboarding Discuss assignment 5 <u>Discuss Final Project</u> Assigned: Assignment 5
Week 13 Friday, Nov. 15	Critically consume documentary Assigned: Assignment 5 Due Next Week
Week 14 Friday, Nov. 22	Assignment 5 due View entertainment drama/read script
Week 15 Friday, Nov. 29	Thanksgiving Break – No Class
Week 16	Due: Final Project

Friday, Dec. 6

Final Exam Review

Finish entertainment drama script read