

## JOURNALISM 620

Fall 2019

Tu 2:30-5pm

### Instructor Information

**Name:** Chad Curtis (he/him/his)

**Office Location:** 2065 Dole and in the Newsroom

**Office Phone:** 702-378-3630 (personal cell, don't abuse this)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 10-11am or by appointment

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### Course Information

#### Description

Welcome to J620! We're heading into the homestretch. I'm glad to have you in our class and looking forward to helping you get to where you are ready to enter the workforce as your graduate!

This is a new semester; a fresh start of sorts. I'm taking advantage of new ways of doing things and I hope you will be too.

Leading up to this class, you've had chances to write for a newscast, enterprise your own VOs and VOSOTVOs, and even do some basic packages. Our prime directive this semester is A) for those who will do on-air reporting; we're going to taking what you've learned so far and moving it up to the professional level, and B) for those who are learning producing; to craft professional newscasts and learn newsroom management skills.

My goal for you by the end of the semester is to have a resume reel ready to go so that upon graduation you can easily enter this industry and be instantly employable in whichever field you choose.

The focus of your classwork this semester will be your newsroom work. Our Tuesday classtime will be mostly group feedback on the work you've done the week before mixed with instruction. The point of this time is not just to hear what people have to say, it's to learn from your and others' mistakes so you don't make that same mistake in the future. Leave your mistakes in your classroom; don't take them into the workplace with you. More on this below.

Audio-visual news reporters and producers are in high demand. The platforms may differ, but the skill set we will work on this semester should be easily transferable to whatever field of work you head towards at graduation

**THIS CLASS IS GOING TO TAKE UP TIME.** Be aware of that. Be prepared for that. Buffer yourself and your other classes so you can do work here that will get you to that first job.

<b>Grades</b>	<b>Percent</b>
A	93%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	83%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	73%
C-	70%
D+	67%
D	63%
D-	60%
F	0%

### **Grading Policy**

I tend to be generous with points, as I include the amount of effort expended in the projects you'll do for this class.

An important thing to understand and remember for this class: **I DO NOT ACCEPT LATE WORK. Period.** You may always turn things in early if your plans mean you'll be out of town on a deadline day, but journalism is a deadline-driven business and missed deadlines are not tolerated. If you put an assignment off until the last minute and then something comes up that interferes with you making your deadline, it was your poor choice that put you in that position, not anything I did.

If you are not going to finish a particular assignment on time, at least turn in the amount you have completed up to that deadline point. That way I can consider giving partial credit.

### **Participation Policy**

A class such as this will be based on discussion. Also, as I stand at the front of the room, I can easily see who falls asleep, is playing around on-line rather than paying attention, etc. Your participation is expected and will be graded.

Since some of what we will I will likely be new to you, I expect you to have a lot of questions. The days of “holding-back-because-you-don't-want-to-be-the-one-to-ask-questions-because-REASONS” are over. If you don't understand a concept as I'm teaching it and you don't ask questions, your low score is your own fault.

### **Attendance Policy - Class**

You will earn ten points for each class you attend. If you leave early or arrive quite late don't expect to get the points. Your total attendance score is a significant part your total grade, so don't take this lightly.

PLEASE do not send me emails, texts, phone calls, etc., to let me know you won't be attending class. The reason why you miss is immaterial to me; missing class or lab means you don't get those points.

If you have a university-excused absence I need to consider, you must present me with the proper paperwork before your absence. Afterward will not do you any good. Also, if something comes up that means you will miss many classes, (a bad car accident, emergency surgery, etc.), there are university policies in place for those sorts of things and we'll work together to figure out what your path will be.

P.S. It is possible to be in class physically and yet still be absent mentally. I can appreciate that you use your electronic devices to take notes, but many succumb to the temptation and spent a portion of the class on social media sites crushing virtual candy, building virtual farms, watching cat videos, etc. I'm not going to make you turn things off, but don't expect me to be very understanding if you miss an important part of the discussion which leads to mistakes on your projects.

### **Attendance - LAB**

Whether your role is as a writing coach, a reporter, or a producer, your attendance on lab days are critical. Unexcused absences on Lab days will drop your overall semester grade by a full letter grade (A- becomes B-, etc.)

That said, you may trade shifts around with other J620 students as long as you clear it with me. Also if you're sick, please stay home. Let me know as soon as you are able and I'll excuse you from lab for the day. I would not recommend faking a sick day. If you call in ill and I later find out you weren't sick you may fail the class entirely.

Producers do not have the authority to excuse your absence or give you permission to be late. Treat the newsroom like a job where I am your supervisor.

## **Assignments and Tests**

Pay close attention to the course calendar. There's going to be a lot of overlap and it is your responsibility to know when you have an assignment (whether package or newsroom help) and be there for it. Part of the assignment in every case is knowing what is expected of you and when.

You will have traditional packages, day-turn packages, and in-depth packages as part of your experience here. You'll also be expected to create the web and radio versions of the stories you do. Regardless, you'll also be expected to enterprize your own story ideas. We'll work on that skill in class too.

You will do four traditional packages, four day-turn packages, and four in-depth packages by the end of the semester. Some will have specific themes (feature vs. hard news) to them. They should be done with your resume reel in mind.

## **Do Spelling, Grammar, Etc., count?**

Put simply: Yes, YES, and Darn Skippy. Mass Communication practitioners have to become masters of the written and spoken word. When presenting something in written form, misspellings and bad grammar indicate a lack of skill, a lack of concern about quality, and certainly that the work is not well-edited or simply incomplete. Professionals always proofread their written work several times before putting it on display. Their reputation (and quite possibly their continued employment) are on the line.

It would be doing you a disservice to require any less at this point in your college career. If these things are problems for you, get the help you need to ensure your work is of the highest quality. Find a friend to help if necessary, but since your name is attached to what you submit, any errors in spelling, grammar, etc., go against your scores. Each instance will cost you points. especially the further we get into the term.

## **What about Extra-credit?**

There may be some extra-credit opportunities along the way. They usually consist of attending a lecture or viewing documentary somehow connected to the field of communications. I have also occasionally offered extra-credit as a reward for those willing to submit certain assignments/papers early.

**Disabilities:** The University of Kansas is committed to helping all students learn. If you have a special need that may affect your learning, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Please be aware that the KU Office of Disability Resources coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted this office, please do so as soon as possible. Information about services can be found at <http://www.disability.ku.edu/~disability/>. Or you can visit the office on the first floor of Strong Hall. The phone numbers are: 785-864-2620. Please contact me privately regarding your needs in this course.

**The KU Office of Student Financial Aid** is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid. Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.

**Course materials and lectures are property** of the instructor or School of Journalism. You must obtain permission to record lectures electronically or use course materials outside this course.

**In the event of inclement weather**, KU officials make the decision to cancel classes. Call 785-864-SNOW (7669) to find out if classes have been canceled.

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communication does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence.

**Plagiarism is stealing.** You take someone else's ideas, thoughts or words and you present them as your own original work. This includes taking ideas from written sources, such as books, as well as materials on the Internet. Cutting and pasting materials from the Internet and presenting that work as if it was your own is plagiarism. There may be times when you want to incorporate another person's ideas, opinions and words into the papers you write, to make a point or to provide background. If you do, it is essential that you attribute that information—that you explain where the information came from and give credit where credit is due. "Recycling" past assignments from other students and presenting them as your own falls into the category of plagiarism.

**Fabrication and falsification mean that you made it up.** This can include making up an entire story/source or embellishing a fact, quote or statistic to make it sound better. Don't do it. In this course, the penalty for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification is a failing grade for the semester. Additional penalties can include expulsion from the School of Journalism. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please contact me.

**You signed a contract of understanding** during the j-school orientation that says you know what plagiarism is and its consequences in this school. Don't be the student who has to call home and tell your parents you've been expelled.

### **Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance**

**No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.**

**Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent.**

**The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting.**

### **Financial Aid Policy**

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Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.

### Misconduct

You are bound by the university rules on academic misconduct. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, please ask BEFORE your endeavor.

### Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for the course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of the course.

The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.

**Plagiarism:** Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement

of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

**Fabrication and Falsification:** Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

### Students with Special Needs

The Office of Disability Resources (DR), 22 Strong Hall, 785-864-2620 (V/TTY), coordinates accommodations and services for KU students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Please also contact me privately in regard to this course.

### Copying or Recording

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor, are the instructor's property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor usually will permit students to record lectures, on the condition that these recordings are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.