

JOURNALISM 552 – Broadcast Reporting

Spring 2019

Instructor Information

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Course Information

Description

Welcome to J552. In this class you'll build upon what you learned in J415 as you advance toward being qualified to work as a journalist upon graduation. Specifically, we'll learn about the reporting and writing side of the business.

We'll discuss this concept more in class, but "broadcast" reporting is a bit of an antiquated term. The type of writing and reporting we will learn this semester isn't limited only to media that transmit over-the-air. My goal is that by the end of this term no matter the platform you choose to work in your skill-set will be instantly transferrable to all multimedia. As I consider it to be the most comprehensive of the multimedia as far as skill-set goes, we will do the majority of our work in the television platform. We'll improve upon the newswriting skills you've already learned and introduce "broadcast-style."

This is a skills-heavy class. Your projects and assignments will often take time out-of-class to complete and prepare, and a fair amount of it. I keep that time requirement proportional to what one should expect in a 500-level class. Protect yourself and don't put things off until the last-minute.

We'll also learn basic audio and video gathering techniques that give the multimedia aspect of your assignments a professional look and feel. Most importantly, we'll study how to combine these two aspects, the editorial and the technical, to optimize your work and advance your abilities as a journalist. The reporting, writing, and editing you'll do both in-class and as part of your KUJH lab are there to strengthen your skill set. Take lab very seriously.

We'll also have assignments that introduce and expand the knowledge base you need as a working journalist. We'll look at what our Constitutional role is as journalists, explore basic legal and ethical principles you need to know as you work (and you need to know them well enough that you can refer to them in your mind on the fly). We'll also do a lot of short writing assignments to help you as you learn this new style of writing.

	Percent
Grades	
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

This class grades on a modified curve. Here's what that means. A grade of C means you've performed average work. Higher grades than C mean I see above-average work, lower grades mean below-average work.

If you do average work, or just barely enough to fulfill the assignment, expect an average score. If you want a B or an A, whether for class assignments or lab assignments, I need to see effort that takes your work to the above-average level (B) or exceptional level (A). If you submit work that is below-average expect a D. Failing work will get an F. This also includes your crew assignments during the newscast, i.e., running the TelePrompTer or running a studio camera, etc.

Mistakes will cost you points, repeated mistakes will cost you a lot of points. Don't forget you can't move on to the next J-school classes without a C in J552. Lucky for you, I tend to be generous with points, as I consider the amount of effort expended on the projects you'll do for this class as part of your grade.

We will do all critique of your projects in class. We do this so that we can learn from each others' triumphs and each others' mistakes. You will make mistakes and so will everyone else in class. Do not be ashamed of honest mistakes you make; you are here to learn. More on this in class the first day.

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 have time for discussion. Your participation is expected. Everyone starts with 75/100 participation points for this class. If you participate regularly and intelligently I will add points. If you don't, expect to see that number drop.

Since most of what we will teach 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. This goes for jargon as well. If I use a term you don't understand, stop and ask for clarification. You see, I've been doing this for a long time and don't always realize when I'm using industry terms you aren't familiar with yet. I would much rather you stop me and ask me to explain rather than trying to fake your way along. Don't be embarrassed. Ask. Then remember.

Also, recognize 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. Participation scores fluctuate accordingly.

Attendance Policy

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 documentation 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.

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 is simply incomplete. Professionals always proofread their written work several times before putting it on display. Their reputation (and quite possibly their continued employment) is 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 a documentary or movie somehow connected to the field of journalism. I have also occasionally offered extra-credit as a reward for those willing to submit certain assignments/papers early.

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

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.

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.