

WRITING FOR PUBLIC COMMUNICATION • COM 2135/12 • FALL 2011

Kennesaw State University | College of Humanities and Social Sciences | Communication

Instructor: Sarah Johnson, M.A.
Office Hours: By appointment
E-mail: sjohn172@kennesaw.edu or through WebCT
Course: Fridays from 11 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.
Location: Social Sciences Building, Rm. #3024

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed to help students become effective written communicators, with emphasis on writing styles and formats commonly used in journalism, public relations and organizational communication. Through writing assignments in each of these areas, students will gain practice in professional writing. In addition, emphasis on correct grammar, punctuation and word usage will strengthen students' writing proficiency, as demanded by professional standards. Students learn to write through frequent practice, both through in-class and outside assignments.

PREREQUISITIES: ENGL 1101 with a minimum grade of C and ENGL 1102 with a minimum grade of C.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: With the successful completion of this course, students should:

- be familiar with styles and formats for journalistic, public relations, and organizational writing;
- be able to analyze the message, the medium, and the audience for various types of writing;
- demonstrate competency in writing and editing skills;
- feel comfortable composing and editing using Microsoft Word;
- have created a variety of writing samples suitable for a portfolio.

REQUIRED TEXT & MATERIALS

- 1) *Writing for the Mass Media*, 8th ed, James Stovall
- 2) *Rules for Writers (e-book)*, 6th ed, Diana Hacker
- 3) *The 2011 Associated Press Stylebook*. You will not be allowed to use an online version of the AP Stylebook for in-class assignments and quizzes.
- 4) Money on KSU card for printing (about \$2). You will not be able to email assignments to me. You must have money on your card during class so that you can print your writing assignments.
- 5) Rules for Writers Web site: <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/rules6e/Player/pages/Main.aspx>

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance and Participation: This course covers a lot of material, and many class periods involve in-class writing exercises and/or small group projects; therefore, attendance is critical to your success in this class. I do take attendance, mostly because it helps me learn students' names, and will note absences. Missing 50 percent or more of the class meetings will result in a failing grade, even if you have submitted all of the assigned work. If you miss the first day, you will receive an email from me and be asked to drop the class unless I hear from you. If you must miss a class, you are responsible for making up any work that can be made up and finding out about changes to assignments, syllabus, etc. Group projects cannot be made up without official documentation for the absence (a doctor's note, notice of court appearance, etc.) provided no later than the next class period. ****If you must be absent the day an assignment is due, you are still responsible for getting the work in on time. Assignments turned in after the first 15 minutes of class on the due date will be considered one-day late and points will be deducted. The penalty for late assignments is a letter grade per day. After three business days, the assignment will be given a zero.**

Printing for in-class writing assignments: Students in any 2135 lab class will have to use the Canon pay-to-print station by the back door. This requires a KSU cash card. **Each student is responsible for putting money on his or her KSU card in order to print in class.** Failure to do so is not an excuse for not turning in an in-class assignment.

Assignment Expectations: Writing assignments will be graded on how well they meet the requirements of the assignment, appropriateness of content, clarity, accuracy, thoroughness, grammar, and adherence to AP style.

Proofread your work carefully. All work must be typed and double-spaced on 8 ½" x 11" white paper, printed one side only. Type should be 12-point Times New Roman. Put your name in the upper left corner. **Assignments should be printed before class and be ready to turn in.**

- 1) **Classroom Demeanor:** You are expected to arrive to class on time and to behave in a courteous and professional manner. Excessive tardiness will lower your grade. If you do arrive late to class, please join us with the least amount of disruption possible. **Please turn phones on silent/vibrate before entering the classroom.**
- 2) **Use of computers/laptops in class:** Computers are an integral part of this class; however, inappropriate use of technology—such as surfing the Web, checking e-mail or working on material for other classes—may result in grade penalties. When computer instruction is not part of our classwork, you should not be using your computer. Computer use should support your work for this class; one violation of computer usage will result in a warning. Thereafter, each offense will result in a three-point deduction from your final grade.
- 3) **Assignments:** Most work in the communication field is based on deadlines so it is Imperative that you adopt a habit of completing work on time as assigned. **Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period; assignments turned in later than 15 minutes after class begins will be considered late.** If you must be absent the day an assignment is due, you are still responsible for getting the work in on time. Assignments turned in after the due date will be dropped one grade for every day (not every class period) the assignment is late. Late assignments should be turned in to the Communication Dept. office on the fifth floor of the Social Sciences Building, where they will be time stamped. **Assignments MAY NOT be submitted via e-mail without prior approval from me.**

4) **Assignments:**

Chapter Discussion Posts (12 x 3 pts)	= 36
Grammar Exercises (5 x 3 pts)	= 15
Quizzes	= 75
AP Style Quizzes (1@15 and 1@10 pts)	
Review Quizzes (4 x 10 pts)	
Editing Marks Quiz (10 pts)	
Writing Assignments	= 184
News Values Analysis (15 pts)	
News Leads (20 pts)	
Leads & f/u Graphs (24 pts)	
Paraphrasing (18 pts)	
Headlines/Cutlines Exercises (12 pts)	
News Story (30 pts)	
Press Release (30 pts)	
Company Letter (10 pts)	
Web Headlines/Summaries (15 pts)	
Broadcast Script (10 pts)	

Final Exam/Project = 60

TOTAL: 370

- 5) **Grading:** Your performance on each exercise/assignment will be worth a number of points. At the end of the semester, your final grade will be based on a standard grading scale:

A= 90-100% B=80-89% C=70-79% D=60-69% F= 59% or below

For example, there are a possible 370 points for the semester. You will need to earn 333 points to get an A.

- 6) Assignments will be graded on the following criteria:

Leads:

Captures the news

Uses correct format (begins with independent clause, active voice, past tense if event already occurred, no names unless person is well-known)

Information is accurate

Uses proper grammar

Follows AP style

Leads and F/U Graphs

Lead is correct based on above criteria

Follow-up graph follows inverted pyramid style

Uses correct grammar

Follows AP Style

News Stories

Lead and follow-up graph follow guidelines above (20%)

Remainder of story follows inverted pyramid style (20%)

Information is accurate (20%)

Follows AP style (10%)

Details are logically organized (15%)

Transitions provide natural flow (5%)

Information does not include any opinion words or statements (5%)

Attribution and quotes are correct format (5%)

Press Releases

Follows guidelines for news story (80%)

Demonstrates writer's role as an advocate of the organization (20%)

- 7) **Academic Integrity:** Kennesaw State University and the Department of Communication are committed to the highest standards of academic and professional ethics. We expect our students to adhere to those standards. Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest independent of whether or not the effort is successful. Please see the Student Handbook for details on academic honesty.
- 8) **Students with Disabilities:** Kennesaw State University does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Public Law 101-336, gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities. This statute guarantees equal opportunity for this protected group in the areas of public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications. If you have a visible or invisible disability and will require academic accommodations in this course, I would be happy to discuss your needs. Accommodations are coordinated through Disabled Student Support Services. If you have a documentable disability is your responsibility

to contact Carol Pope at cpope@kennesaw.edu or call 770-423-6443. Please note that instructors cannot accommodate students with disabilities if we are not appropriately notified, in writing, early in the semester.

- 9) FERPA:** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records once the student has reached 18 years of age (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). Under that law we cannot release your student ID number, grades, performance evaluations, or any other personal or academic information to anyone but you, unless you provide written permission to do so. Also, I cannot discuss grades with you or anyone else over unsecured lines such as email or phone.
- 10) Children on Campus:** According to the KSU Staff Handbook (504.3c Children in the Workplace), the University cannot accommodate children of employees and students on campus during normal operating hours. Children are welcome to make brief visits and to attend scheduled events.

11) Helpful Resources

- Computer Lab in Burruss Building, Room 475. Computers for student use and knowledgeable student assistants to help with computer issues.
- Computer Lab in Social Sciences Building, Rooms 3025 and 3027.
- Writing Center in Humanities Building, Room 237. Staff will assist students with grammar and developing, composing, or organizing, and documenting written assignments. They will NOT proof your paper for typos or AP style

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TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE (as of November 1, 2011)

Week	Class Date	Content	(Stovall) Chapter
1	August 19	<p><u>DISCUSSION</u>: Introduction and Course Overview; Establish an account for the Rules for Writers website. What is Good Writing?</p> <p>Due Next Class: Read Hacker e-book on active verbs (pages 80-83). Read Chapter 2 & 3 in Stovall text. Complete discussion post for Ch's 2 & 3 by 11:59 PM on 8/25.</p>	1
2	August 26	<p><u>DISCUSSION</u>: A Writer's Basic Tools; Overview of Grammar Component; AP Style and Editing Symbols; Complete and submit Graded Grammar Exercise #1 (R4WW: Clarity>E-ex. 8-1); Practice AP Exercise</p> <p>Due Next Class: Bring in AJC from this Saturday. Read Chapter 4 in the Stovall text. Complete practice AP Exercise. Study for AP Editing Symbols Quiz. Submit discussion post for Ch. 4 by 11:59 PM on 9/1.</p>	2, 3
3	September 2	<p>Quiz over AP Editing Symbols</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION</u>: Overview of Journalism and Citizen Media Track; What is News?; Review AJC; Practice News Values Practice AP Exercises Grammar Workshop: Apostrophes (Hacker pages 299-302); Practice Exercise (Grammar>E-ex. 36-1)</p> <p>Due Next Class: Graded News Value Analysis. Read Chapter 5 of Stovall text. Prepare for Review Quiz #1 (Ch's 1-4).</p>	4
4	September 9	<p>Quiz over Ch. 1-4 in Stovall (Review Quiz #1) DUE TODAY: Graded News Value Analysis</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION</u>: Reporting with Text; Writing Leads; Practice Leads; AP Exercise; Headlines Assignment</p> <p>Due Next Class: Prepare for AP Quiz 1. Read Hacker e-book on Fragments and Run-on sentences (pages 148-164). Complete and submit Graded Grammar Exercise #2 (R4WW: Grammar>E-ex. 19-1 and E-ex. 20-1). Submit discussion post for Ch's 5 & 6 by 11:59 PM on 9/15.</p>	5

5	September 16	<p>DUE TODAY: AP Quiz #1</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION</u>: Reporting with Images; Cutlines Assignment; Writing Leads Practice</p> <p>In-class: Read Hacker e-book on Quotation Marks (pages270-308) and Semicolons & colons (pages 270-308). Complete and submit Grammar Exercise (R4WW: Grammar>E-ex. 37-1 and E-ex. 32-1).</p> <p>Due Next Class: Graded News Lead; Cutlines Assignment (on Vista under Assignments > Week 5 > Headlines and Cutlines.</p>	6
6	September 23	<p>DUE TODAY: Graded News Lead; Cutlines Assignment</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION</u> : Leads and Follow-Up Paragraph; Leads and Follow Up Paragraph Practice; AP Practice; Grammar 101 PowerPoint; Interviewing/Quotes; Attribution and Paraphrasing Exercise</p>	
7	September 30	<p>DUE TODAY: Paraphrasing Assignment</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION</u>: Leads and Follow Up-Paragraph Practice; AP Practice</p> <p>Due at the end of class: Graded News Lead & Follow-up Paragraph.</p>	7
8	October 7	<p><u>DISCUSSION</u>: News Stories; AP Practice</p> <p>Due Next Class: Study for Review Quiz #2 (Ch's 5 – 7). Read Hacker e-book on Misplaced Modifiers (pages 96-104). Complete and submit Graded Grammar Exercise #3. (R4WW: Grammar>E-ex. 12-1).</p>	Review 4

9	October 14	<p>Quiz over Ch. 5-7 in Stovall (Review Quiz #2)</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION 1:</u> Wrap up News Story Info. In-class assignment: Graded News Story; AP Practice; Read Hacker e-book on Who vs. Whom(pages 193-197) and Pronoun Reference (175-193); Complete and submit Graded Grammar Exercise #4 and #5 (R4WW: Grammar>E-ex. 25-1 and E-ex. 22-1).</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION 2:</u> Advertising; Submit discussion post for Ch. 10 during class.</p> <p>Due Next Class: Study for AP Quiz #2. Submit discussion post for Ch. 11 by 11:59 PM on 10/20.</p>	11
10	October 21	<p>DUE TODAY: AP Quiz #2</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION:</u> Overview of PR Track; Writing for Public Relations; Press Release; Press Release Practice</p> <p>Due Next Class: Study for Review Quiz #3 (Ch. 11 and 12 in Stovall).</p>	12
11	October 28	<p>Quiz over Ch. 11 & 12 in Stovall (Review Quiz #3)</p> <p>In-class assignment: Graded Press Release</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION:</u> Overview of Organizational Communication Track; Company Letter Practice</p> <p>Due Next Class: Graded Company Letter. Submit discussion post for Ch. 10 by midnight on 11/3.</p>	
12	November 4	<p>DUE TODAY: Graded Company Letter</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION:</u> Writing for the Web; Summaries and Headlines</p> <p>Due Next Class: Graded Web Summary and Headlines; Submit discussion post for Ch's 8 & 9 by 11:59 PM on 11/10.</p>	10
13	November 11	<p>DUE TODAY: Graded Web Summary and Headlines</p> <p><u>DISCUSSION:</u> Overview of Media Studies Track; Writing for Broadcast; Script Format</p> <p>Due Next Class: Broadcast Script; submit discussion post for Ch's 13 & 14 by 11:59 PM on 11/17; Study for Review Quiz #4 (Ch's 8 - 10 in Stovall).</p>	8, 9

14	November 18	Quiz over Ch. 8-10 in Stovall (Review Quiz #4) DUE TODAY: Broadcast Script <u>DISCUSSION:</u> Legal and Ethics; Jobs in Mass Media; Final Exam Review; Course Evaluations	13, 14
15	November 25	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK	
16	December 2	<u>DISCUSSION:</u> Final Exam	
17	December 9	Final Exam: Noon to 2 p.m.	

Instructor reserves the right to change syllabus throughout the semester.