

# Mogle 2311 Fall 2022

## COURSE LOGISTICS, CONTACT INFORMATION

### WRITING FOR MASS MEDIA

MCOM 2311.001

8 a.m. to 9:20 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, CAS 106

Instructor: John "Danny" Mogle

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Best way to contact: Call

Office Hours: 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and by appointment. (I welcome and encourage office visits.)

## COURSE INFORMATION

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers techniques used in gathering and writing news and public relations material on media platforms. Students learn interviewing techniques, objective observation, research, analysis, ethical considerations, grammar and storytelling. Emphasis is on writing cleanly, clearly, and concisely and adapting messages to different platforms and audiences.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

a. Competency: Writing and Storytelling

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Write correctly, clearly and concisely using storytelling styles appropriate for strategic communication, integrated communication or multimedia journalism.
- Produce accurate stories in an appropriate format when given a set of facts.
- Produce accurate stories in an appropriate format when having to develop sources and conduct research.
- Demonstrate proficiency in writing including use of Associated Press style.

**b. Competency: Analysis and Systematic Inquiry**

- Conduct research using methods appropriate to public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism professions.
- Analyze information to determine whether it meets the criteria of news.
- Analyze information to determine the best techniques and formats to tell the story in order to reach a target audience.

**c. Competency: Legal and Ethical Principles**

- Demonstrate ability to apply legal principles pertaining to strategic communication, integrated communication and multimedia journalism.
- Recognize what constitutes libel, plagiarism, fabrication and other legal issues involving media.
- Demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues involved in journalism, strategic communication and social media.
- Apply ethical behavior to practices involved in gathering and writing information for multimedia journalism.

**d. Competency: Mediated Presentation**

- Apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information-using tools and technologies appropriate for public relations/integrated communication or multimedia journalism.
- Write material for news and public relations materials in appropriate formats -  
- print, digital and broadcast -- when given sets of facts.
- Write material for news and public relations materials in appropriate formats -  
- print, digital and broadcast -- when having to originate ideas, do research, interview sources and write a story.
- Identify and distinguish different formats used in presenting information.

**e. Competency: Critical Evaluation**

- Use skills involving news value, fairness, clarity, sourcing, verification and attribution to better evaluate the potential accuracy of information presented as news

- Evaluate print, broadcast and public relations material for accuracy, transparency of sourcing and professional standards.
- Evaluate news, broadcast and public relations material for inclusion of opinion and persuasion.

#### **f. Competency: Media Literacy**

- Demonstrate the ability to identify different types of media and messages media out out to the public.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze, evaluate and create media in different forms.
- Demonstrate the ability to identify and evaluate techniques and impacts of media messages on individuals and society.

#### **g. Competency: Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation**

- Demonstrate the ability to use words correctly.
- Demonstrate the ability to use proper grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Demonstrate the ability to produce writing that is clear, error free, complete and concise.
- Apply techniques used to edit and proofread forms of multi-media journalism.

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

- **Associated Press Stylebook.** New York: Associated Press. Also available online at [apstylebook.org](http://apstylebook.org)([Links to an external site.](http://apstylebook.org)) ([Links to an external site.](http://apstylebook.org)). No older than 2019 edition.
- Select readings assigned in class and posted in Canvas.

### **RECOMMENDED MEDIA CONSUMPTION**

Immerse yourself in mass media to get the most out of this class. Read newspapers and magazines in print and online. Watch news programs and listen to NPR. Examine press releases and advertising campaigns. Look at YouTube, Facebook and other social media in the context of this class.

Other recommendations:

- Clark, Roy Peter. (2006) *Writing Tools, 50 Essential Strategies for Every Writer.*
- Strunk Jr., W., & White, E.B. *The Elements of Style* (4th Ed.), New York: Longman.

### **SPECIAL COURSE NOTES**

## Basic Requirements

The course requires that you have access to a reliable computer and internet connection. You will also need the Associated Press Stylebook.

## Communication

If you have a question, concern, or just want to talk about something related to class, call or send me a text at **903-617-8196**. I will get back to you as soon as possible.

- You can also send me an email.
- Check the Announcements tab of Canvas.
- If there is any valid reason that you cannot turn in work on time, contact me.

## Completing Work on Time

Assignments are posted in Canvas and each will have a deadline. Missing a deadline results in a deduction. Those who miss an assignment without an excused absence may not get the opportunity to make up the assignment.

## Academic Honesty

The University's academy honesty policies apply. You, and only you, must do the work that you submit. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating, unattributed use of others' work (including test and paper "banks"), disruption of class, and discourtesy to, or harassment of, other students or your instructor. Anyone caught cheating will earn a "0" for that assignment and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action.

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit. Students caught plagiarizing will fail the assignment, may fail this class and will be subject to academic and disciplinary action. Go here for more:

<http://www.utt Tyler.edu/judicialaffairs/scholasticdishonesty.php> (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)

## ASSIGNMENTS AND WEIGHTS/POINT VALUES

Each assignment has a posted value and information on the purpose of the assignment and how the grade is determined. If there is confusion on how to carry out the assignment, call or text me at **903-617-8196** BEFORE you do the assignment.

The assignments fall into five general categories:

- graded discussions - 5% of grade
- skill-building assignments - 38% of grade
- writing assignments - 42% of grade

- attendance (starts with 100; 5 pts. off for every unexcused absence) - 4%
- Use of the Stylebook - 11.5% of grade

## **GRADING SCALE**

Your final grade is determined by the points you have acquired as a percentage of the total points available.

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

Check Canvas frequently for the status of your grade. You will not be given an opportunity to do extra work to improve your grade.

## **LATE WORK AND MAKEUP EXAMS**

There will be a deduction for work that it is turned in late -- typically 50%, but sometimes 100%. All assignments will have a posted due date. Work can be made up in cases of illness and emergencies. All I ask is that you be honest.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

You will receive a 5-pt. deduction for each time you miss class.

The University of Texas at Tyler recognizes many things that constitute an excused absence. For a complete list of these policies [click here. \(Links to an external site.\)](#) [\(Links to an external site.\)](#)

## **GRADED COURSE REQUIREMENTS INFORMATION**

- Writing assignments -- 30 to 200 pts. -- require students to write news based on either information provided or obtained on their own.
- Stylebook assignments -- 30 to 50 points -- require students to use the Stylebook to master AP style and receive guidance on use of social media, working with sources and ethical behavior.
- Graded discussions -- 15 to 30 points -- require students to complete tasks, share their thoughts and comment on other posts
- Assignments -- 10 to 100 points -- require students to demonstrate mastery of skills being taught

There are no quizzes or tests. Students demonstrate knowledge by doing work, writing stories and discussing issues. Each topic comes with three to five tasks to do. Some will be done in class and some will be done as homework.

**More detailed information on each assignment will be provided in class.**

## CALENDAR

**Census Date:** The census date for the semester is **Sept. 2**. This is the final date for many enrollment-related actions, including adding new courses, changing sections, or dropping courses without incurring grades of “W” or “Q”. Census is also the second drop for non-payment date each academic session. See the Office of the Registrar website for additional details.

**Final exam:** There is no final exam given in this course.

**Week by Week:** Here is the week-by-week rundown of what will be covered. Sometimes circumstances require scheduling changes. Any changes will be posted in Canvas.

Each unit includes PowerPoint presentation and supplemental readings/videos that are posted in Canvas. Due dates for all assignments are included as part of the assignment. Units typically cover two class periods but that is not always the case.

Unit I: News	Learning Outcomes	In Class	Graded Work
8-23 (News Value)	b, c, e, f	PowerPoint, discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Is it Fake? - 30 pts</li> <li>• Assignment: Distinguishing Facts</li> <li>• Assignment: Applying News Values</li> <li>• Graded Discussion: A Nose for</li> </ul>
8-25 (Pro Standards)	b, c, e, f	PowerPoint, discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Stay Out Your Story</li> <li>• Assignment: Identifying Attribution</li> <li>• Assignment: Examples of Stories</li> </ul>
8-30 & 9-1 (Sins of Journalism)	b, c, e, f	PowerPoint, discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Recognizing Inappropriate</li> <li>• Assignment: What's the Problem?</li> <li>• Graded Discussion - 15 pts.</li> </ul>
Unit II: Developing Skills			

9-6 (Being Correct)	a, b, e, g	PowerPoint, discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Putting Proofreading</li> <li>• Assignment; Grammar, Spelling</li> <li>• Assignment: Using the Right/W</li> </ul>
9-8 (Being Concise)	a, b, e, g	PowerPoint, discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Active of Passive -</li> <li>• Assignment: Getting Rid of Clut</li> <li>• Assignment: Getting Rid of Red</li> </ul>
9-13 (Being Clear)	a, b, e, g	PowerPoint, discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Did You Misplace Y</li> <li>• Assignment: Terminate Your Pr</li> <li>• Assignment: This is Clear as Mu</li> <li>• Assignment: What is Missing? -</li> </ul>
9-15 (AP I: Essentials)	a, e, g	PowerPoint, discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stylebook: Recognizing the Esse</li> <li>• Stylebook: Mastering the Essen</li> </ul>
9-20 (AP II: Stylebook)		video, discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stylebook: Using the AP Styleb</li> <li>• Discussion: Stylebook Discover</li> <li>• Assignment: Proofreading for A</li> <li>• Writing: Putting AP Style to Use</li> </ul>
9-22 Assessment			
9-27 (Writing a News Story)	a, b, c, d, e, f, g	PowerPoint, discussion, videos	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Building an Inverte</li> <li>• Writing: Write a News Story - 2</li> </ul>
9-29 (Writing a Feature Story)	a, b, c, d, e, f, g	PowerPoint, discussion, videos	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: News or Features?</li> <li>• Writing: Write a Feature Story</li> </ul>
10-4 & 6 (Gathering Info)	a, b, c, d, e, f	PowerPoint, videos	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Asking Questions</li> <li>• Stylebook: Working With Sources</li> <li>• Discussion: Learn from Expert Interviews</li> <li>• Assignment: Evaluating a News Release</li> <li>• Writing: Rewriting a News Release</li> <li>• Writing: Writing from Observations</li> </ul>
10-11 & 14 (Working With Quotes)	a, b, c, d, e, f	PowerPoint, etc.	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stylebook: Guidance on Quotes</li> <li>• Assignment: Making Decisions About Quotes</li> <li>• Discussion: What Would You Do?</li> <li>• Writing: Writing from News Coverage</li> </ul>
10-18 (Putting It All Together)	a, b, c, c, e, f, g	discussion	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Your Story Proposal</li> <li>• Writing: Capstone Writing Project</li> </ul>
10-20	Career Conference	no class	
UNIT III: Adapting to Platforms			
10-25 & 27 (Digital)	a, b, d, e, f, g		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Reporting in the Digital Age</li> <li>• Assignment: Planning the Digital Story</li> <li>• Stylebook: Guidance on Social Media</li> </ul>



11-1 & 3 (Strategic Communication)	a, b, c, d, e, f, g	PowerPoint, etc.	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Components of a S</li> <li>• Assignment: Event Planning - 1</li> <li>• Assignment: Managing a Crisis -</li> <li>• Writing: Writing a News Releas</li> <li>• Assignment: A Facebook Post -</li> </ul>
11-8 & 10 (Broadcast)	a, b, c, d, e, f, g	PowerPoint etc.	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Is it for Broadcast?</li> <li>• Assignment: You're the News P</li> <li>• Stylebook: Guidance on Broadc</li> <li>• Writing: Writing a Broadcast - 1</li> </ul>
Unit IV: Ethics			
11-15 & 17 (Ethics)	c, e, f	PowerPoint, video	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stylebook: Guidance on Ethics -</li> <li>• Discussion: An Unethical Situat</li> <li>• Assignment: Case Studies in Eth</li> </ul>
11- 22 & 24	Holiday		
11-29 &12-1 (Media Law)	c, e, f	PowerPoint, videos	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment: Applying the Law -</li> </ul>