

# Feature Writing

## COMM-4402

Summer 2020 Section E01 3 Credits 06/01/2020 to 07/23/2020 Modified 05/12/2020

### Description

Application and analysis of techniques for writing magazine and newspaper features and commentaries.

#### Requisites

Prerequisites:

COMM 3301 and COMM 1154 Minimum Grade: C and ENGL 1102 Minimum Grade: C

Corequisites:

### Contact Information

Dr. John Ike Sewell

#### CONTACT INFO:

**Email:** Email while logged into CourseDen, using the CourseDen email tool only.

**Email Policy:** **Email is the *best* way to reach me. All email communication for this class should be sent using the CourseDen email tool only.** Do *not* contact me using my UWG email address. That course content for this class is accessible 24/7 does *not* mean that I am immediately accessible 24/7. Monday through Friday I will respond to Course Den email within 24 hours. On weekends I will respond to CourseDen email within 48 hours.

**Cell Phone:** 423-741-1474

**Phone Policy:** **Call during business hours (M-F, 9am-5pm) only.** If I do not pick up, leave a clearly stated voice mail message that includes your name, phone number, and a brief description of what the call concerns. I do not respond to text messages from students.

### Meeting Times

#### MEETING TIMES

There are **two learning modules per week in this class.** Each learning module will be open for a 48 hour period within which you can view PowerPoint lectures and/or take exams. Odd numbered learning modules will begin at 12 a.m. on Mondays and will remain open until 11:59 p.m. on the following Tuesday. Even numbered learning modules will begin at 12 a.m. on Wednesdays and will remain open until 11:59 p.m. on the following Thursday.

**Important:** This class is sequentially ordered and is best learned over time. **Each learning module will be open for a 48 hour period. After the 48 hour period is over, you will no longer have access to the PowerPoint lecture content and/or the exam available during the given learning module.** As such, you will only be able to access course content sequentially and in evenly dispersed time increments spanning the semester.

### Materials

## Textbooks (2):

Johnson, C. *21<sup>st</sup> Century Feature Writing, 1st Edition.*

ISBN: 978-0205380152

Publisher: Pearson

Edition: 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 2005.

-

*The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law.*

New York: Basic Books. Any *Stylebook* edition from 2007 or newer will be accepted for use in this class.

## 21st Century Feature Writing

Author: C. Johnson

Publisher: Pearson

Edition: 1st (2005)

ISBN: 978-0205380152

Availability: Available at campus bookstore and via online sources.

## The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law

Author: The Associated Press

Publisher: Basic Books

Edition: It is likely that you can find a used copy of this book at a reduced price. Any edition from 2007 to the present will be accepted for use in this class.

Availability: Available from the campus bookstore and via online sources.

## Outcomes

---

**Learner Outcomes:** Students will learn how to research, gather information, organize and write feature stories for mass media. The course will emphasize the following aspects of good writing and reporting:

- Accuracy and verification
- Storytelling skills
- Creativity
- Narrative observation
- Logical thinking
- News value
- Ethics

### Mass Communications Program Learning Outcomes

**ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies = 6 x 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS:** As a unit accredited the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), the Department of Mass Communications is committed to preparing students with the requisite knowledge and skills to be successful in the media and communications industries after graduation. The Department has adopted as its degree program learning outcomes ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies that all graduates of an ACEJMC accredited program should be aware of and able to demonstrate as scholars and professionals in the discipline. These include the six (6) values and six (6) competencies listed below. For the detailed list of the ACEJMC professional values and competencies, see the [UWG Undergraduate Catalog](#) or [ACEJMC - Standard 2. Curriculum and Instruction](#).

### Values:

1. Freedom of Speech & Press
2. History

3. Diversity
4. Global Impact
5. Theory
6. Ethics

-

Competencies:

7. Think Critically & Creatively
8. Research & Evaluate
9. Write Effectively
10. Self-Evaluate
11. Apply Numbers & Statistics
12. Apply Technology

## ✓ Evaluation

---

Grading Scale:

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

## ☰ Assignments

---

Course Requirements:

1. Students will be expected to **READ** the assigned text chapters *before* they are presented and discussed in class. Attendance is mandatory for each class meeting.
2. **5 AP STYLE QUIZZES** will cover information from materials assigned for a given day, AP style and/or test the student's ability to master writing skills for an immediate deadline.
3. **3 STORY PITCHES** will be delivered by each student in class. For each story pitch assignment, you will present an idea for a story and explain how you will pursue the story, including contacts and leads. I will provide a handout detailing the requirements for these assignments.
4. **2 COMPLETE ROUGH DRAFTS** will be produced by the student during the semester.
5. **3 FEATURE STYLE ARTICLES** will be produced by the student during the semester. You will do the reporting (interviews and observation) for these stories and deliver publication ready articles. I will provide handouts detailing the requirements for these assignments.

Point Values per assignment/assessment

- |                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Feature Story 1 | 20 points |
| Feature Story 2 | 20 points |

|                          |                                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Feature Story 3          | 20 points                             |
| Feature Story Pitch (3)  | 4 points each (total: 12 pts.)        |
| Rough Draft (2)          | 4 points each (total: 8 pts.)         |
| <u>AP style quiz (5)</u> | <u>4 points each (total: 20 pts.)</u> |
| Total Points             | 100 points                            |

## Schedule

SCHEDULE: Summer 2020

COMM 4402 Feature Writing CRN 50691

ONLINE via CourseDen

| Module # | Date       | Assigned Readings & Activities  | DEADLINES  |
|----------|------------|---|--|
| Module 1 | M, June 1  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read documents (syllabus &amp; schedule)</li> <li>Module 1 PowerPoint</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>PURCHASE BOOK!</b></li> </ul>                                    |
| Module 2 | W, June 3  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 2 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Pitch #1 Due</b></li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pitch #1 Deadline:</b><br/>Thur., June 4, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>  |
| Module 3 | M, June 8  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johnson Chapters 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>Module 3 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Quiz #1 Due</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Quiz #1 Deadline:</b><br/>Tue., June 9, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>    |
| Module 4 | W, June 10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 4 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Draft #1 Due</b></li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Draft #1 Deadline:</b><br/>Thur., June 11, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul> |
| Module 5 | M, June 15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johnson Chapters 3 &amp; 4</li> <li>Module 5 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Quiz #2 Due</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Quiz #2 Deadline:</b><br/>Tue., June 16, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>   |
| Module 6 | W, June 17 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 6 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Story #1 Due</b></li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Story #1 Deadline:</b><br/>Thur., June 18, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul> |

|   |            |   |  |
|---|------------|---|--|
| Module 7  | M, June 22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 7 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Pitch #2 Due</b></li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pitch #2 Deadline:</b><br/>Tue., June 23, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>  |
| Last day to withdraw with a "W" grade: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24 |            |   |  |
| Module 8  | W, June 24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 8 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Quiz #3 Due</b></li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Quiz #3 Deadline:</b><br/>Thurs., June 25, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul> |
| Module 9  | M, June 29 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 9 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Draft # 2 Due</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Draft #2 Deadline:</b><br/>Tue., June 30, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>  |
| Module 10   | W, July 1  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 10 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Quiz #4 Due</b></li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Quiz #4 Deadline:</b><br/>Thur., July 2, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>   |
| Module 11   | M, July 6  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 11 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Story #2 Due</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Story #2 Deadline:</b><br/>Tue., July 7, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>   |
| Module 12   | W, July 8  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 12 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Pitch #3 Due</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Pitch #3 Deadline:</b><br/>Thur., July 9, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>  |
| Module 13   | M, July 13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 13 PowerPoint</li> <li><b>Quiz #5 Due</b></li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Quiz #5 Deadline:</b><br/>Tue., July 14, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>   |
| Module 14   | W, July 15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Module 14 PowerPoint</li> </ul>                              |  |
| Module 15   | M, July 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Story #3 Due</b></li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Story #2 Deadline:</b><br/>Tue., July 21, 11:59 p.m.</li> </ul>  |

## \* Course Policies and Resources

**Quiz Deadlines Policy:** Quizzes are available for the 48 hour window of the particular module where they occur. You can take the quiz at your leisure within the allotted 48 hours. After the 48 hour period has expired, you will no longer be able to take the quiz. **If you do**

not take a quiz within the allotted 48 hour window, you will receive no credit for the given quiz. Quiz makeups will not be granted in this class.

**Pitch Deadlines Policy:** Pitch assignments are available for the 48 hour window of the particular module where they occur. You can turn in your pitch at your leisure within the allotted 48 hours. **After the 48 hour period has expired, you will no longer be able to turn in your pitch for credit.**

**Draft Deadlines Policy:** Draft assignments are available for the 48 hour window of the particular module where they occur. You can turn in your rough draft at your leisure within the allotted 48 hours. **After the 48 hour period has expired, you will no longer be able to turn in your draft for credit.**

**Feature Stories (Final Edit) Deadlines Policy: DEADLINES ARE ABSOLUTE.** Turn-ins for the final edits of stories 1, 2 and 3 are available for the 48 hour window of the particular module where they occur. You can turn in the final edits of your stories at your leisure within the allotted 48 hours. **After the 48 hour turn-in period has expired, 20% of the possible score will be deducted for each day a story is turned in late.**

## Institutional Policies

---

### Academic Support

**Accessibility Services:** Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php).

**Center for Academic Success:** The [Center for Academic Success \(http://www.westga.edu/cas/\)](http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or [cas@westga.edu](mailto:cas@westga.edu).

**University Writing Center:** The [University Writing Center \(https://www.westga.edu/writing/\)](https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or [writing@westga.edu](mailto:writing@westga.edu).

### Online Courses

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the [UWG Online \(https://uwgonline.westga.edu/\)](https://uwgonline.westga.edu/) site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the [Online/Off-Campus Student Guide \(http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php\)](http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the [UWG Cares \(http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/\)](http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/) site. [Online counseling \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.

### Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing.

Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook \(https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php).

## UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

## Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

## HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: [http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional\\_information#](http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information#) ([http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional\\_information](http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information))

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php> (<https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>)

## Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](#). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](#). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](#).