

Practicum-The West Georgian

COMM-4421N

Spring 2021 Section 01 3 Credits 01/09/2021 to 05/11/2021 Modified 01/04/2021

Description

Practical experience with the campus newspaper, The West Georgian, that primarily includes general and specialty news writing and reporting on deadline, editorial decision-making, interviewing, copy editing, photojournalism, and layout and design across traditional and emerging digital media platforms. Emphasis is placed on news style and judgment, localization, and ethical and legal issues. Repeatable; Maximum of 3.0 credits hours may be applied to the Mass Communications major.

Requisites

Prerequisites:

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

Corequisites:

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. John Ike Sewell

Email: johns@westga.edu

Office: Humanities 147

Phone: 423-741-1474

Office Hours

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS will be held by phone (423) 741-1474 on Mondays from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. and on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. (noon).

By phone: (423) 741-1474

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS will be held by phone (423) 741-1474 on Mondays from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. and on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. (noon). You are welcome to call me during these times. Bear in mind, I may be on the phone with another student when you call. If so, leave a clearly worded voicemail message with your phone number and I will call you. I am also potentially available at other times **BY APPOINTMENT**. To schedule virtual office hours by appointment, contact me via CourseDen email.

Meeting Times

Monday, 9:30 AM to 10:15 AM, Monday staff meetings are held online using Google Meets.

The purpose of COMM4421N is to provide students with the experience of working for a professional quality newspaper. You should view your participation in the publication of *The West Georgian* as a job. As such, you are required to attend all online staff meetings and meet every deadline, period. Attendance at online staff meetings is mandatory and deadlines are absolute.

If you miss a Monday staff meeting, it is your responsibility to contact Editor-In-Chief Brittany Shivers by or before the day of the staff meeting to make arrangements for that week's assignment. If you miss a staff meeting, you are still required to write an article that will be due at the next week's deadline. When problems emerge in the process of collecting information for a story (and they will), contact Brittany immediately to request a deadline extension and/or a different assignment. Do **NOT** write a different story without Brittany's expressed consent.

VIRTUAL ATTENDANCE FOR EACH GOOGLE MEETS STAFF MEETING IS MANDATORY. Each week, I will record who attends the online meetings. You will be allowed one absence from the Monday meetings without penalty. **Half of a story credit will be deducted from your final score for the semester for each additional absence.**

Materials

The Associated Press Stylebook

Author: The Associated Press

Publisher: Basic Books

Edition: Any edition from 2010 to the present is acceptable.

Textbook: While there is no textbook per se for this class, all students are required to have a copy of the *Associated Press Stylebook* from 2010 or newer.

Outcomes

Learner Outcomes:

- To deliver professional quality newswriting on deadline for print and online publication (SLO5, SLO7, SLO9, SLO10, SLO12)
- To produce news briefs, columns, photojournalism, entertainment coverage, sports coverage, hard news and feature stories (SLO5, SLO7, SLO9, SLO10, SLO12)
- To build a portfolio (SLO9, SLO12)
- To operate professionally and ethically as a journalist (SLO5, SLO7, SLO9, SLO10)

Mass Communications Program Learning Outcomes

ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies: As a unit seeking accreditation from 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](#).

Evaluation

Criteria

Course Requirements: Participants in COMM4421N are expected to be present at all weekly online meetings (MW 9:30am-10:45am) and to research and write news content for a minimum of an additional 6 hours per week.

Breakdown

The West Georgian will publish 12 online editions in spring 2021. You should produce one article per week. While it is possible to do more than one article on a certain week to make up for another week, **no more than two articles will be assigned to any student on any given week.** This is to say that if you procrastinate and only produce seven published articles during the semester, you will not be assigned five articles for the final edition so that you can meet your goal of publishing 12 articles to make an A. You must deliver content steadily throughout the semester so that *The West Georgian* has ample content for each weekly publication. ***It is your responsibility to make sure that enough of your stories are published to meet the grade requirements for the course.*** (See grade scale).

GRADE ASSESSMENT

*All accepted articles will be published in the online edition of *The West Georgian*. Any article that is posted on the website will count toward your quota. Online publication does not guarantee that your article will also be selected for print publication.

Number of Complete, Published Articles	Letter Grade
12	A
11	B
10	C
9	D
8 or fewer	F

Policies re point value assessments:

- **UNPUBLISHED ARTICLES:** Articles that are denied for publication will receive zero points.
- **POINT SCORES** for each publication date will be posted on Course Den by 5pm each Monday of publication, beginning on the publication date of the first issue. It is your responsibility to keep up with your scores through the semester. **If one of your stories is not published, the editorial staff of *The West Georgian* will NOT be contacting you to remind you that you are behind. ALWAYS CHECK THE PUBLICATION CREDITS EACH MONDAY ON COURSE DEN. THIS IS YOUR WAY OF KNOWING WHETHER YOU RECEIVED PUBLICATION CREDIT. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP UP WITH YOUR SCORES THROUGH THE SEMESTER.**

Assignments

The West Georgian will publish 12 online editions in spring 2021. You should produce one article per week.

Schedule

Spring 2020 Story Assignment, Deadline (Turn-In) and Publication Dates for <i>The West Georgian</i>			
Issue #	Story Assigned at Practicum Meeting	Deadline Date (Story due at 9:30 a.m.)	Publication/Circulation Date
1	Mon., Jan. 25	Mon., Feb. 1	#1 Fri., Feb. 5
2	Mon., Feb. 1	Mon., Feb. 8	#2 Fri., Feb. 12
3	Mon., Feb. 8	Mon., Feb. 15	#3 Fri., Feb. 19
4	Mon., Feb. 15	Mon., Feb. 22	#4 Fri., Feb. 26

5	Mon., Feb. 22	Mon., March 1	#5 Fri., March 5
6	Mon., March 1	Mon., March 8	#6 Fri., March 12
SPRING BREAK March 15-19			
7	Mon., March 8	Mon., March 22	#7 Fri., March 26
8	Mon., March 22	Mon., March 29	#8 Fri., April 2
9	Mon., March 29	Mon., April 5	#9 Fri., April 9
10	Mon., April 5	Mon., April 12	#10 Fri., April 16
11	Mon., April 12	Mon., April 19	#11 Fri., April 23
12	Mon., April 19 (Final Online Meeting)	Mon., April 26 (No Online Meeting)	#12 Fri., April 30

* Course Policies and Resources

Attendance Policy: The purpose of COMM4421N is to provide students with the experience of working for a professional quality newspaper. You should view your participation in the publication of *The West Georgian* as a job. As such, you are required to attend all online staff meetings and meet every deadline, period. Attendance at online staff meetings is mandatory and deadlines are absolute.

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Pitching Stories: It is required that you attend each staff meeting via Google Meets with an idea for a story to pitch. Pitching a story, however, does not guarantee that you will be assigned the story. (Another student may have come up with the same idea. You will not be penalized if your idea overlaps with another student's.) Pitching stories is a group effort and your participation will ensure that *The West Georgian* is more diverse and thought-provoking. Pitching stories is part and parcel of the process of producing a newspaper and is, as such, mandatory.

The West Georgian is an independently produced, student-led publication. Stories will be assigned at each Google Meets Monday staff/practicum meetings by Editor In-Chief, Brittany Shivers. If issues arise emerge that may affect your deadline (which is likely, at some point) and/or if you need a story reassignment, contact **Brittany Shivers, not Dr. Sewell.**

Policy on Deadlines and Publication Requirements: DEALINES ARE ABSOLUTE. Still, it's possible that one or more of your assigned stories may fall apart for some reason. (You might not be able to get access to key players in a story, a source might not show up for a scheduled interview or even decide they don't want to publicity, etc.) If any of your stories falls apart—or if any of your stories are

turned down for publishing by an editor—you will be required to produce another article in its stead. If you are going to be out of town or be particularly busy with other projects during certain times of the semester, you may want to schedule two stories on another week (or weeks) to make up for the deficit. Be proactive.

🎯 College/School Policies

Mission

Fair, just, and productive societies require the free flow of news, information, and ideas from communicators of knowledge, skill, and integrity who reflect the diversity of the people they serve. Therefore, the Department of Mass Communications strives to provide high quality academic and experiential learning opportunities to prepare students for successful integration into the global community as industry professionals, leaders, and thinkers in the fields of convergence journalism, digital media and telecommunication, film and video production, and public relations.

Vision

The Department of Mass Communications is committed to empowering students to communicate clearly, act responsibly, think critically, and understand context(s) to enhance their personal, civic, academic, and professional lives, facilitating active participation in an evolving and increasingly diverse society.

Strategic Priorities

Invested Teaching

To inspire and equip students to discover their personal, intellectual, and professional potential through personalized teaching, academic coaching, and career mentoring.

Experiential Learning

To offer students early and on-going multiple and diverse hands-on learning to develop and enhance personal, intellectual, and professional growth.

Connectedness

To serve as the hub that connects and cultivates partnerships among key stakeholders to enhance personal, intellectual, and professional growth. Key stakeholders include administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni, industry, community, and friends.

Mass Communications Degree Program Learning Outcomes

ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies: The Bachelor of Science degree program in Mass Communications is accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), and the Department 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 Mass Communications degree program learning outcomes ACEJMC's 12 professional values and competencies, known as 6 X 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS, that all graduates of an ACEJMC accredited program should be aware of and able to demonstrate as scholars and professionals in the discipline. For the detailed list of the ACEJMC professional values and competencies, see the [UWG Undergraduate Catalog \(https://catalog.westga.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=11&poid=1991\)](https://catalog.westga.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=11&poid=1991) or [ACEJMC - Standard 2. Curriculum and Instruction \(http://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/nine-standards/\)](http://www.acejmc.org/policies-process/nine-standards/).

6 X 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS

[6 X 6 MASS COMM SUCCESS
\(https://www.westga.edu/academics/coss/mass-communications/assets/pics/6x6_MC_Success_Graphic.JPG\)](https://www.westga.edu/academics/coss/mass-communications/assets/pics/6x6_MC_Success_Graphic.JPG)

(click to view image)

1. Freedom of Speech & Press
2. History
3. Diversity
4. Global Impact
5. Theory
6. Ethics
7. Think Critically & Creatively
8. Research & Evaluate
9. Write Effectively
10. Self-Evaluate
11. Apply Numbers & Statistics
12. Apply Technology

Film & Video Production Degree Program Learning Outcomes

Overview: The Bachelor of Science degree program in Film & Video Production is designed to train graduates in the field who are agile, adaptable, and able to employ their skills in an array of roles from entrepreneurial content producers to on-set film work, both above and below the line. It will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the machinery at work behind media production and distribution, along with a set of tangible, marketable, and transferable skills for an array of positions within the infrastructure of film and content production. The FVP degree program learning outcomes include:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking, aesthetic awareness and technical proficiency in the production and assessment of audio-visual film work.
2. Understand all phases and roles of film production in order to help formulate career goals.
3. Understand the various potentials of film as both a commodity for a targeted audience, and an act of authorship and creative expression.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of cinema in a global society.

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.

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.

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)

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](#).

ELL Resources

If you are a student having difficulty with English language skills, and / or U.S. culture is not your home culture, specialized resources are available to help you succeed. Please visit the [E.L.L. resource page](#) for more information.

COVID-19

Proctored Exams/Online Instruction: Students should be aware and plan ahead for the possibility of having to complete all courses and/or exams online or in a proctored environment. This means talking with your instructors about what minimum technical requirements (software and hardware) will be required should your class move online or a student's personal needs dictate. This also includes making plans for internet access at whatever location participation may occur.

Virtual or in-person proctored exams, if your instructor should require them, may result in an additional cost to the student. Please discuss these details with your instructor or see the information provided here.

Face Coverings: Effective July 15, 2020, University System of Georgia institutions, including the University of West Georgia, will require all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use will be in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing.

Face coverings are not required in campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area.

Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons.

Student FAQs: For more information about UWG COVID-19 guidance for students visit the [Student FAQ webpage](#) (<https://www.westga.edu/student-services/health/coronavirus-info/return-to-campus/students-faq-return-to-campus.php>).

Additional Items
