**JOMC 252 Audio Journalism**

School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Carroll Hall 132

Tuesday-Thursday

11am-12:15pm

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| Professor:  Jim Hefner  329A Carroll Hall  (Broadcast and Electronic Journalism Suite)  Phone: 910-315-3485  e-mail:  [jrhefner@email.unc.edu](mailto:jrhefner@email.unc.edu) | **Office Hours:**  **11am-noon**  **Mondays/Wednesday**  **and**  **by appointment.** |

**Information about the course**

Welcome to JOMC 252, one of the foundation courses in the broadcast and electronic journalism sequence of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. At the core of news reporting -- no matter the medium -- is writing. JOMC 252 is designed to provide students with the necessary writing, reporting and production skills to work within the electronic/broadcast news industry. Proficiency in electronic/broadcast news writing, reporting and production will benefit those interested in print journalism, public relations, advertising and many other disciplines under the mass communication umbrella and beyond.

**The discipline of the course:**

The study of broadcast journalism combines the skills of news writing, reporting and production. To succeed in this course, students need to achieve competence in all three areas. In addition, proficiency in broadcast and electronic reporting and production must be married with news story development/assignment, ethical standards and professionalism, etc. JOMC 252 is the first course, along with JOMC 221, in the broadcast sequence, which also includes JOMC 421 and JOMC 422. All four courses, as well as others are required to complete the Broadcast and Electronic Journalism concentration in the school.

JOMC 252 may not be taken concurrently with any course in which the lab or group meeting conflicts with the class time, Tuesday/Thursday 11am-12:15pm. Students pursuing broadcast and electronic journalism majors are encouraged to take JOMC 221 as early as possible, and, ideally, during the same semester they take JOMC 252.

**Participation:**

Working in the news business should be fun, and this class ought to be fun, as well. The class will operate like a newsroom. Don’t expect a regular college class. Effective newsrooms establish a climate where there is a healthy collision of ideas -- where story assignments, approaches, writing, production, etc., are discussed openly and honestly. Tension and conflict can and should be present to some degree. That tension and conflict should be tempered, however, with respect.

Broadcast writing and audio journalism are designed for a mass audience. If a story is going to be broadcast over a radio station, television station or other news medium the reporter/producer of the story must be prepared to justify and defend that story at every level. It is difficult to be a broadcast journalist if one is thin-skinned. It is about the work; not the person. A news story is a news story. It is NOT the extension of an individual.

One of the primary forms of participation in this class will be discussion, even debate. We will talk as a class and in groups, thinking through issues together and critiquing our own work and the work of others. In order to create a climate conducive for participation by everyone, please follow these discussion guidelines:

* Be ready to share and explain your opinions. Feel free to disagree with others, but be specific in your own assertions and back them up with evidence.
* Listen carefully and respond to other members of the group. Be willing to change your mind when someone demonstrates an error in your logic or use of facts.
* Do not hesitate to ask for clarification of any point or term you do not understand.
* Make your point succinctly, avoid repetition, and stick to the subject.
* Be honest but sensitive in critiquing the work of others, whether you know the people involved or not. Keep the focus on the work, not the individuals, and critique their work product as carefully as you would hope to see someone else critique your own.
* When critiquing your own work, try to divorce yourself from your emotional connection to it and be as objective as possible.

To get the most out of our discussions, students must be prepared. That means the student is responsible for having read that session’s material, and for having thought through any questions that may have been distributed ahead of time. Participation, undoubtedly, will reflect preparation – positively and negatively. The participation portion of the students’ grade will be judged, accordingly.

**Syllabus:**

The syllabus will change. Just as events alter the day’s activities in a newsroom, events will change our plans. If schedules and/or assignments change, every effort to contact students via email will be made. The professor will regularly revise the syllabus posted on Sakai as needed. You are encouraged to check the online syllabus frequently to make sure you are working from the latest version. In addition, changes to the syllabus may be announced in class.

# Undivided Attention:

If you become a broadcast journalist you will utilize electronic devices daily, but all reporters must learn to listen well and take good notes without the aid of a computer. Before class begins please turn off all your electronic devices – laptop, PDA, cell phone, pager, etc. Carroll 132 is equipped with computers for our purposes. If the student is caught on the computer during class time doing other things outside the class he or she will be asked to leave. No exceptions!

**Additional Considerations:**

All work must be original and solely for this class. No assignment which was prepared for credit as part of any other class may be submitted for credit in JOMC 252. Violation of this policy will result in a grade of zero for the assigned project. The student may also be subject to an honor code violation.

In the news business accuracy is vital. In the work you submit, misspelling of any word will result in point deductions from your grade. Each style error as defined in the Kalbfeld text will result in point deductions. Misspelling of a proper name, or a factual error, may result in a failing grade on that assignment. Credibility is the foundation of any news organization. Errors – especially errors of fact – erode credibility and are unacceptable.

Finally, under no circumstances should any student fabricate a source, a quote, a sound bite, or a story. If you engage in such a fabrication you risk failing the course; being referred for an Honor Code violation; and/or being removed from the university. Fabrication of a story or of sources is considered on the same level as plagiarism.

**Oral Communication Component:**

No prerequisite exists for oral communication skills. Unlike many courses in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication this course includes an oral communication component.  Broadcast journalists must be able to speak clearly and confidently into microphones, and those working in television must be able to do so in front of cameras. If you have any doubts about your ability to achieve competency in this area before completing the course, check with the professor. You will not be graded on your voice quality, but performance improvement will be considered.

**What students will learn**

**Basic Objectives:**

Basic objectives of JOMC 252 include the following:

* To attain competence in the conventions associated with electronic/broadcast news writing and reporting.
* To integrate your broadcast/electronic news writing skills with basic reporting practices into the production of professional, broadcast-quality audio news packages.
* To produce electronic/broadcast news stories acceptable under the standards generally established by reputable, professional news organizations.

**ACEJMC Core values and Competencies**

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies. The values and competencies associated with this course include being able to:

* Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
* Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
* Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
* Think critically, creatively and independently;
* Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
* Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
* Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
* Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

**National Standards:**

The standard expected of every student enrolled in the School's JOMC 252 sections is at the level of national excellence. By the time a student successfully completes the requirements of JOMC 252 that student should be a competent, electronic/broadcast news writer and producer.

**Measurement:**

Those objectives and standards will be measured through a variety of means and methods. There will be frequent quizzes; projects; in-class, timed writing assignments; examinations or tests, etc. The professor will judge and grade work based on news industry standards and conventions generally applied within reputable news organizations, locally and nationally. News writing – both electronic and otherwise – is part craft, science and art. Learning the rules and standards of this approach to writing is fundamental to success in the course, overall. Broadcast production is another vital area of concern in the class. Production quality will be judged and measured in the same fashion.

The breakdown of how these measurements will result in a final grade will be discussed below.

**Honor Code:**

It is expected that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system ([http://honor.unc.edu](https://outlook.unc.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=_PwXhu5wkEKfdEIVTpil9KJAr6RORM8IBwmgW7JyZPUuO4or7Dri_9D4gXEkBO0Z0IIreRKEjIQ.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fhonor.unc.edu)). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class, which includes outside writing assignments. Use of former students’ writing assignments constitutes a breach of the honor code. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor’s responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean Chris Roush, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

**Seeking Help:**

If you need individual assistance, it’s your responsibility to meet with the instructor during office hours or to set up an appointment for another time. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

**Diversity:**

The University’s policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Bulletin [*http://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/*](https://outlook.unc.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=_PwXhu5wkEKfdEIVTpil9KJAr6RORM8IBwmgW7JyZPUuO4or7Dri_9D4gXEkBO0Z0IIreRKEjIQ.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.unc.edu%2fugradbulletin%2f)*.* In summary, UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression or disabilities.

**Materials, equipment and books**

**Required texts:**

Bliss Jr., E. & Hoyt, J.L., *Writing News for Broadcast*, Third Edition, Columbia University Press, New York, ©1994.

Kalbfeld, Brad, *Associated Press Broadcast News Handbook*, McGraw-Hill, 2001.

# Audio Recorder:

To record material for your stories you will need to purchase a digital voice recorder or a mini-disc recorder. There will be an in-class review of the various options. A handout will be distributed, as well.

The school will provide you with a microphone and a cable to use this semester. At the end of the semester you must return both in good condition before you can receive a grade for the class. Damaged or lost equipment is the responsibility of the student.

Students are expected to use equipment responsibly and report any issues they have immediately to the equipment manager.

**Readings:**

Just as if the student were a professional, broadcast journalist, the student is expected to have a daily, working knowledge of major news developments as reported by reputable news organizations. The scope of the students’ acquaintance with issues needs to be broad, encompassing not only national and international events but also state, local and on-campus developments. Many of our classroom sessions will include a quiz and/or a discussion of current events. In other words, you must know the news. There will be weekly news quizzes. For these purposes, on a daily basis, I will be reading one, local newspaper (*The News & Observer* of Raleigh); one national newspaper (*The New York Times*); watching one national, over-the-air, network newscast (ABC); reading one national news Internet site (CNN). I will be listening to National Public Radio each morning (WUNC-FM); and reading the *Daily Tar Heel* and viewing *Carolina Week* for campus news. The questions on the weekly news quizzes, generally, will come from these sources. We will be dealing with “major” news stories. Don’t be concerned that some obscure news item will show up on the quiz.

**Your E-mail Address:**

Every enrolled student in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication is required to have a UNC e-mail address. I will use your UNC e-mail address for all communications regarding this class. If you prefer to use a private e-mail account, be sure to forward your UNC e-mail to it. Check your UNC e-mail often, and always within 24 hours before class.

Attendance and grading policies

Broadcast journalists in the real world are expected to come to work. An employer’s basic expectation from an employee is that the employee will be at work and on time. Failure to do so leads to termination. The news does not wait for someone to come to work. This class will operate like a professional newsroom. Therefore, the attendance policies are strict, and will be strictly enforced. Testing these policies is ill advised.

**Attendance:**

As in the broadcast industry, punctuality is essential and deadlines must be met. Classroom experiences are a vital part of the educational process. Therefore, regular class attendance is essential. The following policy governs absences and their effect upon your grade:

* You are expected to arrive on time, and to stay for the entire class period. Arriving late, coming in and out during class and/or leaving early will have an impact on the class participation aspect of your grade. Do not schedule activities related to other classes or to news stories that will conflict with your ability to attend these class sessions.
* One (1) absence – no penalty.
* Each additional absence will result in the deduction of one grade level (A- to B+, for example) from your final grade.
* Medical absences are not considered separately. Hardship medical cases and other personal emergencies will be considered when the situation arises. If you find yourself dealing with a contagious illness or an emergency situation notify me **in** **advance** of class by phone or e-mail to avoid grading penalties.

**Inclement Weather:**

In the event of inclement weather, please check the [UNC Website](http://www.unc.edu/) to see if class has been canceled. Also be sure to check your e-mail for any messages.

**Grading Breakdown**

| **Course Elements** | % of Grade |
| --- | --- |
| Participation in Discussion | 15% |
| Current Events and Grammar/Style Quizzes; Tests on Textbook Materials | 10% |
| Writing drills | 10% |
| Four Reporting Projects | 40% |
| Final Project/Final Exam | 25% |

# All projects will be submitted electronically via email in an audio file. A specific deadline will be established. Missed deadlines will not be tolerated. Each project will be judged on the following criteria:

|  |
| --- |
| News Value |
| Choice of Interviewee(s) |
| Writing |
| Field Audio Quality |
| Editing |
| Use of Natural Sound |
| Overall effect |

You will not receive a passing grade in this course unless all assignments are completed. The assignment must be turned in even when it may receive a grade of zero due to missing deadlines. A numerical grade scale will be used on all papers, tests, participation and projects.  Here are the letter equivalents:

**FINAL GRADES**

94 -100  A

91 - 93.9   A-

88 - 90.9   B+

84 - 87.9   B

81 - 83.9   B-

78 - 80.9   C+

74 - 77.9   C

71 - 73.9   C-

68 - 70.9   D+

64 - 67.9   D

61 - 63.9   D-

60.9 and below F

**Late Assignments:**

The news business is all about deadlines. A large part of success in this class is meeting deadlines. Students are responsible for meeting those deadlines and for getting projects turned in on due dates. This is true even if a student is to be absent from class on a given day. Therefore, late assignments are unacceptable. Late work will receive a grade of 0 (zero), but, as mentioned, should be turned in, nonetheless.

In all likelihood at some point in this class the student will encounter real-world, last-minute problems over which he/she will have little or no control – problems that will compromise one’s ability to get an assignment turned in on time. Stories shift. Plans fall through. Interviewees cancel appointments. Equipment malfunctions. Illness strikes. Know this and build a time cushion for yourself.

**Sources:**

On the back page of each assignment the student is required to write the name and phone number of each source interviewed for that news story, or project. Failure to include source names and phone numbers will result in a failing grade.

**Weekly Schedule:** The professor reserves to right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates (excluding the officially scheduled final examination), when unforeseen circumstances occur. These changes will be announced as early as possible so that students can adjust their schedules. Please check for syllabus updates on Sakai.

**Tuesday, August 19**—Review syllabus. Review course objectives. Discuss text, equipment and recorders. Read Bliss and Hoyt chapters 1 and 2 for next time.

**Thursday, August 21**—Review assigned reading. Read Bliss and Hoyt chapters 3 and 4 for next time. Study AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, A, B and C for quiz next class.

**Tuesday, August 26**—Review assigned readings. In-class writing drill. Current events/AP Broadcast Handbook quiz. Read Bliss and Hoyt chapters 5 and 6 for next time.

**Thursday, August 28**— Review assigned readings. Review quiz. Review writing drill. Audio recorder/editing seminar, Dylan Field. Read Bliss and Hoyt chapter 7 for next time. Study AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, D, E and F for quiz.

**Tuesday, September 2**— Current events/AP Handbook quiz. Review readings. Discuss Project 1. Brainstorm ideas.

**Thursday, September 4**— Review quiz. Read Bliss and Hoyt chapters 8 and 9 for next time. Study AP Broadcast Handbook, Part 2, G, H and I for quiz next time. In-class writing drill.

**Tuesday, September 9**— Current events/AP Handbook quiz. Review readings. Discuss writing drill. Read Bliss and Hoyt chapters 10 and 11 for next time.

**Thursday, September 11**— Review quiz. Project 1 work day in class. Study AP Handbook pages 9 through 46; Part 2 J, K and L.

**Tuesday, September 16**— Current events /AP Handbook quiz. Project 1 due by beginning of class. Review Project 1 in class.

**Thursday, September 18**— Brainstorm/assign Project 2. Continue review of Project 1 if necessary. Read Bliss and Hoyt chapter 15 for next time. Study AP Handbook part 2, M, N and O.

**Tuesday, September 23**— Current events/AP Handbook quiz. Review readings.

**Thursday, September 25**—Study AP Handbook pages 115 through 134. In-class writing drill.

**Tuesday, September 30**— Current events/AP Handbook quiz. Review in-class writing drill. Project 2 in-class work day.

**Thursday, October 2**— Project two due at beginning of class. Review Project 2. Assign Project 3.

**Tuesday, October 7**— Continue review of Project 2, if necessary. Study AP Handbook part 2, P, Q and R for next time. Brainstorm/Assign Project 3.

**Thursday, October 9**—Current events/AP Handbook quiz. In-class writing drill.

**Tuesday, October 14**— Project 3 due at beginning of class. Review Project 3 in class. Study AP Handbook, part 2, S and T for next time.

**Thursday, October 16**—**NO CLASS/FALL BREAK**

**Tuesday, October 21**—Current events/AP Handbook quiz. Continue review of Project 3 if necessary. Assign Project 4.

**Thursday, October 23**—Review quiz. Brainstorm Project 4. Study AP Handbook, part 2, U through Z.

**Tuesday, October 28**— Current events/AP Handbook quiz. In-class writing drill.

**Thursday, October 30**—Review quiz. Review in-class writing drill.

**Tuesday, November 4**—Project 4 due at beginning of class. Review Project 4.

**Thursday, November 6**—Assign Final Project. In-class writing drill.

**Tuesday, November 11**—Review writing drill.

**Thursday, November 13**—Bud Dwyer and ethical decision making.

**Tuesday, November 18**—Diamond structure and television.

**Thursday, November 20**—Brainstorm final project.

**Tuesday, November 25**—Final project due at beginning of class. Review final projects.

**Thursday, November 27**-- **NO CLASS. Thanksgiving Holiday**.

**Tuesday, December 2**—Continue final project review.