

COMM 202: WRITING BROADCAST NEWS

Citrus College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Winter 2021
Credits:	3
Total Contact Hours:	54
Lecture Hours :	54
Lab Hours:	0
Hours Arranged:	0
Outside of Class Hours:	108
Strongly Recommended:	COMM 101.
Transferable to CSU:	Yes
Transferable to UC:	No
Grading Method:	Standard Letter

Catalog Course Description

Intensive journalistic writing and reporting for radio and television. Newscast planning, story organization, and functions of a broadcast newsroom will be explored. Emphasis on writing assignments for both audio and video media. Lecture/discussion of issues and responsibilities facing broadcast journalists, including developing news judgment, discussing ethical considerations and examining legal issues. 54 lecture hours.

Course Objectives

- Differentiate between writing for speaking and writing for reading
- Identify and research news stories
- Assess credibility of sources and determine appropriate attribution
- Evaluate libel, rights of privacy, and ethics issues, and their appropriateness for television and radio news
- Determine and assess story angles
- Evaluate story structure, leads and endings and determine how to write the story
- Understand and use rules of "readability" for broadcast scripts, including both readers (copy read by a news anchor) and voice-over copy (copy read over video)
- Use appropriate grammar and revise scripts for precision and clarity

Major Course Content

1. Introduction to broadcast style: writing for speaking, not reading
 - a. Short sentences
 - b. Informal tone
 - c. Active voice
 - d. Leads and endings
 - i. Soft
 - ii. Delayed
 - iii. Question
 - iv. Throwaway
 - e. Avoiding jargon
2. Finding the news: researching a story

- a. Futures files
- b. Beats
- c. Sources
- d. Angles
3. Sourcing, attribution and topic choice
 - a. Attribution (WHO said it?)
 - b. Background information (WHAT do I need to know?)
 - c. Balance and fairness (maintaining objectivity)
 - d. Human interest (who would be interested in this story?)
4. Libel, attribution, quotation, rights of privacy, ethics, and "good taste": what is appropriate for television and radio news and why?
5. Readers for television: copy read on-camera by a news anchor
6. Voice over copy for television: copy read by a news anchor while video is played.
7. Story structure, leads, language: how to write the story
 - a. Lead
 - b. The 5 W's and the H: who, what, when, where, why and how?
 - c. Ending
8. Rules of "readability" for broadcast scripts
 - a. Proper ways to write numbers
 - b. How to edit copy
 - c. Pronunciation guides
9. Grammar, precision and clarity
 - a. Punctuation for writing vs. speaking
 - b. Use of adverbs/adjectives
 - c. Parallel construction and agreement of subject/verb
 - d. Word choice, writing for emphasis
 - e. Colloquial expressions
 - f. Pronouns/proper nouns
 - g. Comparisons, attribution
 - h. First person vs. third person
 - i. Level of specificity
 - j. Sensitivity to labels, gender and sexual orientation
 - k. Diversity: racial and ethnic identity, disabilities, age

Suggested Reading Other Than Required Textbook

A variety of forms of contemporary journalism for print, online and broadcast media.

Examples of Required Writing Assignments

Read the chapter on leads and endings, and be prepared to write several alternate leads and endings to a script given out in class.

Examples of Outside Assignments

Write and edit a two- to three-minute news segment that adheres to broadcast news style and summarizes the news story.

Instruction Type(s)

Lecture