News Writing
COMM 2311
M/W 1 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.
CM 156

Syllabus

Class Information
Required Text: AP Stylebook 2018
Room: CM 156 | Levelland

Instructor Information
Kati Moody | CM 158
kmoody@southplainscollege.edu
The best way to reach me will be via email. You can also set up a time to meet with me in-person during my office hours. Please send me an email to set up an appointment to ensure I am in my office. For all emails, please allow 24 hours for a response. If you email me on the weekend, I might not return your email until Monday morning.

Office Hours
MW: 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. | 2:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.
T/Th: 11 a.m. – noon
Friday: 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Objectives
- Define News & Journalism
- Newsworthiness
- AP Style
- Inverted Pyramid
- Identifying Sources
- Conducting Interviews
- Transcribing Interviews
- Objectivity, Transparency & Credibility
- Fact Checking
- News Distribution

Class Description: In this course, students will learn the difference between news and information, how to report news, how journalism ethics apply to news, the differences between hard news and soft news, as well as how news is distributed among traditional and digital mediums.

Attendance: This is an in-person class and attendance is mandatory. The participation grade in this class will come from student attendance and participation in class discussions.

Access: Students will be required to access Blackboard weekly to complete discussions and journal entries; thus, students should ensure they have adequate access to internet and/or a computer or smartphone to complete the assignments.

Grading: The grades in this class will comprise totals for AP Style Quizzes, Weekly Discussions and/or Journal Entries, Writing Assignments, and a Final Project.

AP Style Quizzes: (5 @ 20 points each) 100 points
Weekly Discussions: (5 @ 20 points each) 100 points
Writing Assignments: (12 @ 25 points each) 300 points
Final Project: 300 points
Participation: 200 points

**Grades subject to change at the discretion of the professor. Any changes will be communicated to the students in class and via Blackboard.

Phase 1: What is journalism? What is news?
August 26 – September 19
- Define journalism
- Define news
- News worthiness
- Inverted pyramid
- 5Ws and the H
- AP Style
- Sources, Interviews, Writing

Phase 2: Finding a story & Identifying sources
September 23 – October 22
- Who's you're audience?
- What's important to them?
- What's impactful to them?
- What's relevant to them?
- Who are credible sources?
- What type of sources add a human element?
- How do you pitch a news story?

Phase 3: In-depth & investigative journalism
- How does journalism make an impact?
- What types of stories matter to people?
- How do you uncover facts?
- Follow the money
- On the record versus background versus off the record
- Do you publish?

- Spotlight

Final News Story
- Pitch: Due Nov. 20 (In Class) (100 points)
- Interviews Scheduled: Due Nov. 25 (In Class)
- Rough Draft/Final Drafts Due: Dec. 4 (In Class) & Dec. 10 (Blackboard) (200 points)

This schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes will be communicated to the student in class and via Blackboard.

Intellectual Exchange Statement
In South Plains College courses, the instructor will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group difference and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world and about ourselves. By promoting intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

Disabilities Statement
Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716- 2577, Lubbock Centers (located at the Lubbock Downtown Center) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302.

Non-Discrimination Statement
South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806- 716-2360.

Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement
If you are pregnant, or have given birth within six months, under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To activate accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Health and Wellness Center. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529
or email dburleson@southplainscollege.edu for assistance.
CARE (Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation)
Team
South Plains College is committed to ensuring the safety, health, and well-being of its students and community. To support its campus community SPC has a CARE Team. This

is a dedicated group of campus professionals responsible for assessing and responding to students who could benefit from academic, emotional, or psychological support, as well as those presenting risk to the health or safety of the community. If you see someone experiencing challenges, appearing distressed, posing a threat to their safety or someone else's safety, or causing a significant disruption to the SPC community, please submit a CARE Team referral. You may also submit a referral for yourself if you would like additional support. NOTE: In cases where a person's behavior poses an imminent threat to you or another, contact 911.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement
Texas Government Code 411.2031, et al. authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations and Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to the Campus Carry page at: http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuscarry.php

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

Cheating & Plagiarism

Dishonesty of any kind on examinations or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination, obtaining information during an examination from the textbook or from the examination paper of another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, illegal entry or unauthorized presence in an office are examples of cheating.
Complete honesty is required of the student in the presentation of any and all phases of course work. This applies to quizzes of whatever length, as well as to final examinations, to daily reports and to term papers.
Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgment, is plagiarism; therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism.

Artificial Intelligence

The use of any artificial intelligence to help in the writing or completion of any projects for this class will result in an automatic zero for the assignment and referral to the Dean of Students for further action.

Artificial intelligence is a tool that used throughout many industries and businesses; however, this is a class to teach you how to create and understand advertising and advertising campaigns. Any outside assistance from other students or unauthorized sources is strictly forbidden for any class assignments.

AI applications such as ChatGPT, OpenAI, Bard, Grammarly, WordTune and others are advanced language models designed to aid and engage in meaningful conversations, as well as, generate and revise content. AI is intended to supplement learning, stimulate critical thinking, and enhance academic discourse. However, its use comes with certain responsibilities.

· **Academic Integrity:**
Using AI to generate academic work, including essays, reports, or assignments, without proper attribution is a violation of SPC academic integrity policies. Plagiarism undermines the learning process and is strictly prohibited. Students must ensure that their work reflects their own ideas, research, synthesis, and analysis and appropriately cites all sources, including AI.
· **Collaboration and Consultation:**
While AI can be a valuable resource, it is essential to strike a balance between seeking assistance and maintaining personal responsibility. Collaboration with peers, consulting instructors, and utilizing other approved learning resources should be prioritized. Overreliance on AI for solutions without actively engaging in the learning process is discouraged and can be grounds for academic integrity violations. Utilizing AI as a tool for brainstorming or research is allowed but the writing should be the student's own work and thoughts.
· **Critical Thinking and Originality:**
AI usage can provide suggestions and information, but it is essential to critically evaluate the responses and exercise independent thought. Relying solely on AI for answers deprives students of the opportunity to develop their analytical and problem-solving skills. In assignments where originality, creativity, and independent thinking are valued, AI would be detrimental to the student learning process. Critical thinking and originality emphasize the importance of independent thinking in all academic endeavors as part of the student's learning experience apart from outside influence and offers the student the opportunity to refine their unique, individual voice through academic discourse with other students and faculty.
· **Ethical Use and Bias Awareness:**
AI is trained on large amounts of data from the internet, which may include biased or inaccurate information. Be mindful of the potential for bias and critically evaluate the

responses provided by AI. Therefore, when using AI, just like with using any other database, students must verify that the information is from reliable sources, question any potential biases, and ensure that the information and sources used in the paper are neutral, peer-reviewed sources.

· **Responsible Engagement:**

Students should engage with AI in a respectful and responsible manner and avoid using offensive language, discriminatory remarks, or engaging in any form of harassment or inappropriate behavior. Students should also uphold the standards of respectful communication in addressing both AI and fellow classmates.

· **Compliance with South Plains College Policies:**

Policies regarding the appropriate use of AI in South Plains College courses are set by instructional departments and individual instructors. Appropriate use of AI may range from strict prohibition to assignments they may require the use of AI. Misusing or violating the guidelines outlined in this syllabus warning may result in disciplinary action, including academic penalties. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the specific course policies regarding the use of AI and adhere to them throughout the semester.

Remember, AI can be a tool to support your learning in certain courses and assignments, but it cannot replace the critical thinking, creativity, and independent work that are integral to your overall academic growth