



# COMM 2311: News Gathering & Writing I

## Course Syllabus: Fall 2019

"Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide responsible, exemplary learning opportunities."

### Mandy Smith

**Office:** Humanities Building - Office 116

**Phone:** (Office) 903-434-8254 (Cell) 903-466-6377

**Email:** msmith@ntcc.edu

Office Hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Online
	1:30-5:30	1:30-5:30		1:30-5:30		NA

*The information contained in this syllabus is subject to change without notice. Students are expected to be aware of any additional course policies presented by the instructor during the course.*

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

3 credit hours.

Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture each week.

Fundamentals of writing for the mass media. Includes instruction in professional methods and techniques for gathering, processing and delivering content.

### COURSE GOAL:

The goal of this course is to help students develop a variety of skills needed for journalistic writing including interviewing, reporting, writing, editing and revising. Students should acquire and apply these techniques to a number of journalism writing styles comprising of news, feature, opinion, sports and entertainment.

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S):

Harrower, Tim. *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*

**PUBLISHER:** Boston: McGraw-Hill

**ISBN NUMBER:** 13:978-0-07-337891-6

### RECOMMENDED READING(S):

A selection of articles from various newspapers and news media-based websites.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate proper media writing and editing styles.
2. Modify writing styles to fit various media platforms.
3. Demonstrate effective information gathering skills and techniques.
4. Demonstrate understanding of laws, ethics, and responsibilities of media writing.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Working in a spirit of inquiry and dialogue, upon successful completion of this course, you will:

1. Apply invention strategies that generate topics and ideas suitable for composing in a variety of journalistic writing styles
2. Apply a variety of organizational strategies, for reporting, interviewing and writing, which use critical thinking skills to develop a progression of ideas.
3. Apply a variety of revision strategies that clarify and enhance the writer's approach to the topic.

## LECTURES & DISCUSSIONS:

Lectures will be supplemented by the reading assignments given in class. You are required to read assignments and participate in classroom discussions.

## COURSE/ASSIGNMENTS GRADES:

Your assignments will be evaluated using the following point values:

Newspaper articles 5@ 100 points	500	Points
Online publication stories 4 @ 50 points each	200	Points
Current event quizzes 10 @ 10 points each	100	Points
Final clip book	200	Points
<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>1000</u></b>	<b><u>Points</u></b>

## ASSIGNMENTS:

Conscientious and timely completion of assignments is essential for success in this journalism writing course. All assignments must be typed in AP style and submitted in class on the due date.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

During the semester, you are required to complete a variety of news writing assignments that will be graded and published in *The Eagle* newspaper and/or on the newspaper website.

Please follow these instructions when writing your papers:

- Writing assignments must be typed in 12 pt. Times font.
- Double-space and no indent.
- News writing assignments vary in length according to the type of article assigned. Length of stories will be discussed with the instructor when the assignment is given.
- Pay attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. Articles will be written using AP style.
- Deadlines for all writing assignment will be assigned during class or lab time.
- Submit your papers to your instructor in class or through email.
- **Professional journalism depends on deadlines. Therefore you will be expected to meet all writing assignment deadlines or lose points toward your final grade. Writing assignments, including rough drafts, must be submitted on the due date in order to receive full credit.**

## READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are expected to read all reading assignments before coming to class. Students may be asked to respond to readings by writing in class or during class discussions. Failure to read and respond effectively to the reading assignments will affect your grade in the course.

## TESTS/EXAMS:

Current event quizzes will be given as pop-quizzes throughout the semester. Students should be prepared for the pop-quizzes each class period. Students will also study AP Style and may be subject to random AP style quizzes throughout the semester.

## COURSE EVALUATIONS:

Toward the end of the course you will be asked to complete an online course evaluation. Students are encouraged to fill out an online evaluation for each of their courses. This will be your opportunity to share important feedback on each of the courses you take at NTCC and the faculty member who teaches the class. Please watch for info about the evaluation on your NTCC email account and make sure you participate in evaluating your experiences in the classroom.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS:**

### **COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

To complete this course successfully, you should do the following:

- Participate in the course activities.
- Read all of the reading assignments.
- Complete both in-class and outside writing assignments.
- Participate actively and meaningfully in all discussions.
- Prepare and submit all writing assignments on time.
- Create a portfolio of work for submission at the end of the course.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Please try to make it to class on time. Many times we begin writing (including current event quizzes) and reading assignments at the start of class; if you're late you will not be able to make up those assignments. Please don't engage in casual conversations during our lecture, discussion and group times or while we're working on other assignments. I reserve the right to act as necessary to maintain a productive class environment, including asking disruptive students to leave, and in extreme circumstances, dropping chronic disruptors from my course. I will not tolerate uncivil behavior toward other class members during class discussions. Uncivil behavior includes interrupting others while they have the floor, rude responses to the ideas expressed by others, and the use of racial, ethnic, sexual, gender, or religious slurs.

### **WITHDRAWAL POLICY:**

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO DROP A COURSE OR WITHDRAW FROM THE COLLEGE. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN RECEIVING A PERFORMANCE GRADE, USUALLY A GRADE OF "F."

### **NTCC ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT:**

"Students are expected to complete course work in an honest manner, using their intellects and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. This course will follow the NTCC Academic Honesty policy stated in the Student Handbook."

### **ACADEMIC ETHICS:**

The college expects all students to engage in academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuit. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. Refer to the student handbook for more information on this subject.

### **ADA STATEMENT:**

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations. An appointment can be made with Katherine Belew, Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations located in Student Services. She can be reached at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the [NTCC website - Special Populations](#).

### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA):**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to

whom the rights have transferred are considered “eligible students.” In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child’s college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as “directory information” may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as: the student’s name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

## **Syllabus Acknowledgement Statement**

**A syllabus is a binding contract between the student, instructor and the institution. As such, all students enrolled in this course are asked to closely read the syllabus and sign this syllabus acknowledgment.**

**By signing the acknowledgment, you are agreeing to the following:**

1. I have read the syllabus and understand the course description and course goals, the student learning outcomes, the expectations of the instructor, the assignment directions, the section on academic ethics and honesty, and the responsibilities I have as a student in this course. If I do not believe that I can complete the requirements outlined in the syllabus, it is my responsibility to withdraw from the course.

(Please circle one)

A. Agree

B. Disagree

2. I have read the information provided in the syllabus on academic ethics and honesty. I understand that if I am discovered to be cheating or colluding on work assigned in this class, I could receive a zero for the assignment. I also understand that if I am found to have submitted a paper for credit that contains any amount of plagiarized material, I could receive a grade of "F" for the assignment or for the entire course.

(Please circle one)

A. Agree

B. Disagree

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_