BC/DJ 111  
MWF 10:30-11:30 am  
Section 01  
TC 205  

Instructor:  
Keith Corso, Ph.D.  
Program Coordinator for Communication Studies and Speech – If you’re interested in picking up a Communications Studies major or minor or a social media minor, just ask...we’d love to have you.  

Office Address:  
Thompson Clark 309  
Office Phone:  
724-946-7235  
Campus Mail Address:  
Box 114  
Email address:  
corsokf@westminster.edu  

Office Hours:  
M – 11:40-12:40  
R – 12:40 – 1:40  
Others by appointment  

Education:  
B.A. Westminster College, M.A. The University of Akron, PhD Capella University  
Work Experience: Account and Project Manager, Marcus Thomas Advertising, Cleveland, OH; Director of Marketing and Promotions, Connoisseur Communications, Youngstown, OH; Continuity Director, WBBG/WBBW, Youngstown, OH; Music Director and Staff Announcer, WYFM, Youngstown, OH; Program Director, WPIC, Sharon, PA.  

Research Interests:  
Media Literacy, Social Media education, the scholarship of Star Trek, Hero archetype on communication.  

Outside Interests:  
Baseball fan, television, technology, Star Trek.  

Section 1.0 Course Information  

1.1 About the Course  
Writing is an important skill to develop and it is something you can develop. Writing for the media is a specialized skill and writing for electronic media I consider a finely developed skill. You may have taken a journalism class which focused on writing for print outlets like the Holcad. Writing for electronic media, specifically radio, television and multimedia is a different matter altogether. In these cases, we write for the ear. This means we write to make the copy easy to digest when it is listened to either by itself or as part of a video or multimedia presentation.  

In this class we will focus on the basics of writing and the basics of gathering material for a story and then getting that information out in either a radio or television script. Most of our time in class will be spent writing and doing.
1.2 Learning Outcomes
At the end of the course students will be able to:

- Write new stories under deadline.
- Write useable scripts and copy for Titian Radio News, Westminster Cable, and WCN24/7.
- Demonstrate an understanding of target audiences and demographics.
- Utilize the basic script formats, mechanics, and styles for writing stories in electronic newsrooms.
- Analyze story ideas, content and news items for newsworthiness criteria used by journalists and news organizations.
- Gather, process and assemble information as news stories in proper broadcast script formats.
- Analyze stories and news coverage for ethical issues.
- Apply key issues of libel, privacy, Pennsylvania’s wiretapping law, and copyright.
- Analyze electronic messages and content from a media-savvy position of one who produces content.

1.3 Course Assessment
Once we know what a student should be able to do after a course is over (or while it is in motion), we have to figure out if in fact they can actually do it. That’s where assessment comes in. You know assessment better as the assignments that are part of a course (tests, papers, speeches, etc.). Here is how the final grade will be calculated this semester.

Writing Assignments/Exercises – 30% of final grade
The majority of what you do in this class as far as writing will be done in class but occasionally there are outside assignments that will be required. Since this is a writing class, a significant part of the final grade is what you do on the writing assignments.

Weekly Current Events Quizzes – 20% of final grade
You’ve heard this before I hop, but if you are going to write news, you should be aware of the news. Being informed is an essential part of the life of a news writer/reporter as well as a productive citizen. These weekly short quizzes are designed to make sure you are staying on top of the big current events happening in the country and state. I will give you some sources to stay on top of so you can be prepared for these quizzes.

Midterm and Final – 30% of final grade
We will have two tests in this class at the mid-point and during the final period. Obviously the midterm will cover everything up to that point. The final will mostly cover material from the midterm on but there will be some cumulative elements.

Visual Slideshow Essay – 20% of the final grade
This is an assignment that pulls together your script writing ability and the ability to write to pictures. You will seek out a topic for this, get the photos, and write and produce a visual, narrated slide show for this project.
Final Grade Calculation

At the end of the semester when all of the points are totaled an average number of points is calculated. That average number, or percentage, is converted into a letter grade as detailed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-66</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-63</td>
<td>D-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 or below</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final grades are not necessarily rounded up. Final determination is made by the course instructor.

Assessment of scripts- You will write copy for electronic media geared toward the target audiences for Titan Radio and our television news magazine, as well as wcn247.com. Proper grammar and spelling is required. You will lose five points on a script for each spelling error, grammar mistake and any failure to format and rules under the BC writing style.

As broadcast style rules and elements are presented in class, you are asked to integrate it into your writing. Your assignments will be graded accordingly. All news copy must include proper attribution and provide the key information of who, what, why, when, where, and how. We will also be writing copy that fits time constraints. Failure to write copy that fits the time limitations can cause problems on the air. Failure to write scripts to match time restrictions will impact the score of the script.

ACCURACY IS PARAMOUNT. FACTUAL ERRORS WILL OPEN THE DOOR TO LAWSUITS. ANY SCRIPT WITH FACTUAL ERRORS WILL AUTOMATICALLY SCORE ZERO.

I will always deduct 5 points for each failure to incorporate broadcast style & script mechanics; grammar issues; missing key information; weak leads sentences; lacks of proper attribution; script mechanic or format errors. Assignments that can receive an A grade must be free of errors, follow proper broadcast style and format, include necessary facts and information and be properly attributed.

The bottom line on getting an A grade on a script involves turning in copy that requires no editing/correction.

To qualify for a B on an assignment, your writing would require only minor editing/corrections. It is correct with style and formatting.

Scripts that require significant editing because of content, grammar or style or format mistakes, will fall into the C category. Any scripts that bury the lead, fail to answer all the news questions, have significant style, lack of attribution, format errors, etc., would clearly fall below the average standard result in the fact that serious editing and significant rewriting would be required.

Section 2.0 Materials
Broadcast News and Writing Stylebook, 6th Edition
Robert A. Papper
2017 Routledge
Section 3.0 Policies

3.1 Attendance
Attendance and polices regarding it are often sticking points for college classes. Being in class is important for a number of reasons.

- Not all material is covered in course readings and the time in class provides this additional material.
- Assignments are discussed in detail in class and this information is essential to succeeding on assignments and in the class.
- This is an opportunity to have questions answered and get some help on understanding content and often another student’s questions can help you.
- Developing attendance at your college level classes develops the habits of attendance that your eventual job will require.

The policy in this class is simple. You are required to be here. I do understand that at times you can’t make it due to an illness or something similar. Just like an actual job allows a few days for sickness or other personal reasons, I build in some of these to this class. Here is the way it works.

You are allowed three (3) unexcused absences for this class the entire semester. The following are examples of UNEXCUSED ABSENCES.

- You are sick and can’t make it to your class (just remember that even if you go to the health center and they give a slip, it’s NOT EXCUSED).
- You don’t feel like going to class.
- You made arrangements for a doctor’s appointment at home for the class time (please schedule Dr. appointments around classes)
- You make arrangements to go home for a break and need to leave early.
- You are in a friend’s wedding and need to get home for the rehearsal.
- Your family schedules a vacation during classes (yes this has happened).

These are just a few that have come up in the past. If you aren’t sure if something is excused or not, ask.

After the three (3) excuses absences, the final grade in the class is reduced one step for EACH unexcused absence. For example, you have six unexcused absences for the semester. Three are freebies which leaves 4 unexcused. Your final grade in the class was a B+ but you lose one step in grade for each of the four, the final grade becomes a C.

The EXCEPTION to the policy would be what I call college RELEASE TIME. This means you are missing class because of a scheduled college activity such as travel for a college athletic event or a field trip for another class. In these cases, you are excused.

If you miss class? Remember the following:

- Whatever assignments (big or small) that were assigned, you are responsible for.
- Check with someone you know you can count on who attended the class. Get any notes, information or assignments from them.
- Never ask if you missed anything important.
• Please don’t expect me to go over material covered in class with you on an individual basis. Time is at a premium and I won’t be able to teach a class twice for an absence.

3.2 Grade Appeals
I’m more than happy to help you understand grades and grade sheets in this class. If you can’t read my writing or I added things up incorrectly or even entered a grade wrong into the online system, just let me know and I’ll take care of it.

However, if you wish to dispute a grade (think you should have had more points on one section of a speech or assignment), you will need to submit a written appeal within 48 hours from receiving your grade. Please know that this ISN’T required because I want to discourage appeals, I just want THOUGHTFUL AND INFORMED appeals. The written appeal forces learners to formulate a reasoned argument.

All appeals should include the following:
• A paragraph detailing what you are appealing;
• Why it should be changed;
• To what it should be changed;
• Evidence to support the request

For the why section above never include something like, “I worked really hard” or “I really need a B- in this class for my scholarships.” These just aren’t good “why” statements.

You should email the document to me attached to an email with your last name, class code, and Assignment Appeal in the subject line (Corso, BC 111, Assignment Appeal).

3.3 Electronic Device Usage
To tell you the truth, I’ve struggled with this policy and whether to include it. However, I’ve decided on a fairly rigid policy which I will explain in a bit. First, the policy.

I DO NOT permit the use of cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices during class unless you need these pre-approved learning reasons. When taking notes for this class, use a pen and paper. It’s actually more efficient and promotes better retention of information. Plus, an electronic device presents a distraction that is difficult to overcome. If you need to use a tablet or computer because of a disability, then see the Disability Office on campus to secure the proper authorization.

Now the why. Why do I have this policy?
• People using devices are splitting their attention and often miss important information such as class content and assignment updates.
• I don’t really want to repeat myself and that happens a lot with people who are distracted my phones and other electronics.
• It’s just plain rude to me and others in the class.

The following article spells out the benefit of using your handwriting:
http://mentalfloss.com/article/33508/4-benefits-writing-hand
Being on computers is a part of this class experience so obviously I can’t say no to using the computers, however I ask that once the business of class begins there is no checking of social media or email or online news sources unless otherwise instructed to do so.

3.4 Misinformation
Misinformation (other than plagiarism—see below) will result in a penalty. When a student provides information that is false, inaccurate, or incomplete in such a way that it misleads or tends to mislead the audience, he or she violates the ethical duty of the speaker. At the very least, any student who significantly misinforms the class will be required to give a speech of apology and retract the misinforming statements. Grade penalties, up to failing the assignment in question, may also be assessed. The severity of misinformation depends on the extent to which it is avoidable, the extent to which it varies from accepted knowledge, failure to cite qualified sources of the information, and other factors. Any student concerned that her or his speech might violate this policy should contact me ahead of time and we can resolve the issue.

3.5 Time Penalty
You are required to complete your speech in the time allocated. You will be penalized 1 point for every 10 seconds under the time limit, and 1 point for every 20 seconds over the time limit. Students who go extensively beyond the allocated time may be asked to stop speaking, whether they are finished or not, as serious overtime speaking can disrupt the speaking schedule and is unfair to the other students.

Section 4.0 Course Communication

4.1 Email
I try to let you know everything you need to know while we are in class. However, sometimes people need reminders and I like to have some things in writing. Any more long-form information I want to transmit outside of class will come in the form of an email. I only use the Westminster email address on file so don’t ask me to send to another email address. Get in the habit of checking your Westminster email on a daily basis at a minimum. This is important.

4.2 Remind.com
If I have a shorter, text-length piece of information for you I use a service called Remind.com. This allows me to send information to the entire class using an app and it saves my phone from having to store all your phone numbers. It’s a great and reliable service which I have used for a few years now with great results. You will be given the information that you need to sign up on the first day of class.

5.0 College Policies

5.1 Academic Integrity
Page 21 of your student handbook states:

Central to the purpose and pursuit of any academic community is academic integrity. All members of the Westminster Community, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators, are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity, in keeping with the philosophy and mission of the College.
The most flagrant violation of academic integrity is cheating on an exam or a quiz. Students caught participating in such an activity (either for their own or for another's benefit) will receive a course grade of "F," with no opportunity for the student to receive a "W" or "WF."

Other forms of scholastic dishonesty will be dealt with in a like manner. These may include (but are not limited to):

A. Copying/turning in another's work (e.g., a fellow student's, a past student’s, or work from the internet) as one's own.

B. Lending of one's work to another so that he/she may turn it in as his/her own.

C. Stealing class materials from students, the professor, or from the library.

D. Inhibiting another student from using library materials or other resources necessary for the class.

See the complete Student Handbook (beginning on page 21) for more details and specifics about academic integrity.

https://www.westminster.edu/campus/services/handbook.cfm

5.2 Disability Statement
Westminster College is committed to providing services and support for students with physical, psychological, visual, hearing or learning disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. All students who seek accommodations for diagnosed disabilities should contact the director of the Office of Disability Resources for further information. Signed comprehensive medical documentation and/or test evaluations that indicate the nature of the disability and appropriate professional recommendations is required. Guidelines for the documentation can be obtained from the Office of Disability Resources. The disability resources director will review the documentation, determine if the student is eligible for services, and then coordinate the accommodations, auxiliary aids, academic support, and/or referrals as deemed appropriate, necessary, and within the current resources of the College. You can contact the Office of Disability Resources by calling 724-946-7192.

For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, contact the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students at 724-946-7110

The brochure for disability services can be accessed by using the link below.

http://www.westminster.edu/campus/services/pdf/disabilities.pdf
Section 6.0 Class Schedule

Below is the plan for the semester class by class. It is tentative and subject to change due to a number of circumstances that might arise. It is not a contract and should not be perceived that way.

Week One
8/28 – 8/30 – 9/1
Introduction to the Class and Syllabus
Writing for the ear and reader
Read Chapter 1

Week Two
9/4 – 9/6 – 9/8
Broadcast style and format
CE Quiz 9/8
Read Chapter 6

Week Three
9/11 – 9/13 – 9/15
News Hooks
News Values
Leads
CE Quiz 9/15
Read Chapters 2 and 10

Week Four
9/18 – 9/20 – 9/22
Writing basic readers
CE Quiz 9/22
Read Chapter 4 and 7

Week Five
9/25 – 9/27 – 9/29
More story writing
CE Quiz 9/29
Read Chapters 8 and 9

Week Six
10/2 – 10/4 – 10/6
Writing actualities and with sound bites
CE Quiz 10/6
Read Chapter 5
Week Seven
10/9 – 10/11 – 10/13
Conducting interviews
Gathering and editing your own sound
CE Quiz 10/13
Read Chapters 3

Week Eight
10/16 – 10/18 – 10/20
Midterm Week

Week Nine
10/23 – 10/25 – 10/27
Monday 10/23 No Class Mid Break
Writing to pictures
CE Quiz 10/27

Week Ten
10/30 – 11/1 – 11/3
Writing TV News
CE Quiz 11/3
Read Chapter 11

Week Eleven
11/6 – 11/8 – 11/10
Writing TV news
Introduction to the Visual Essay Assignment
CE Quiz 11/10
Read Chapter 12

Week Twelve
11/13 – 11/15 – 11/17
Longer form writing and scripting
Finding and using good photos
CE Quiz 11/17

Week Thirteen
11/20 – 11/22 – 11/24
Wednesday 11/22 & Friday 11/24 No Class Thanksgiving Break
Recording good audio
**Week Fourteen**
11/27 – 11/29 – 12/1
Production work on the Visual Essay Assignment

**Week Fifteen**
12/4 – 12/6 – 12/8
Visual Essay showcase in class

The final exam is given during the scheduled exam period which can be determined by reading the document at the following link.
https://my.westminster.edu/ICS/Portlets/ICS/Handoutportlet/viewhandler.ashx?handout_id=4139468e-19d5-4a6b-a145-ad0846901649