INTRODUCTION TO BROADCAST NEWS
COMM 240-001  FALL 2006  R.S. SMALL LIBRARY 002 MWF 9-9:50
(Term 067)

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Office Hours:  Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10-11 a.m. (or by appointment)
Homepage:  www.cofc.edu/~harwoodp (site used for additional course material)

Books and Equipment
•  A digital voice recorder- recommended model:  Olympus 8-hour recorder, Model VN-480PC (includes microphone and “earbuds”) available at Radio Shack and other stores (online too).  Price:  approx. $40
•  An analog tape recorder that uses standard (not mini) cassettes
•  A microphone that attaches to your tape recorder (optional)
•  Several standard-size (not “mini”) cassettes, 60 or 90 minutes
•  Recordable CD discs (especially for digital recordings)
•  Headset with microphone (for digital recordings/production)

Course Objectives:  This is an introductory broadcast journalism course that stresses the newsgathering process, as well as writing, reporting, ethical/legal issues, industry issues and trends, and the business of broadcasting.  You will do different types of radio news reports and radio newscasts that will be played before the class in a team newscast setting.  We will also look into cutting edge audio/video computer production software.  I also teach Television News Reporting (Comm 340) that is designed as a follow-up to this course.  So you are encouraged to take both, if this field really interests you, or if you just want to learn more about television news.

To Succeed in this Class:
•  Complete all homework and reporting assignments on time and in the formats that will be detailed.  Deadlines are crucial in the news business.
•  Show effort, imagination, and improvement
•  Take reporting assignments seriously—try to do them like a professional reporter would.  Don’t take the easy way out by interviewing friends and relatives for your stories—professionals would not do that!
•  Don’t miss class and be on time.  Coming in late is very distracting!
•  While attendance will not regularly be taken, excessive absences will surely impair your ability to keep up with all of the assignments involved in this class.
C of C’s New Plus/Minus Grading Scale—The following grading scale goes into effect this semester in the posting of midterm and final grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, F

Tests: There will be midterm exam and a final exam project. The midterm will cover Parts I and II in your book, “Radio-TV Newswriting Philosophy: Style and Methods” (Part I), “Legal and Ethical Concerns” (Part II), plus handouts and other material covered.  Midterm Exam Grading Scale: A 94-100; A- 90-93; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D+ 65-69; D 60-64; F 59 and under

Here is the letter-grade plus/minus grading system:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>D</td>
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Extra Credit Opportunities: You can have points added to your marks in this class by producing extra news articles on communication and media-related speakers and events at College of Charleston this semester. Up to three points can be added to your midterm exam grade, for example.

Radio Recording Equipment: Some basic, easy-to-use recording and editing equipment is available for your use in the C of C Student Media Center on Calhoun Street. This equipment can help with the quality of your reports. But you will also be shown how to produce your stories at home with the use of two tape recorders. Produced stories can be turned in on standard size cassette tapes, CDs and email.

***But please note that regular homework is not accepted via email.

Radio Reporting Stories: You will be given plenty of advance notice about due dates for reporting assignments, and you will be trained on how to do these stories. The assignments include: “man/person on the street,” “voicer” and “wrap” stories; a 10 minute “live on tape” interview; radio newscasts; an opinion/commentary piece; and a longer form final project newscast. Reporting assignments and newscasts will be given letter grades based on the following criteria: accuracy, enterprise/initiative; newsgathering skill, writing quality, production quality, scripting; and delivery. A reporting or newscast assignment can be turned in one class period late, but will automatically lose one letter grade. They will not be accepted after one class period late, meaning you will receive a zero for that assignment. Book homework assignments can be turned in one class late but will get a check-minus and won’t be accepted after that.

Final Grade Determination:

- Midterm and Final Exam Project  40 percent
- Reporting Assignments (averaged)  40 percent
- Homework, Quizzes, In-class work  20 percent
(Homework receives check plus, check or check minus. 24 assignments=60 points maximum using 2.5 points for check plus; 2.0 for check; and 1.5 for check minus system)

Weekly Schedule (subject to changes and modifications)

Week 1—August 23 and 25
- Course introduction
- Broadcast News Code of Ethics
- Start to view A&E Biography video on American broadcasting pioneer Edward R. Murrow

Week 2—August 28-September 1
- View rest of Murrow biography (short paper due next class)
- Legal and Ethical Concerns
- Notes on RTNDA focus group findings about public’s view on b’cast news
- Homework for Friday, Sept. 1: read pages 70-83 and do the six “Stop and Write” sections; also download RTNDA Code of Ethics (www.rtna.org)

Week 3—September 4-8
- How broadcast news writing differs from print style
- Homework for Wednesday, Sept. 6: In book, read Introduction and review Radio-TV News Terminology. Read pages 3-16 and answer all (10 total) the “Stop and Write” questions and exercises
- The importance of proper attribution and sourcing
- Homework for Friday, Sept. 8: Read pages 16-20 and do the three “Stop and Write” sections (attribution and quotes)
- Homework for Monday, Sept. 11: Read pages 20-30 and do the eight “Stop and Write” sections (contractions, adjectives and adverbs, verbs, numbers, symbols, abbreviations and individually voiced elements)
- Discuss next week’s field exercise

Week 4—September 11-15
- Covering stories for radio—field exercise on Wednesday and Friday this week: bring tape recorders to record interviews during class session for your “person on the street” assignment
- Log interviews to turn in on Monday, Sept. 18
- Go over “POS checklist”

Week 5—September 18-22
- Copy Editing and Leads
- For Wednesday, Sept. 20: read pages 31-32 (editing) and do copy editing handout exercise
- For Friday, Sept. 22: read pages 33-36 (copy preparation and leads) and do the one “Stop and Write” section. Write leads for five stories on page 96. Also write two anchor leads for your POS report
In class Friday: review page 96 and during class write leads only to four stories on page 95
Homework for Monday, Sept. 25: read pages 37-39 (The Body and Endings of Stories) and do the two “Stop and Write” sections.
Homework for Tuesday, Feb. 14: And write a 45 second full story for “Strike” story on page 104

Week 6—September 25-29
Monday, Sept. 25: write endings only to four stories on pages 138-139
Wednesday, Sept. 27: during class, do page 88 style test
For Friday, Sept. 29: read pages 39-43 on Actualities and Soundbites and Voicers, Wraparounds and Packages and do the two “Stop and Write” sections. Also, write two anchor leads or “package introductions” to your POS story.
Friday: review Koala leads from book and student POS anchor leads
For Monday: Write a 45 second full story from the “Strike” story on p. 104

Week 7—October 2-6 (Note—Tuesday, Oct. 3 is the last day to withdraw with a “W”)
Monday: review “Strike” story due today
Scripting and producing radio stories
Broadcast delivery—handouts and recording exercise (strike stories?) in class
For Wednesday, Oct. 4, read pages 58-68 (radio, TV and R-TV web site news story scripts) and write four scripts: a radio reader script, a radio actuality script, a TV reader script and a TV soundbite script for the story on page 117: Radio Actuality Story 1 (“Sickout”)
Friday, Oct. 6: Show radio production equipment at Student Media Center
First Draft Script for your POS story is due Friday, Oct. 6. It will be returned to you Monday. Final tape and script are due Wednesday, Oct. 11

Week 8—October 9-13
Further discuss production of “POS” wrap story due Wednesday
Start to review for Midterm Exam which is on Monday, Oct. 16
Wednesday, Oct. 11: POS tape and script due
For Friday, Oct. 13 do Style Test 6 on page 89 and write two stories on page 100 (to help prepare for midterm exam)

Week 9—October 16-20 (Midterm grades are due noon, Wednesday, Oct. 18)
Midterm Exam is Monday, Oct. 16
Play POS reports in class on Wednesday, Oct. 18 and Friday, Oct. 20
Return and review midterm exams

Week 10—October 23-27
Discuss “voicer” reports
• Do practice voicer report for Noise Capper story on page 138—due Monday, Oct. 23
• Continue to discuss “voicer” reports. Cover a story and turn in a voicer report for class on Friday, Oct. 27
• Friday, Oct. 27- “Voicer” report and script due
• Start to discuss two upcoming wrap report assignments and covering stories for radio

Week 11—October 30-November 3
• Continue to discuss “wrap” report assignments: issue/controversy report (due Friday, Nov. 10) and “natural sound” report (due Friday, Nov. 17)
• Go over computer editing/production in greater detail

Week 12—November 6-10
• No class Monday, Nov. 6 due to Fall Break
• Friday, Nov. 10: Issue/controversy report due
• Discuss “natural sound” story due next Friday, Nov. 17
• Discuss 10-minute interview assignment due Thursday, April 13

Week 13—November 13-17
• Continue to discuss “nat sound” assignment due Friday
• Discuss 10-minute interview due Monday, Nov. 22
• Friday, Nov. 17: “natural sound” report due

Week 14—November 20-24
• Monday, Nov. 22: 10 minute interviews are due
• Thanksgiving Holiday: No classes on Wednesday, Nov. 22 or Friday, Nov. 24
• Discuss Opinion/Commentary piece due Friday, Dec. 1
• Discuss newscasts and newscast scripting—newscast assignment due
  Wednesday, Nov. 29—will tape during class
• Read pages 47-50 (newscast organization)

Week 15—November 27-December 1
• Wednesday, Nov. 29: tape newscasts during class
• Opinion/Commentary Piece due Friday, Dec. 1
• Tuesday and Thursday: Continue to discuss Final Exam Newscast project
• Give handout on Final Exam Newscast Project

Week 16—December 4—last class
• Discuss Final Exam Newscast Project due on or before our Exam Date

FINAL EXAM DATE— Friday, Dec. 8, 8-11 a.m.. Final newscast projects due
(Final grades due Friday, December 15 by noon)