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Course Objectives:  This is a hands-on/learning-by-doing class.  You will learn about television newsgathering, writing, production and on-camera delivery by doing it.  This course also focuses on journalistic responsibilities and ethical concerns pertinent to broadcast news.  This course is somewhat technical in that you’ll be expected to learn how to operate video cameras, microphones, and video editing equipment and non-linear/computer video software.  You’ll learn how to plan and complete the different types of TV news stories and you’ll learn how to write, produce and deliver television newscasts.


Supplies:  A few mini-DV video tapes will be provided, but teams may need to purchase extra ones.  Teams and/or individuals will need to have headphones with microphone capabilities that will be used to record audio for your news reports.  Each team will need to purchase recordable DVDs.  Your reports can be turned in on these DVDS.  You may also be able to turn in projects via email.

Cameras and Editing Equipment:  We have expensive mini-DV cameras available for your shooting/reporting projects.  Once news teams are formed, each team will be assigned a camera kit.  Team members are responsible for taking care of this equipment.  The equipment must be turned in at end of the term, otherwise final grades will be withheld.

You will also be taught how to use non-linear (or digital) editing equipment located in the Addlestone Library, Education Center and your own personal computers if you have Windows XP.  You will also be exposed to editing software programs such as Adobe Premier, Windows Movie Maker and Sony Vegas.

Working in Teams to Shoot TV News:  Shooting TV news stories is usually a group process of two or more people.  In this class we will set up news teams in which you will work together to shoot and edit news reports.  A team grade is given for each team reporting assignment.  Member contributions will be noted on each team script.
Work Outside of Class: This class will require a time commitment needed to plan, shoot and edit these news and feature stories. Efforts will be made to organize teams with students who have compatible schedules.

Specific Reporting and Writing Assignments:
- Team Reports (POS, Q & A, Music Montage, VO, VO/SOTS, PKGs)
- Individual writing and delivering of TV “live reports” and newscasts
- Homework assignments from your book and other sources dealing with TV news writing, research and news judgment

Grading Reports: Your reporting projects and some other assignments will be given letter grades based on: accuracy, enterprise and newsgathering skills shown, writing, scripting, production quality, delivery, meeting the deadline, and overall quality.

Exam: There will be a midterm exam. There won’t be a final exam. We will most likely use our exam period to record a final individual newscast.

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:

- A = 4.00
- B = 3.00
- C = 2.00
- D = 1.00
- A- = 3.67
- B- = 2.67
- C- = 1.67
- F = 0.00
- B+ = 3.33
- C+ = 2.33
- D+ = 1.33

Deadlines: A crucial part of the news business is being able to work quickly, efficiently and accurately in order to meet deadlines. Reporting assignments turned in late cost one letter grade for each class session late. Regular homework assignments turned in late will receive an automatic check minus and won’t be accepted after one class period late.

Attendance: While attendance will not be taken every class, assignments will be made in class without advance notice that will be due the next session—such as the homework from your book which may not be listed on the syllabus. Missing class can result in failing to complete assigned work which will surely affect your progress in this class. And because you are working in teams, everyone must be responsible to do his/her share of the work.

Final Grade Determination:
- Team Reporting Projects 20 percent
- Live Reports and Newscasts 20 percent
- Midterm Exam 20 percent
- Term paper 20 percent
- Homework, in-class work 20 percent
Weekly Schedule (subject to change)
Week 1—August 22 and 24
  • Course introduction
  • Journalistic ethics and responsibilities/legal considerations (Chapter 11)

Week 2—August 29 and 31
  • News, news sources and the TV newsroom (Chapters 1-3)
  • View videos of C of C grads working in local TV news

Week 3—September 5 and 7
  • Form news teams
  • Camera operations (Chapters 7 and 8) and editing videotape (Chapter 9)
  • Teams will shoot “Person on the Street” reports that are due Tuesday, Sept. 19
  • View examples of MOS reports and scripts

Week 4—September 12 and 14
  • Continue with editing videotape instruction
  • Linear versus non-linear editing
  • Writing television news (Chapters 5 and 6)
  • Scripting TV news

Week 5—September 19 and 21
  • Tuesday, Sept. 19—POS reports due today
  • Writing TV news (cont’d)
  • Discuss “Q&A” team project due Tuesday, Oct. 3

Week 6—September 26 and 28
  • Using public records (Chapter 4)
  • Thursday—Distribute Study Guide for Midterm Exam (Thursday, Oct. 5)
  • More newswriting/news judgment exercises

Week 7—October 3 and 5 (Oct. 3 is last day to withdraw with a “W” grade)
  • Tuesday, Oct. 3-- Q&A reports due today
  • Preview Midterm Exam
  • Thursday, Oct. 5—Midterm Exam
  • Discuss “music montage” assignment due on Thursday, Oct. 12

Week 8—October 10 and 12
  • Return Midterm Exams
  • Discuss shooting and editing news footage or “b-roll”
  • Thursday, Oct. 12-- “Music montage” video due

Week 9—October 17 and 19 (Midterm Grades are due Wednesday, Oct. 18)
• Writing VO and VO/SOT (voice over and voice over/sound on tape) reports
• VO and VO/SOT stories are due Tuesday, Oct. 24

Week 10—October 24 and 26
• Tuesday, Oct. 24—Team VO and VO/SOT reports are due today
• Discuss TV news packages—first team package (issue/controversy) due
  Thursday, Nov. 16
• Delivery, live reporting and anchoring (Chapter 10)
• More on live reporting; more on news packages
• Will tape Live Report I on Tuesday, Oct. 31

Week 11—October 31 and November 2
• Tuesday, Oct. 31—Tape Live Report I during class
• Thursday, Nov. 2—view Live #1 and prepare for Live #2
• Discuss term paper guidelines- students should start reading “Bias” book

Week 12—November 7 and 9
• Tuesday, Nov. 7-- Fall Break
• Thursday, Nov. 9—Shoot Live Report #2 during class

Week 13—November 14 and 16
• Tuesday: View Live Report II
• Team issue/controversy package due Thursday, Nov. 16
• Discuss Team Package II report (feature story) due Thursday, Nov. 30
• Producing and writing newscasts
• Write a newscast using a newspaper as source material

Week 14—November 21 and 23
• Tape Newscast #1 on Tuesday, Nov. 21
• Thursday: Thanksgiving—no class today

Week 15—November 28 and 30 (last week of classes—classes end Monday, Dec. 4)
• Tuesday, Nov. 29-- Tape Newscast I
• Thursday, Nov. 30—Team Package II (feature) due today

Final Exam Period—Tuesday, December 12, 4-7 p.m.
• Record final newscast
• “Bias” paper due
• Return all C of C equipment
• Extra Credit Team or Individual Packages due
  (Final Grades are due Friday, December 15)

KEY ASSIGNMENT DATES (subject to change)
• Tuesday, Sept. 19—Team POS reports due
• Tuesday, Oct. 3—Team Q&A reports due
• Thursday, Oct. 5—Midterm Exam
• Thursday, Oct. 12—Team Music Montage video due
• Tuesday, Oct. 24—Team VO and VO/SOT due
• Tuesday, Oct. 31—Live Report I during class
• Thursday, Nov. 9—Live Report II during class
• Thursday, Nov. 16—Team Package I due
• Tuesday, Nov. 21—Newscast I during class
• Thursday, Nov. 30—Team Package II due
• Tuesday, Dec. 12—Tape Newscast II and turn in “Bias” term paper

NOTE: In this class, you have the potential to start to put together a professional television resume or audition tape used to apply for jobs in this field. So keep this in mind and be sure to save all the things you do and shoot in this class: scripts, video, stand ups, live reports, packages, etc.