COMMON COURSE OUTLINE: Course discipline/number/title: MCOM 1245: Writing for Mass Media

A. CATALOG DESCRIPTION
1. Credits: 3
2. Hours/Week: 3
3. Prerequisites (Course discipline/number): College level reading and writing
4. Co-requisites (Course discipline/number): None
5. MnTC Goals (if any): NA

This course will introduce students to writing copy for a range of mass media including print and broadcast journalism, public relations, advertising, social media and web publications. Students will learn to gather information and become proficient in conventions and style for publishing/broadcasting for each medium.

B. DATE LAST REVISED (Month, year): September, 2012

C. OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS:
1. Basic writing techniques and conventions
2. Grammar, parts of speech, spelling and punctuation
3. Journalistic style
4. Sources, research, interviewing and attribution
5. The structure of news stories
6. Basics of photo journalism
7. Writing for print sources
8. Reporting with audio and video
9. Writing for broadcasting
10. Writing for journalism and social media
11. Writing advertising copy
12. Writing for public relations
13. Regulations and ethics in media writing

D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (GENERAL): The student will be able to:
1. Name and recognize of parts of speech (noun, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections).
2. Recognize common grammar, punctuation and spelling problems.
3. Write a short descriptive essay using correct grammar and spelling.
4. Define the concept of journalistic style.
5. Use the Associated Press Stylebook for to correct common style errors.
6. Define the terms attribution and plagiarism.
7. Explain how to avoid plagiarism and how to use effective paraphrasing.
8. Edit copy for spelling, grammar, style and punctuation.
9. Describe the inverted pyramid.
10. Write effective headlines and lead paragraphs for news copy.
11. Explain the “rule of thirds” as it relates to photo journalism.
12. Write effective captions for photographs.
13. Distinguish between hard news, feature stories and opinion/editorial pieces.
14. Write a news story from a given collection of facts and quotes.
15. Write a feature story from a given collection of facts and quotes.
16. Name the differences between writing stories for print and writing stories for broadcast.
17. Discuss the ethical editing of photographs, video and audio.
18. Write an audio news story using an actuality.
19. Write a video news story incorporating voice over and interview footage.
20. Write a script for a basic newscast.
21. Describe the major outlets for media organizations on the internet (social media, blogs, and websites).
22. Name and explain the elements of backpack journalism and lateral reporting.
23. Write copy for an advertisement and select accompanying graphics and photos.
24. Construct a storyboard for a television advertisement.
25. Name the special constraints of advertising on the internet.
D. LEARNING OUTCOMES (GENERAL): The student will be able to: Continued...
26. Describe the main functions of a public relations professional.
27. Write a news release for a business of organization.
28. Write an effective public relations letter for a campaign.
29. Explain the main components of copyright law and broadcast regulations.
30. Explain the main legal components of defamation.

E. LEARNING OUTCOMES (MNTC): NA

F. METHODS FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT LEARNING:
May include any of the following:
1. Objective exams
2. Quizzes
3. Small group discussions and projects
4. Oral presentations
5. Written Assignments
6. Essay Exams
7. A portfolio of projects/prototypes made during the semester
8. Or any other activities deemed appropriate by an individual instructor

G. RCTC CORE OUTCOME(S) ADDRESSED:
- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Global Awareness/Diversity
- Civic Responsibility
- Personal/Professional Accountability
- Aesthetic Response

H. SPECIAL INFORMATION (if any): None