COURSE NUMBER ---- MST 341

COURSE TITLE ---- BROADCAST NEWSWRITING

This course is designed for junior and senior level students with an interest in news, news writing, broadcast journalism, or television production.

I do not have regular office hours but do have access to the office at 321 Brown and may let you know of some hours I will be there, during the semester. Questions can be addressed during class time or after class. I can also schedule a conference before or after class if needed. I can be reached anytime by e-mail at rjbuckle@uncg.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION ---- Writing and planning for broadcast media.

COURSE OBJECTIVES ---- During the course we will concentrate on learning what qualifies as news and how to turn factual information into a story. We will also learn how to work within the limitations of the medium and how to take advantage of its strengths. Upon completion of the course you should be able to write a variety of news stories within all the common formats, using video and interviews to create broadcast copy. You will also learn how to create a newscast using those stories; organizing show segments, graphic support, and news of the day to demonstrate your writing ability. The successful student can use these skills to acquire an entry-level writing job in the broadcast industry. We will also discuss how to find a job in broadcasting.

CLASSWORK ---- Your course material will come from several sources - the required text, class discussion, handouts during class time and other material that is brought into class (usually video). For that reason, it is vital to attend class each day. The attendance policy is spelled out, but this class relies on cumulative learning – ideas that build on each other. Missing one or more important ideas can cause problems down the road. If you miss a class, please make sure you get the assignment from the instructor or another student.

No handwritten work will be accepted, unless the assignment is done in class. During the semester, we will use exercises from the book, printed assignments, video support material and class discussion as material for assignments. That's why it is vital to come to class each day with the text and the proper material to take notes. You are responsible for the material presented in class, so be sure to exchange phone numbers with at least one person – in case you miss class, you can get what you need from that person. I can also be reached via e-mail at the above address.

GRADING: Your grade will come from several areas – tests on your knowledge of the news, effort and progress in writing skills, class attendance and your final project. It will be broken down as follows:
QUIZZES/ASSIGNMENTS 50%

FINAL PROJECT 50%

You must receive a C or better for this class to count toward your major.

TEXT ---- AIR WORDS – Writing for Broadcast News (4th ed.), John Hewitt

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Two free cuts are provided. After the second (2nd) absence, the course grade will be reduced by one-third letter grade (3.33 points on a 100-point scale) for each absence. After the sixth (6th) absence, you will be automatically dropped from the course. Roll will be taken at the beginning of class. If you are tardy, it is your responsibility to let me know after class that you are present. If you do not, you will remain marked absent for that day. Excused absences will be allowed for documented illness, family emergencies and school sponsored trips. If you have an excused absence and the work is made up, it will not count against those recorded for the attendance policy.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS ---- While in this class, you will be expected to stay informed about the news of the day. Reading newspapers and reputable websites, watching television newscasts, listening to NPR are all acceptable avenues to that end. To be a journalist, you must show some commitment to learning each day about the world around you.

As a journalist, you will learn the importance of deadlines. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED. The only exception is an excused absence as noted in the attendance policy above. If you miss a deadline on the job, the story will likely be killed and tossed aside. It is vital to adhere to the class schedule and keep up with assignments. It is also important to read class material ahead of time and be familiar enough with it to participate in the discussion.

No cell phones in class – please turn them off when you come in. No laptop computers during class time as well, unless you have a disability that requires you to use one and have a note from the university. If you choose to break the policy on electronics in class, you'll be asked to leave and counted absent for that day.

No eating in class – drinks are fine as long as you clean up what you bring in.

There are no additional materials needed for this class per se – however some items you might consider investing in would include a daily newspaper along with additional paper and printer cartridges. Your access to topical information will directly affect your ability to complete this course. You will also be writing a great deal of news copy, and it is often disconcerting to discover your assignment cannot be turned it because of printer problems. Invest now – reap the benefits later.

FINAL PROJECT ---- The final project involves writing and producing a 30-minute newscast. You will select and write all the stories in your newscast. It is not a group project. Each student will write their own show and be graded on their efforts. You will notice that it involves a substantial portion of your grade. That's why it is important to keep up throughout the semester because everything you learn will be utilized on the final. We will have work sessions during the final few weeks to sort out problems as you progress on the project. It is also important to hand it in on time. You have already read the policy on late work. It will be due on the last day of class – NO EXCEPTIONS. Handing it in past that day will result in the loss of one letter grade per day. The bottom line – hand it in on time!
CLASS DATES
FALL 2017

August 15  Introduction
August 17  Chapter 1 Audience Needs
August 22  Chapter 2 Scripts
August 24  Chapter 3 Word Choices
August 29  Chapter 4 Leads
August 31  Chapter 5 Story Construction
September 5  Chapter 6 Gathering Soundbites
September 7  Chapter 7 Using Soundbites
September 12  Chapter 8 Using Soundbites in packages
September 14  What is a great TV news report?
September 19  Chapter 9 Writing to stills
September 21  Chapter 10 Understanding video sequences
September 26  Chapter 11 - VO
September 28  Chapter 12 – VO/SOT
October 3  Chapter 13 – Packages
October 5  What makes a great newscast?
October 10  FALL BREAK, no class
October 12  How to produce a “block” of news.
October 17  Packages
October 19  Packages
October 24  Chapter 15 – Producing
October 26  Chapter 16 – Producing
October 31  Getting a job 101
November 7  Pulling it all together
November 9  Final projects assigned
November 14  Final project work session
November 16  Final project work session
November 21  Final project work session
November 23  THANKSGIVING BREAK, no class
November 28  FINAL PROJECTS DUE

FINAL DATE     Saturday, December 2nd  3:30 -- 6:30

GRADING:  Your grade will come from several areas – tests on your knowledge of the news, effort and progress in writing skills, class attendance and your final project. It will be broken down as follows: QUIZZES/ASSIGNMENTS 50%   FINAL PROJECT 50%