

COM414
Long Form Broadcast News
Spring 2014
T/TH 11-12:15 – Cabrillo 101

Clark Greer, Ph.D.
Office: Cabrillo 205 Office Phone: 849-2385
Office Hours: M-F 9:30-12
Email: ClarkGreer@pointloma.edu

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, students shall be able to:

- Choose news stories and content that correctly align with news values
- Critically analyze radio and television long-form news stories
- Investigate news topics for radio and television long-form news using appropriate research techniques
- Create radio and television long-form stories using industry-accepted production methods
- Employ ethical standards in producing news stories

Required Text:

Kern, J. (2008). *Sound reporting: The NPR guide to audio journalism and production*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Course Requirements:

- Assignments must be submitted prior to the beginning of class on the date they are due. Post audio files (in MP3 format) and written materials to Canvas before the beginning of class on the due date. Submit video projects on a flash drive at the beginning of class on the dates the projects are due. Assignments submitted in any other way will not be accepted. We work in a deadline-oriented profession; therefore, late assignments will not be accepted and will receive zero points. Budget your time and plan ahead. Do not ask for extensions on projects.
- Written assignments must follow correct radio and television news script formats. Grammar, sentence structure, format, and spelling will be included in the grading of all written work. Follow all instructions carefully. If you have questions, ask when the project is assigned.
- Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Projects will be displayed or played in class for group discussion and provided to outside reviewers for broadcast journalism assessment.
- It is the student's responsibility to sign up for audio and video equipment and editing facilities in a manner that will result in the timely completion of assignments. Lack of planning, which results in difficulties obtaining equipment or securing editing time, is not an excuse for failing to complete a project. Check the operability of equipment (batteries, video aspect ratio, audio, etc.) before taking it into the field. Your professor and his colleague, Rick Moncauskas, are here to help you accomplish your goals. However, you must seek us early in the process for us to be able to help you (i.e., not the night before a project is due).
- Save your editing frequently through the entire process. Projects that are incomplete due to software malfunctions (e.g., quitting during editing) is not an excuse for not completing a project. Do not discard your work from the computers until the end of the semester.

- During the television portion of the semester, students will be assigned to a news production team. Members of the team are expected to provide technical support (i.e., camera operation, lighting and audio assistance) for each other's projects.
- In addition to regular class sessions, students may be asked to meet with the instructor. These sessions will provide an opportunity for detailed discussion of story conceptualization, composition and editing.
- Attire: When reporting stories, students must dress as news professionals (no jeans, cut-offs, shorts, t-shirts, logo shirts, hats, etc.). Students must wear formal attire when conducting video interviews (coat and tie for men, dresses or dress slacks for women). Even radio news people should wear professional attire when conducting interviews in person.

Course Projects:

- News diaries: During the radio segment of the semester, students must listen to three *All Things Considered* stories on separate dates of the week and submit a listening diary to Canvas each Tuesday prior to the beginning of class. *All Things Considered* programs are archived on the NPR website. Due dates for listening diaries are posted on the syllabus calendar. Diary instructions are found on Canvas. During the television story portion of the semester, students must watch one of the segments on *60 Minutes* each week, either live on Sunday night or via the CBS Web page, and submit a viewing discussion and critique to Canvas each Thursday prior to the beginning of class. Since the program airs on Sunday night, a Thursday deadline will provide ample opportunity for you to complete the critique. Instructions for the analysis are located on Canvas.
- Projects: The bulk of work for the semester will involve researching, writing and producing two 3-4 minute *All Things Considered*-style stories individually and one 6-8 minute *60 Minutes*-style story in teams. Teams must maintain a binder of all television news story projects and submit the binder at the time of the final exam, along with the completed video on a DVD.
- Coastline stories: To enhance your news production skills this semester, each student will individually produce three packages for Coastline. Production schedules will be determined by the newscast producer.

Attendance:

- Attendance will be taken in all classes. Students will be allowed, without penalty, absences equal to one week's class sessions. Students participating in programs representing the university, which will require exceeding the allowed number of absences, are to make arrangements at the beginning of the semester or as soon as the student is aware of any conflict with class meetings. Medical excuses and excuses from other faculty members will not affect the absence, but will be used to allow makeup work for tests, quizzes, etc. Students exceeding the allowable absences will be penalized 1% point for each extra absence. These points will be removed from the student's final grade percentage.
- Students are expected to attend all class sessions (except for illness or emergency situations) and to be on time to class. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class. Students who enter the classroom after that time must see me personally after class to be counted as present. Students who fail to take this action will be counted as absent. Please remember that it is disruptive to others when students enter the classroom after the session has started. Students who exhibit a consistent pattern of tardiness may be asked to withdraw from the course.
- Attendance in class means that you are fully attending to the course. Students who choose to read the paper, engage in irrelevant and disruptive conversations, study for their next class exam, etc... will be counted as absent for that day. Please plan accordingly and use your absences wisely (this includes doctor appointments or employment issues). There are no exceptions to this policy, so please do not ask (barring serious illness or tragedy, of course).

- You must let me know the day you miss class due to illness for an assignment to be submitted late. Work submitted late because of illness is due the first day the student returns to class. Students will not be reminded that they need to submit assignments missed due to illness.
- Students who will miss class because of a required university activity must submit any due assignments prior to the date missed.
- As noted in the university catalog, students who miss 10% of class sessions will be reported to the Vice Provost of Academic Administration. Missing 20% of class sessions will result in the student being de-enrolled from this course.
- In the event that you miss a session, you will be expected to get notes, handouts, and assignments from another student in the class. **Do NOT ask me for those materials.**
- It is the student's responsibility to maintain his/her class schedule. Should the need arise to drop this course (personal emergencies, poor performance, etc.), the student has the responsibility to follow through (provided the drop date meets the stated calendar deadline established by the university), not the instructor. Simply ceasing to attend this course or failing to follow through to arrange for a change of registration (drop/add) may result in a grade of F on the official transcript.

Technology Policy

Computers may be used during class, but only for taking notes and conducted course-related research. Cell phones are not allowed. Remove the phone from the desk. Set the phone to vibrate or turn off the sound. Students who use their cell phones when not permitted will be counted as absent. Making audio or video recordings of class sessions are not allowed. Students may not mass distribute any course materials or content in any form (print or online) without permission of the instructor.

Notice to Students with Disabilities

While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students requesting academic accommodations must file documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student's instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual learning needs of the student. This policy assists the University in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of which prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.

Academic Dishonesty

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As stated in the university catalog, "Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. Such acts include plagiarism, copying of class assignments, and copying or other fraudulent behavior on examinations. Essentially, if you turn in work that is another person's work, without giving credit to the original person, it is plagiarism and is punishable by an automatic failing grade in this class (see PLNU's Academic Policies for more details).

FERPA Policy

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by distributing all grades and papers individually or posting your score to Canvas. Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the

“Information Release” section of the student portal. See Policy Statements in the undergrad student catalog.

Changes to Syllabus:

The instructor reserves the right to make amendments, additions or deletions to this syllabus. It is each student’s responsibility to stay current and be aware of any changes.

Grading

Grades are based on a point system (listed below) that makes it easy for students to estimate their grade throughout the semester.

Radio news assignments (points as listed)	40 pts.	Grading Scale			
Listening and viewing diaries (10 @ 10 pts.)	100 pts.	470-500	A	370-384	C
Coastline news packages (3 @ 15 pts.)	45 pts.	450-469	A-	350-369	C-
NPR feature analysis	15 pts.	435-449	B+	335-349	D+
Radio feature story	50 pts.	420-434	B	320-334	D
Radio issue story	65 pts.	400-419	B-	300-319	D-
<i>60 Minutes</i> story	185 pts.	385-399	C+	0-299	F
Total points possible	500 pts.				

Course Calendar

Jan 16

Topic: Course introduction; Writing radio news stories
Reading: Text pp. 1-38

Jan 21

Topic: Interviews and actualities; Audio editing review
Reading: Text pp. 39-59
Assignment: Radio news readers due to Canvas (15 pts.)

Jan 23

Topic: Listen to radio stories
Assignment: Radio story with actuality (script and MP3) due to Canvas (25 pts.)

Jan 28

Topic: Radio feature design
Assignment: NPR analysis due to Canvas (15 pts.)

Jan 30

Topic: Field interviews and sound; Field observation
Reading: Text pp. 64-82
Assignment: Radio feature topic due to Canvas (10 pts.)

Feb 4

Topic: Organizing and scripting features
Reading: Text pp. 83-91
Assignment: *All Things Considered* analysis due to Canvas

Feb 6

Topic: Editing features
Reading: Text pp. 92-114
Assignment: Radio feature story script due to Canvas (15 pts.)

Feb 11

Topic: Producing issue stories; Ethics
Reading: Text pp. 216-239
Assignment: *All Things Considered* analysis due to Canvas

Feb 13

Topic: Listen to feature stories in class; Story sourcing
Assignment: Radio feature story MP3 due to Canvas (25 pts.)

Feb 18

Topic: Issue topic discussion
Assignment: Radio issue topic due to Canvas (10 pts.)
All Things Considered analysis due to Canvas

Feb 20

Topic: Introduction to short-form documentary; Story selection research; What makes a story;
Topic guidelines

Feb 25

Topic: *60 Minutes* screening and analysis

Feb 27

Topic: Organization, flow, structure
Assignment: *60 Minutes* analysis due to Canvas
Video topic due to Canvas (10 pts.)

Mar 4

Topic: The role of the video news producer; Maintaining lists

Mar 6

Topic: Producer field workshop
Assignment: *60 Minutes* analysis due to Canvas
Radio issue script due to Canvas (20 pts.)

Mar 10-14

No classes – Spring break

Mar 18

Topic: Secondary research; Casting storytellers

Mar 20

Topic: Library research day – Library training lab
Assignment: *60 Minutes* analysis due to Canvas

Mar 25

Topic: Listen to radio issue stories in class
Assignment: Radio issue story MP3 due to Canvas (35 pts.)

Mar 27

Topic: Interview prep and pre-interview; Content development and backgrounding
Assignment: *60 Minutes* analysis due to Canvas

Apr 1

Topic: Videography techniques; Shooting b-roll and sequences
Assignment: Secondary research due to Canvas (30 pts.)

Apr 3

Topic: B-roll and sequences field work
Assignment: *60 Minutes* analysis due to Canvas

Apr 8

Topic: Multicamera shoots and lighting (TV studio)

Apr 10

Topic: Scripts and editing on paper
Assignment: *60 Minutes* analysis due to Canvas

Apr 15

Topic: Using other visuals; Advanced Final Cut session

Apr 17

Topic: Script workshop – Bring transcripts and scripts with you to class
Assignment: *60 Minutes* analysis due to Canvas

Apr 22

Topic: Script meetings in the classroom
Assignment: Script and b-roll list due to Canvas (30 pts.)

Apr 24

Topic: Editing video

Apr 29

Topic: Editing workshop – Work on rough cuts during class

May 1

Topic: Rough cut meetings; Work on final editing during class
Assignment: Rough cut due to Canvas (40 pts.)

May 8 10:30-1:00

Final produced video due (50 pts); Video story binder due (25 pts.)

NOTE: Please make sure your vacation travel plans accommodate your final exam schedule. You must be present for the story viewing to receive credit for the project.