



## **Course Syllabus**

### **COMM 2315 – News Gathering & Writing II**

**Catalog Description:** An intensive study of methods used in gathering the news and writing. More in-depth than COMM 2311. Field trips to study various media. Class members serve as staff members of *The Pony Express*, the College newspaper. (Lab fee) (0904015806)

**Prerequisites:** None

**Semester Credit Hours:** 3

**Lecture Hours per Week:** 3

**Contact Hours per Semester:** 96

**State Approval Code:** (0904015706)

**Course Subject/Catalog Number:** COMM 2315

**Course Title:** News Gathering & Writing II

**Course Curriculum:** State Criteria (those marked with an X reflect the state-mandated competencies taught in this course) (*double-click on the box and choose 'checked' or 'not-checked'*)

#### **Basic Intellectual Competencies in the Core Curriculum**

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- Listening
- Critical thinking
- Computer literacy

#### **Perspectives in the Core Curriculum**

- Establish broad and multiple perspectives on the individual in relationship to the larger society and world in which he/she lives, and to understand the responsibilities of living in a culturally and ethnically diversified world.
- Stimulate a capacity to discuss and reflect upon individual, political, economic, and social aspects of life in order to understand ways in which to be a responsible member of society.
- Recognize the importance of maintaining health and wellness.
- Develop a capacity to use knowledge of how technology and science affect their lives.
- Develop personal values for ethical behavior.
- Develop the ability to make aesthetic judgments.
- Use logical reasoning in problem solving.
- Integrate knowledge and understand the interrelationships of the scholarly disciplines.

## Core Components and Related Exemplary Educational Objectives

### Communication (composition, speech, modern language)

The objective of a communication component of a core curriculum is to enable the student to communicate effectively in clear and correct prose in a style appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience.

- To understand and demonstrate writing and speaking processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, and presentation.
- To understand the importance of specifying audience and purpose and to select appropriate communications choices.
- To understand and appropriately apply modes of expression, i.e. descriptive, expository, narrative, scientific, and self-expressive, in written, visual, and oral communication.
- To participate effectively in groups with emphasis on listening, critical and reflective thinking, and responding.
- To understand and apply basic principles of proficiency in the development of exposition and argument.
- To develop the ability to research and write a documented paper and/or to give an oral presentation.

### Mathematics

The objective of the mathematics component of the core curriculum is to develop a quantitatively literate college graduate. Every college graduate should be able to apply basic mathematical tools in the solution of real-world problems.

- To apply arithmetic, algebraic, geometric, higher-order thinking, and statistical methods to modeling and solving real-world situations.
- To represent and evaluate basic mathematical information verbally, numerically, graphically, and symbolically.
- To expand mathematical reasoning skills and formal logic to develop convincing mathematical arguments.
- To use appropriate technology to enhance mathematical thinking and understanding and to solve mathematical problems and judge the reasonableness of the results.
- To interpret mathematical models such as formulas, graphs, tables and schematics, and draw inferences from them.
- To recognize the limitations of mathematical and statistical models.
- To develop the view that mathematics is an evolving discipline, interrelated with human culture, and understand its connections to other disciplines.

### Natural Sciences

The objective of the study of a natural sciences component of a core curriculum is to enable the student to understand, construct, and evaluate relationships in the natural sciences, and to enable the student to understand the bases for building and testing theories.

- To understand and apply method and appropriate technology to the study of natural sciences.
- To recognize scientific and quantitative methods and the differences between these approaches and other methods of inquiry and to communicate findings, analyses, and interpretation both orally and in writing.
- To identify and recognize the differences among competing scientific theories.
- To demonstrate knowledge of the major issues and problems facing modern science, including

issues that touch upon ethics, values, and public policies.

- To demonstrate knowledge of the interdependence of science and technology and their influence on, and contribution to, modern culture.

### **Humanities and Visual and Performing Arts**

The objective of the humanities and visual and performing arts in a core curriculum is to expand students' knowledge of the human condition and human cultures, especially in relation to behaviors, ideas, and values expressed in works of human imagination and thought. Through study in disciplines such as literature, philosophy, and the visual and performing arts, students will engage in critical analysis, form aesthetic judgments, and develop an appreciation of the arts and humanities as fundamental to the health and survival of any society. Students should have experiences in both the arts and humanities.

- To demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
- To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
- To respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
- To engage in the creative process or interpretive performance and comprehend the physical and intellectual demands required of the author or visual or performing artist.
- To articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
- To develop an appreciation for the aesthetic principles that guide or govern the humanities and arts.
- To demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences.

### **Social and Behavioral Sciences**

The objective of a social and behavioral science component of a core curriculum is to increase students' knowledge of how social and behavioral scientists discover, describe, and explain the behaviors and interactions among individuals, groups, institutions, events, and ideas. Such knowledge will better equip students to understand themselves and the roles they play in addressing the issues facing humanity.

- To employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition.
- To examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures, and cultures.
- To use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories.
- To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.
- To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the area under study.
- To comprehend the origins and evolution of U.S. and Texas political systems, with a focus on the growth of political institutions, the constitutions of the U.S. and Texas, federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.
- To understand the evolution and current role of the U.S. in the world.
- To differentiate and analyze historical evidence (documentary and statistical) and differing points of view.
- To recognize and apply reasonable criteria for the acceptability of historical evidence and social research.
- To analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems.
- To recognize and assume one's responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy.

- To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.

**Instructional Goals and Purposes:** The purpose of this course is to fulfill the academic requirements necessary to earn an associates degree or transfer degree, or to provide personal enrichment opportunities for Panola College students seeking an interdisciplinary course emphasizing the structure and influence of mass communication. The purpose of the course is to help students learn to use language correctly, to be accurate, to work under and respect deadlines, and to recognize, gather and assemble news into readable form. This course is a continuation of the aims and objectives of news gathering and writing with emphasis on advanced reporting techniques.

**General Course Objectives:**

- To recognize appropriate journalistic style.
- To recognize the historical significance of the free press in the United States.
- To discern between news and other forms of journalistic writing.
- To recognize the problems faced by journalists in producing work for the media.
- To develop the knowledge and skills to succeed in higher level communication courses and the workplace.

**Specific Course Objectives:**

After studying the book, current events and multimedia presentations, students should be able to complete all behavioral/learning objectives listed below with a minimum competency of 70% on exams and quizzes.

- Recognize the duties and positions of journalists in various media outlets.
- Explain the process for preparing an article for media.
- Explain the 5Ws and H of journalistic style, and write various types of leads for news stories, features, editorials, columns, and reviews.
- Write a clear and concise news story, an interesting feature, a coherent editorial and a good review.
- Identify sources for news articles, from face-to-face interviews to the Internet.
- Conduct interviews and write articles as assigned.
- Recognize the value of quotations, and be able to include quotes in an article.

**Course Content:**

Students in Introduction to Mass Communication will be required to do the following:

- Read assigned chapters in the text.
- Take a quiz on each chapter.
- Complete assigned articles, short essays and reports on various topics in mass media.
- Watch assigned video presentations and write summary reports on the presentations.
- Write articles as assigned.
- Pass a final, comprehensive exam on all course content.

**Methods of Instruction/Course Format/Delivery:** The course is offered in the traditional classroom for lectures, discussions and audiovisual presentations, and online via WebCT platform as a hybrid (web-assisted) course, allowing students the flexibility of working both online and face-to-face.

**Assessment:** Assessment will include chapter quizzes, writing and critical thinking assignments, reports and a final exam. Students will also be graded on class attendance and participation.

**Course Grade:** The grading scale for this course includes:

- Quizzes – 30%
- Assignments – 50%
- Attendance/Participation – 10%
- Final Exam – 10%

**Texts, Materials, and Supplies:** *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*, By Tim Harrower, (McGraw-Hill, 2007) (Chapters 6-10 for COMM 2315)

*The Associated Press Stylebook*, Norm Goldstein, Editor, ((Basic Books, A Member of the Perseus Books Group, New York, 2004)

**Other:**

- For current texts and materials, use the following link to access bookstore listings: <http://www.panola.edu/collegestore.htm>
- For testing services, use the following link: <http://www.panola.edu/instruction/dl/testing.htm>