



Broadcast Journalism I
Spring 2014
Monday/Wednesday | 12:10- 1:30pm
Jennifer C. Thomas, Assistant Professor

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| Office Hours | Monday 2pm – 5pm Tuesday 10:30 am– 12:30pm Wednesday 2pm-5pm Thursday 1:00pm-3:00pm & by appointment |
| Class Location | C.B. Powell Building 307 |
| Office Location | CB Powell Bldg Room 329 |
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Course Description:

Broadcast Journalism I is designed to introduce the skills needed to be an effective broadcast journalist to work in multimedia platforms. It emphasizes writing for broadcast news with concise, accurate, thoughtful copy and producing quality packages for broadcast and digital distribution. Students are expected to produce audio stories for the Howard University communication outlets. Students will learn and master reporting various techniques including researching stories, news and information gathering, natural sound collection, and interviews resulting in final enterprise broadcast pieces.

Course Objectives:

At the successful completion of this course, it is expected that students will be able to:

- Apply First Amendment principles, ethics and laws appropriate to professional journalistic practice.
- Demonstrate how to be an efficient, truthful, ethical and professional broadcast journalist.
- Develop and improve writing skills with a focus on writing for broadcast news.

- Develop practical skills for packaging and delivering broadcast news and feature packages in multi platforms.
- Develop and sharpen interviewing skills and techniques with practical application.
- Critically analyze current news stories and real-life scenarios
- Respect the core principles of journalism with emphasis on news concepts of “accuracy”, “fairness” and “balance.”
- Practice proper techniques for recording and producing natural sound and interviews
- Learn and practice newsroom terminology
- Discuss related news and media events relating to topics and issues discussed in class.
- Edit and mix sound elements to produce packages
- Understand and develop broadcast voice and ‘style’
- Build digital platforms for self-publishing
- Explore internship and career opportunities in broadcast/digital newsrooms
- Be excited about a career in broadcast journalism!

Prerequisites:

Students must have successfully completed all prerequisite courses listed below, including Reporting and Writing (Jour 202), Introduction to Broadcast News (Jour 204) and Radio Production (RTVF 322). Students should also have basic computer skills and a familiarity with audio recording devices and software. Students may be required to submit transcript to professor to verify required prerequisites prior to the beginning of this course.

See prerequisites below:

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| JOUR 201 | Writing for the Media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ English 002 (Grade “C” or Better) ▪ English 003 (Grade “C” or Better) |
| JOUR 202 | Reporting & Writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ JOUR 201 (Writing for the Media) |
| JOUR 204 | Intro to Broadcast News | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ JOUR 201 (Writing for the Media) |
| RTVF 231 | Introduction to Media Production | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sophomore Standing RTVF/Jour 111 |
| RTVF 322 | Radio Production | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RTVF 231 |

Required Text:

“*Writing Broadcast News: Shorter, Sharper, Stronger*” by Mervin Block, third edition, CQ Press, ISB #978-1-60871-417-9. Various other online articles, archival and current broadcasts via online links.

Additional Suggested Reading Materials:

An excellent resource for this course which is recommended, but not required: Kern, Jonathan. (2008). *Sound reporting: The NPR guide to audio journalism and production* The University of Chicago Press ISBN-10: 0226431789 | ISBN-13: 978-0226431789

Other books, articles and media clips, and materials related to current events* will be used to supplement classroom instruction, These will be assigned by the professor.

Expectations:

*Students should be familiar with current local and national news and events, and be prepared to discuss in class. Professor may assign in-class papers, discussions, and quizzes regarding news stories, wires, *blogs, local, regional, and national news as well as information from broadcast, print, new media and magazines. These news events are of vital importance to the chapters and news cases and events discussed in this course. This class will offer practical instruction on learning basic newsroom culture, terminology and newsgathering, while also researching, writing, recording, editing and producing news stories and audio news packages for broadcast and digital distribution. Students who successfully complete the course will have the beginnings of an online portfolio of their work including story pitches, scripts and audio packages.

Students are expected monitor various local and national media, such as live /online versions of local and national television broadcasts such as CNN, MSNBC, FOX News, newspapers such as *The Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Huff Post College*: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/college>, *The Washington Afro American*, etc., radio broadcasts such as National Public Radio, and other news and information blogs.

(*my blog is: <http://profithomas.blogspot.com/>)

Attendance:

Broadcast journalism is driven by deadlines and time constraints. Student journalists are expected attend all classes and to be on time. Attendance, punctuality and participation will affect one's grade. Being absent is not acceptable unless a student is ill (with proper document substantiating same), or has experienced a personal or family emergency. An excused absence requires prior approval, and students with excused absences are expected to make up any missed assignments by the next class session. **Any student missing 3 or more classes (unexcused absences) will risk receiving a grade of D.** Four tardies equal one absence. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students who arrive 20 minutes (or more) late will be marked "absent."

Assignments:

Students are expected to complete all required assignments which should be submitted on time, typed, proofread, and free of grammatical errors. The deadline for turning in assignments is the beginning of each class, or uploaded per the professor.

Homework/assignments will not be accepted after the deadline. Students will be held responsible for all class-related assignments, activities, and announced and unannounced quizzes. Whenever an assignment is missed due to an unexcused absence, a grade of “zero” (0) will be automatically assigned. If a student misses class, he or she misses any in-class assignments that count toward his or her grade, and he/she is still responsible for any homework assigned that day. The professor is NOT responsible for sharing information from class for students who are not in attendance. All out-of-class assignments should be typed or computer-generated and conform with expository or report writing guidelines. Student participation in each assigned activity is mandatory.

Students are expected to use proper grammar, spelling and punctuation according to AP Style. Mechanical errors will affect the student’s grade. Students may be expected to maintain personal blogs for grades, and select signature assignments should be uploaded to the student’s digital notebook (ePortfolio initiative)

Attire:

Students are expected to dress professionally (business attire) when in the field, or while representing Howard University, this course and its professor.

Class Participation:

A newsroom is an interactive environment where ideas are exchanged, discussed and debated. In class all students are also expected to contribute to discussions and actively participate in exercises and group projects.

Classroom Etiquette:

Students are expected to maintain a positive learning atmosphere conducive of participatory collegiate discourse in which the opinions of others are respected. **To maintain a positive learning classroom atmosphere, use of cell phones, I-Pods and/or other electronic entertainment devices, and the checking e-mails are not allowed in class and must be turned off and put away.** Failure to adhere to this policy may lead to a student being requested to submit phone to professor during class, or the student may be requested to leave. In-class use of the Internet will only be allowed during designated class time as directed by the instructor. Remove all headphones and ear plugs during class. No foul language or inappropriate conduct will be accepted.

What you can expect from me.

I will begin class on time and will be prepared with lectures, discussions and assignments. I will return assignments in a timely manner. I will keep posted office hours, and return emails and phone calls promptly. I will inform you of any changes in my schedule, the syllabus or class assignments.

Ethics: Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Misconduct:

Please keep in mind that the School of Communications maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** on plagiarism, cheating, fabrication (including fake sources and quotations), forgeries and duplication, which also includes submitting the same work to more than one class or media outlet without prior faculty approval. **All of your work must be original and created by you.** Joint projects must be pre-approved with clarity and documentation of the division of labor. Committing any of these infractions could result in:

- **A failing grade for an assignment or the course**
- **Suspension for a semester or more**
- **Delayed graduation**
- **Expulsion from the university and/or**
- **Revocation of your degree — even if the infraction is discovered years after you graduate.**

Plagiarism is a reprehensible offense. It is an act of dishonesty and undermines the credibility that is essential to all professional communicators. The Howard University H-Book for Academic Offenses (Section II.1.b) defines plagiarism as: “to take and pass off as one’s own the ideas, and writings of another, without attribution (without acknowledging the author).”

The copying does not have to be exact to be plagiarism. Shuffling the order of ideas, moving paragraphs around, loosely paraphrasing, or changing a word here and there does not mean you have made the work your own.

Students in the Department of Media, Journalism and Film are expected to do original analysis, reporting, writing, editing, filming or capturing of audio. This includes social media and other forms of communications. Students are expected to explicitly cite the sources of any information that is not derived from their own independent work.

Here are a few don’ts:

- Don’t use excessive citations from a single source, which can result in a copyright infringement. Put in the work to make the story your own.
- Don’t include excessively long quotations without attribution. That’s plagiarism.
- Don’t use images or audio without permission.
- Don’t assume that information widely available to the public on the Internet or through other means is fair game. This includes many instances of “common knowledge.” For example, if you’re thinking, “Everyone knows that.” Ask yourself, “How do they know?” Go to the source of the information, and cite the source.

Here’s a rule to live by: If you have any doubt about the need to cite a source, cite the source. Err on the side of over-attribution. If you don’t know, ask. In addition, please review the plagiarism information under Library System at www.howard.edu.

All instances of plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct are documented in the student's academic record, filed in the dean's office and require a meeting with the instructor and the chair and/or assistant chair of the Department of Media, Journalism and Film at minimum. The department will seek the immediate suspension of any student whose academic record includes previous punishment for plagiarism or similar misconduct.

ACADEMIC CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

(Revised 2010)

Approved by the Board of Trustees, June 29, 2010

Retrieved on November 19, 2013 from:

<http://www.howard.edu/policy/academic/student-conduct.htm>

Howard University is a community of scholars composed of faculty and students both of whom must hold the pursuit of learning and search for truth in the highest regard. Such regard requires adherence to the goal of unquestionable integrity and honesty in the discharge of teaching and learning responsibilities. Such regard allows no place for academic dishonesty. To better assure the realization of this goal any student enrolled for study at the University may be disciplined for the academic infractions defined below.

Definitions of Academic Infractions

1. **Academic Cheating**—any intentional act(s) of dishonesty in the fulfillment of academic course or program requirements. This offense shall include (but is not limited to) utilization of the assistance of any additional individual(s), organization, document, or other aid not specifically and expressly authorized by the instructor or department involved. (Note: This infraction assumes that with the exception of authorized group assignment or group take-home assignments, all course or program assignments shall be completed by an individual student only without any consultation or collaboration with any other individual, organization, or aid.).
2. **Plagiarism**—to take and pass off intentionally as one's own the ideas, writings, etc. of another without attribution (without acknowledging the author).

*Note: Also, included is **self-plagiarism** - the reuse of one's own writing taken from another written document (published or unpublished) without acknowledgement. Self-plagiarism has also been identified in cases of 'duplicate publication,' and consists of a person re-purposing their own written material without citing the source of the original content. Therefore, students are discouraged from submitting the same paper to more than one course.*

3. **Copy Infringement**—Copy infringement occurs when a copyrighted work is reproduced, distributed, performed, publicly displayed, or made into a derivative work without the permission of the copyright owner.

Administration of the Code and Penalties..... For details regarding the policy, refer to Howard University Student Academic Code of Conduct URL:
<http://www.howard.edu/policy/academic/student-conduct.htm>

Two copies of all relevant paperwork related to any infraction of these policies shall be kept in the SOC: one by the chair of the student’s department and the other in the Dean’s office.

Incomplete Grades:

**School of Communications
Office of the Dean
Policy for Assignment of Incomplete Grades**

School of Communications Incomplete Policy

Faculty in the School of Communications (SOC) are to assign Incomplete (I) grades only, in instances when the student has the potential to pass the course and has completed the majority of the work. In addition, the university policy must be followed with regard to considerations for assignment and implementation of “I” grades as outlined under university guidelines for *Academic Standing*. See statement below:

Howard University Incomplete Policy

Incomplete grades may be assigned ONLY to students who, as a result of circumstances beyond their control (e.g., illness or family emergency) are unable to complete their coursework. Although the student initiates the request for an incomplete grade, the decision to assign an incomplete grade rests solely with the instructor. If the student’s request is approved, the instructor establishes and submits specific “make-up” conditions on an Incomplete Grade Processing Form (IGPF). Each incomplete designation (“I”) must be accompanied by an alternative grade (“B,” “C,” “D,” or “F”). The alternative grade will become the permanent grade, if the incomplete is not removed.

Retrieved on November 19, 2013 from
<http://www.howard.edu/academics/standing.htm>

The HU Statement on ADA Procedures:

Howard University is committed to providing an educational environment that is accessible to all students. In accordance with this policy, students in need of accommodations due to a disability should contact the Office of the Dean for Special Student Services for verification and determination of reasonable accommodations as soon as possible after admission to the University or the beginning of each semester.

The dean of the Office of Special Student Services, Dr. Elaine Heath, can be reached at (202) 238-2420.

Course Requirements:

The requirements for this course will include and may not be limited to: audio packages, broadcast scripts, blogs, logs of radio and television broadcasts, assignments, quizzes, and exams.

1. Attendance, Class Participation = 10%
2. blogs = 15%
3. Quizzes, assignments = 20%
4. Exams = 25% (Mid-Term & Final Podcast)
5. Packages / Newscast = 30%

Total= 100%

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance, Class Participation

Students are expected to attend all classes, and be prepared to discuss current events, and in class or homework assignments. This class will have several class assignments. Students are expected to be “read in” on the day’s news and likely be assigned in-class activities. Student participation in each assigned activity is mandatory. Students are also expected to be prepared for class guests; knowing background information on guests and be prepared to ask relevant questions. Students may also be provided the opportunity for out-of-class / on-site visits of guests

2. Scripts/ Blogs

Students will be required to write broadcast-style scripts in class and as part of homework assignments. The scripts should be concise, factual, interesting and adhere to the journalistic objectives of this course. Additionally, students are expected to maintain a blog for this course which will be updated as assigned. The blog should be as professional as possible, and its content be uploaded on occasion to the student’s ePortfolio. These will show the student’s progression and expression.

3. Quizzes, Assignments

There will be regular quizzes and in-class and homework assignments that test your knowledge of current events, and your understanding of the reading assignments. Quizzes take place at the beginning of or during class and cannot be made up. A weekly quiz may also include questions from *Writing Broadcast News*, or current events that are discussed in class or given as take-home assignments. Heavy emphasis is placed on writing. You have in-class writing assignments that cannot be made up. You will also receive weekly homework assignments.

4. Exams

There will be a midterm exam and possibly a final exam.

5. Packages

You will report, write and edit reporter packages- both audio packages and at least one video package using pro tools, final cut, as well as other editing suites provided by the tech center. We will offer workshops with other departmental professionals to assist in refreshers for these projects. These projects will utilize the terminology, ethical standards, and scenarios learned throughout the course of this semester. One of the packages will likely be the final project for the course.

Final grades are based on the following performance standards:

- A** Excellent Work: 90% - 100%
Student attends all classes, participates, and completes all work on time. Quality is excellent. Work and effort are excellent without error.

- B** Above-Average: 80% - 89%

Student attends all classes, participates, and completes all work on time. Quality is above assignment expectations. Work and effort are very good and above average with minimal error.

- C** Average: 70% - 79%

Student attends most classes, participates, and completes most work on time. Quality is mostly consistent with assignment expectations. Work and effort are average with minimal error.

- D** Below-Average: 60% - 69%

Student attends some classes, participates, and completes some work on time. Quality is not consistent with assignment expectations. Work and effort are below average with error.

- F** Unacceptable: Below 60%

I can do two things in life; I can dissolve into the mainstream, or I can be distinct. To be distinct, I must be different. To be different I must strive to be what no one else but I can be.

Course Calendar:

Note: The instructor reserves the right to make changes or modifications to this schedule to accommodate professional media, adhere to university class suspensions, and other Departmental or University mandates. Likewise, the instructor reserves the right to administer “pop” quizzes, and other impromptu in-class assignments. The instructor will advise of any significant changes.

Week 1

Why Media Matters

Jan 13, 15

First day of class....introductions, syllabus review, expectations.
The Importance of the First Amendment to Broadcast Journalists
Quiz-1 – Current News
8 forms of media & Convergence
What is News? (ch 10 *Sound Reporting*)
What makes a story newsworthy?
Homework: Martin Luther King, Jr. blog (to be uploaded)

Week 2

The Newsroom

Jan 20

NO CLASS | Holiday – Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance

Jan 22

Who does what?
Inverted pyramid
Roles in the news station & newsroom
Homework- Blog assignment: War of the Worlds
The news rundown- stories / elements
Guest: Prof. Reginald Miles E-portfolio

Week 3

Writing for Broadcast News

Jan 27, 29

News Quiz
Homework Review: War of the worlds
Impact of the medium
Writing for broadcast: Differences between radio & TV (from *Sound Reporting*)
In class assignment: Listening to a radio vs TV newscast
Homework Assignment: Dissection of Local/National radio & TV news (due Jan 29 beginning of class)
Text Assignment – Chapter 1 – *Dozen Deadly Don'ts: Mistakes that mar scripts* – pp. 3 – 17

Week 4

Radio

Feb 3, 4

Homework Assignment due: discuss results in class

Current radio/online broadcasts
Writing for radio: NPR newscast
Text Assignment: “*Writing Broadcast News*”
Text Assignment – Chapter 2 – *Venial Sins: Words that hurt copy* – pp. 19 – 30.
News Quiz
Homework Assignment: Homework Assignment: re-write 10 print stories into broadcast format (typed, printed and due Feb 10)

Week 5

Feb. 10,12

Properly Writing Scripts

In-class writing assignment
How to write in broadcast style (Ch. 3, *Sound Reporting*) | practice
Elements of audio packages
Audacity Workshop
Homework: write/voice first news package using online content. Due Feb 17
Homework: Submit (3) first self-produced audio pkg ideas. Pitches must be two paragraphs each; typed and printed and/or uploaded. Due Feb 19.
PKGs due March 3
News Quiz

Week 6

Feb 17

Feb 19

“The Voice”

NO CLASS | Holiday- President’s Day Observance

Review writing assignments/ pitches
Writing shorter, sharper, stronger
Elements of audio packages
“*Writing Broadcast News*” Text Assignment Due – Chapter 3
– *Top Tips of the Trade: 40 Pointers that lead to better scripts.*
pp. 31 – 48
News Quiz

Week 7

Feb 24, 26

“The Interview”

Discuss audio pkg pitches
Reviewk8 topics, chapters for Mid-term
Guest – Prof. Candace Shannon Lewis
Homework: Blog: TBD
Homework: Long-form Profile pitches. Due March 3. Three pitches. Must be three (3) graphs each explaining person, topic, reason for profile (profile is 4-5 mins and due April 7)

Week 8

March 3

The Profile

1st- news package due
Writing the “profile” –pitches due/discussed

March 5 **Mid-Term**

Week 9 **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES**

March 10, 12

Week 10 **The Story & Get to the Point**

March 17,19 Writing to soundbites, tight sound editing....getting rid of the ums
Interviewing skills
Developing writing style
Review: “*Writing Broadcast News*” Text Assignment– Chapter 4 – *Writing Well With Orwell: What Style is—and isn’t* – pp. 51 – 66.
News Quiz
“*Writing Broadcast News*” Text Assignment Due – Chapter 8 – *Words, Part II: No Journalese, Please-How to write plainly and clearly for stronger scripts*, pp. 131 – 148.
Producing the radio newscast – roles
Homework: Group Newscast Assignment due March 26
Guest: TBA

Week 11 **Music & Numbers**

March 24,26 Writing for broadcast with numbers
“*Writing Broadcast News*” Text Assignment Due – Chapter 9 – *After Math: How to deal with numbers* – pp. 149 – 153.
Using music in your profile pieces (ch 12 *Sound Reporting*)
26- Newscast assignment due
Quiz
Homework: Third story pitch – Due April 2. Topic DMV feature
Homework: Blog: TBA

Week 12 **The Newscast**

March 31,
April 2 **Veterans Day – NO CLASS**
Class project: 5 minute newscast
Feature pitches due.
Feature pkgs due April 14
Producing – Ch 12 (*Sound Reporting*)

Week 13 **Prepping for the Podcast**

April 7, 9 Long-form profile pkg due
Final: Podcast will serve as the final. This is a group assignment. Details will be discussed
“*Writing Broadcast News*” Text Assignment Due – Chapter 12 – *Rewriting: If you find time, rewrite...*pp. 181 – 186.
pp. 213 – 229.

Beyond Radio: Podcasting (Ch. 18 *Sound Reporting*)

Week 14 **Prepping for the Podcast**

April 14, 16 feature DMV pkgs reviewed
Podcast planning session

Week 15 **Final radio projects presented – SENIOR FINALS WEEK**

April 21, 23 FINAL Podcasts presented
Grading Rubric Discussed

Week 16 **Final Exam Week**

April 28 week TBD *class *may* meet to present final podcasts, per the discretion of prof.