



# INTRODUCTION TO BROADCAST NEWS



COMM 240-001 FALL 2008 EDUCATION CENTER 110 T/R 1:40-2:55

(Term 087)

Instructor: Patrick Harwood

Phone: 953-2212 (office); 224-3112 (cell)

E-mail: [harwoodp@cofc.edu](mailto:harwoodp@cofc.edu)

Course Website: [www.cofc.edu/~harwoodp](http://www.cofc.edu/~harwoodp)

Office: Robert Scott Small Building, Room 203 (old library); I also have a box at the Communication Department Main Office located on Physicians Promenade

Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 12:30-1:30; Mondays 1-3 p.m.

Note: I do not accept any work by e-mail.

## Books and Equipment

- Textbook: “Radio-TV Newswriting: A Workbook” by K. Tim Wulfemeyer (Iowa State Press, Second Edition )
- A digital voice recorder: You will need a digital recorder that allows you to upload content to your computer. Olympus makes a number of models. See: [http://www.olympusamerica.com/cpg\\_section/cpg\\_vr\\_digitalrecorders.asp](http://www.olympusamerica.com/cpg_section/cpg_vr_digitalrecorders.asp)  
Sony is another manufacturer. Used or “reconditioned” recorders can also be found on the Internet. Will need recorder for Sept. 18 field interview project.
- Several recordable CD discs for your digital recordings/reports (CD-RW preferable)
- A microphone that attaches to your digital voice recorder (optional)
- Headset with microphone for digital recordings/production (optional)

**Course Objectives:** This is an introductory broadcast journalism course that stresses the newsgathering process, as well as writing, reporting, ethical/legal issues, industry issues and trends, and the business of broadcasting. You will do different types of audio/radio-style news reports and newscasts that may be played during class in a team newscast setting. We will also explore and utilize cutting edge audio/video computer editing/production software. I also teach Television News Reporting (Comm 340) that is designed as a follow-up to this course. So you are encouraged to take both, if this field interests you, or if you just want to learn more about television news.

## To Succeed in this Class:

- Complete all homework and reporting assignments on time and in the formats that will be detailed. Deadlines are crucial in the news business.
- Show effort, imagination, and improvement
- Take reporting assignments seriously—try to do them as a professional reporter would. Don’t take the easy way out by interviewing friends and relatives for your stories—professionals would not do that!
- Don’t miss class and be on time. Coming in late is very distracting!
- **Very important class rule:** Don’t turn on computers unless told to do so. Class time is not your time to check and send email or browse the Internet. Please do not make me repeatedly tell you to turn off your computer and pay attention in class!

**Attendance Policy:** A roll sheet will be passed around at the start of each class. Five absences will result in a half letter grade reduction in your final grade. To receive an excused absence you must give me a dated written note (not emailed). Do not ask me if I received an email from Health Services about your absence. You still must turn in a written note. You will also receive a half-letter final grade reduction if you are someone I repeatedly tell to turn off your computer and pay attention!

**C of C's Plus/Minus Grading Scale**—The College uses the following grades in the posting of midterm and final grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, F

**Tests:** There will be midterm exam and a final exam project. The midterm will cover Parts I and II in your book, “Radio-TV Newswriting Philosophy: Style and Methods” (Part I), “Legal and Ethical Concerns” (Part II), plus handouts and other material covered. The final exam project will consist of a five minute newscast containing the various types of reports you will be learning to do. It will receive a letter grade.

**Midterm Exam Grading Scale:** A 94-100; A- 90-93; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D+ 65-69; D 60-64; F 59 and under

**Here is the letter grade plus/minus grading system:**

A = 4.00	B = 3.00	C = 2.00	D = 1.00
A- = 3.67	B- = 2.67	C- = 1.67	F = 0.00
B+ = 3.33	C+ = 2.33	D+ = 1.33	

**Extra Credit Opportunities:** You can have points added to your marks in this class by producing extra news stories on communication and media-related speakers and events at this semester. Up to three points can be added to your midterm exam grade, for example, per story with a maximum of nine extra credit points possible. Producing newscasts/podcasts using your teams’ reports can earn extra credit also.

**Radio Reporting Stories:** You will be given plenty of advance notice about due dates for reporting assignments, and you will be instructed and trained in how to do these stories. The assignments include: “person on the street,” “voicer” and “wrap” stories; a multimedia reporting project; a 10 minute “live on tape” interview; radio newscasts/podcasts; and a longer form final project newscast.

You will also work together in groups to produce podcasts.

Reporting assignments and newscasts will be given letter grades based on the following criteria: accuracy, enterprise/initiative; newsgathering skill, writing quality, production quality, scripting; and delivery. A reporting or newscast assignment can be turned in one class period late, but will automatically lose one letter grade. They will not be accepted after one class period late, meaning you will receive a zero for that assignment. Book homework assignments can be turned in one class late but will get a check-minus and won’t be accepted after that.

All work turned in for this class must be typed unless told otherwise.

**Again, I do not accept any work by e-mail.**

### Final Grade Determination:

- Midterm Test & Final Exam Reporting Project 40 percent
- Reporting Assignments (averaged) 40 percent
- Homework, Quizzes, In-class work 20 percent  
(Homework receives check plus, check or check minus. 24 assignments=60 points maximum using 2.5 points for check plus; 2.0 for check; and 1.5 in my check minus system)
- Remember five unexcused absences results in a half grade reduction

### Weekly Schedule (subject to changes and modifications)

#### Week 1—August 26 and 28

- Course introduction
- Broadcast News Code of Ethics
- Homework for Thursday, Aug. 28:
  - Download RTNDA Code of Ethics  
[http://www.rtna.org/pages/media\\_items/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct48.php](http://www.rtna.org/pages/media_items/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct48.php)
  - Write two or three paragraphs on what you feel are the code's most important elements
- Thursday: View A&E Biography video on American broadcasting pioneer Edward R. Murrow
- Homework for Tuesday, Sept. 2: Write a paper about the Murrow video (see paper guidelines posted on class website)

#### Week 2—September 2 and 4 (Monday, Sept. 1: Last day of drop/add)

- Tuesday Class:
  - Return RTNDA Code papers
  - Discuss and collect Murrow papers due today
  - Murrow's Legacy (web posting)
  - View video of C of C alumna Kelly Golden, who is a local radio anchor/reporter and Murrow Award recipient
  - Legal and Ethical Concerns
- Homework for Thursday, Sept. 4:
  - Read pages 70-83 and do the six "Stop and Write" sections.
  - Also complete Ethical Analysis handout—how would you handle each scenario? What does the Code of Ethics say about each situation?
- Thursday Class:
  - Discuss Ethical Analysis homework
  - Review Libel and Privacy Law standards and media defenses (web)
  - Review Guidelines for Coverage (RTNDA website)
- Homework for Tuesday, Sept. 9: In book, read Introduction and review Radio-TV News Terminology. Read pages 3-16 and answer all (10 total) the "Stop and Write" questions and exercises

#### Week 3—September 9 and 11

- **Tuesday:**
  - Review broadcast pronouncers and rewrites done for homework
  - How broadcast news writing differs from print style (website posting)
  - Review additional ethical/legal scenarios (handout)
  - Review RTNDA Guidelines for News Coverage
  - The importance of proper attribution and sourcing
- Discuss Election 2008 Podcasts. Form news teams for this project.
- **Homework for Thursday, Sept. 11:** Read pages 16-20 and do the three “Stop and Write” sections (attribution and quotes)
- **Also for Thursday,** come up with two special report story ideas—topics that would involve getting the opinions of C of C students, faculty and staff and/or Charleston area residents about the presidential election. Make sure topics will still be timely when these reports are due. Type your two or more story ideas and include with your book homework due Thursday.
- **Thursday’s Class:**
  - Shake up at MSNBC: Olbermann/Matthews out; David Gregory in
  - Election-related story topics due today
  - Form class into News Teams today
  - Allow teams to meet to go over topic ideas
  - Go over attribution handout
- **Homework for Tuesday, Sept. 16:** Read pages 20-30 and do the seven “Stop and Write” sections (contractions, adjectives and adverbs, verbs, numbers, symbols, abbreviations and individually voiced elements)
- Discuss next week’s field exercise

#### Week 4—September 16 and 18

- Tuesday—groups meet to go over special report topics
- Covering stories for radio or podcasts
- **Homework for Thursday, Sept. 18:** Copy edit Plane Crash story (handout)
- **Field exercise on Thursday this week:** Bring digital recorders to record interviews during class session for your upcoming “person on the street” (POS) assignment
- Go over “POS checklist”
- See examples of interview “logs”
- **Homework for Tuesday, Sept. 23:** Log interviews from field exercise—see posted examples.

### Week 5—September 23 and 25

- Leads—preview book section on leads; also look on lead material on website
- **Tuesday Class:**
  - Field exercise logs due today
  - Preview John Palmer class visit Thursday
  - Assignment due next Tuesday based on his talk
  - Look at his bio posted on our website
  - Go over web posting about Writing Broadcast News Stories
  - Go over section on Leads at end of Print/Broadcast Differences posting
  - Go over web posting about Leads
  - Preview homework due next class—be sure to type and double space!
  - Uploading recording to your computer demonstration
- **Homework for Thursday, Sept. 25:**
  - Write leads assigned from back of book (page 96)
  - Read pages 37-39 (The Body and Endings of Stories) and do the two “Stop and Write” sections.
- **Thursday: Special Guest: John Palmer, former longtime NBC anchor and correspondent speaks to our class today (bring recorders and be ready to take notes for a report due next class about his talk)**
- In class Thursday: review page 96 and during class write leads only to four stories on page 95
- **Homework for Tuesday, Sept. 30:**
  - Write a 30 second radio reader script about John Palmer’s visit to our class on Thursday, Sept. 25 (for sample radio reader script—see p. 58)

### Week 6—September 30 and October 2

- **Tuesday’s Class:**
  - Return writing leads homework and review (see website)
  - John Palmer Reader scripts due today—write several on the board
  - Go over Broadcast Delivery handout
  - Using handout guidelines, mark your Palmer script for delivery
  - Read scripts out loud and time
  - Start of discuss Midterm Exam which is Thursday, Oct. 9
    - Midterm Study Guide will be posted on Thursday
    - Scripts will be written for the Midterm that will be due next Tuesday
  - More leads—Timed writing—type leads to five stories on p. 97
  - Review at end of class
  - Preview homework due Thursday
- **Homework for Thursday, Oct. 2:**
  - Read pages 39-43 on Actualities and Soundbites and Voicers, Wraparounds and Packages and do the two “Stop and Write” sections.
  - Also write an Anchor Lead to your POS wrap report

- **Thursday:** During class, do page 88 style test. Also during class, write a 45 second full story from the “Strike” story on p. 104
- **Thursday:** Go over Midterm Study Guide (posted): Exam is Thursday, October 9
- **Homework for Tuesday, Oct. 7:** Read pages 58-68 (radio, TV and R-TV web site news story scripts) and write four scripts: **(this is part of the exam)**
  - The radio stories will be about the Midcity teachers’ ongoing strike (see page 143). Write a **radio reader script** and a **radio actuality script** about the Teacher’s Strike (see sample scripts: p. 58 and 59)
  - The TV stories will be about the Cincinnati explosion (page 145). Write a **TV reader script** and a **TV soundbite script** about the Explosion story. Four scripts total. Don’t forget to put TV scripts in proper “split-page” format. (see sample scripts: p. 62 and 65)

**Week 7—October 7 and 9** (Tuesday, Oct. 7: Last day for students to withdraw with a W)

- **Tuesday—**
  - Return POS anchor leads—many not done correctly—use of “I” or your name not included as the reporter
  - See POS script examples (posted)
  - **Midterm Review:**
    - Midterm Scripts due today for review
    - Distribute Midterm Copy Editing part
    - Go over Midterm Exam Study Guide (posted)
    - Review Style Test 6 on page 88
    - Review Lead writing exercise, p. 95
    - Review two stories on page 100
- **Thursday, Oct. 9: Midterm Exam (don’t forget to turn in Four Scripts and the Copy Editing exercise that are part of the test)**
- **First Draft Script for your POS story is due Thursday, Oct. 16—sample POS scripts will be posted and distributed**

**Week 8—October 14 and 16** (post midterm grades by noon, Oct. 16)

- **Tuesday: No class- Fall Break**
- **Thursday:** Return and review midterm exams
- **Thursday, Oct. 16: POS scripts due**
- **Class Thursday, Oct. 16**
  - Return and go over midterms
  - Peer review POS scripts due today (mark for delivery first)
  - Go over POS Report guidelines (on website)
  - Next week will go over editing on Windows Movie Maker
  - Today, go over formatting CDs so you can put your audio files on them (there’s a help sheet posted on the website)

**Week 9—October 21 and 23**

- **Tuesday’s Class:**
  - **Return POS scripts—CDs and scripts are due next Tuesday**
  - **Go over Election Reaction assignment (Issue/Controversy Report)**
  - **Go over producing audio reports**
  - **Review production Guidelines (posted)**
  - **Thursday—bring scripts and recorders to class—can start to produce your reports during class time**
  - **Bring audio and interviews on a flash drive in case recorder won’t upload to ECTR 110 computers**
- **Thursday’s Class:**
  - **Students can work on producing/editing POS reports due Tuesday**
  - **Bring script, recorder, USB cable, and earphones to class**
  - **We will go to Comm Media Lab toward end of class**

**Week 10—October 28 and 30**

- **Tuesday, Oct. 28: POS CDs and scripts are due**
- **Tuesday’s Class:**
  - **Collect and break up into groups to listen to POS reports**
  - **Discuss “voicer” reports**
  - **Thursday, we will meet at the Rivers Communications Museum at the corner of George and St. Philip Streets. Bring your recorders for the “nat sound” voicer report due Thursday, Nov. 6**
- **Thursday’s Class:**
  - **Meet at Rivers Communications Museum at corner of George and St. Philip Streets. Be sure to bring your recorder!**

**Week 11—November 4 and 6**

- **Tuesday’s Class:**
  - **Go over editing Rivers Museum “nat sound” voicer due Thursday**
  - **Prepare for Thursday’s Election Reaction field interviews**
- **Thursday, Nov. 6: Rivers Museum “voicer” reports and CDs due today**
- **Thursday’s Class:**
  - **Collect and listen to some Rivers Museum reports**
  - **Discuss Election Reax reports—due next Thursday—go through guidelines for report and the team podcasts (details posted)**
  - **Teams will meet to discuss topic ideas**
  - **Also, go over Newscast Assignment due Tuesday, Nov. 11—details posted on the class website**

**Note: Thursday, Nov. 6, 7 p.m., Sottile Theatre: Communication Department presents a Distinguished Communicator Series speaker—see C of C homepage for details**

**Week 12—November 11 and 13**

- **Tuesday:**
  - Updates on Election Reax wraps—they are due Thursday
  - Teams will have time to meet before or after newscasts
  - Record Midcity newscast during class
- **Thursday:**
  - Issue/Controversy Wrap (Election Reax) due Thursday, Nov. 13
  - Start to discuss 10-minute interview assignment: Due Nov. 25

**Week 13—November 18 and 20**

- **Tuesday:**
  - Podcast Progress Updates from News Teams
  - Podcasts are due Thursday from each team—producer should email the You Tube link to me at [harwoodp@cofc.edu](mailto:harwoodp@cofc.edu)
  - Go over posting videos on You Tube—keep TRT under 10 minutes
  - Producer can put on a CD/DVD
  - Producer should turn in reporters' scripts Thursday too
  - More on 10-minute interviews
  - Interviewing tips- see posting
  - In-class Assignment: List two or three possible guests for your “C of C Scene” interview. For each person, list name, position, why you want to talk to this person, why listeners may be interested in this guest, and why this guest is topical and newsworthy at this time
- Team Podcasts are due Thursday, Nov. 20
  - Listen to Podcasts
  - Also start to discuss Multimedia Project

**Week 14—November 25 and 27 (no class Thursday due to Thanksgiving)**

- 10-minute interviews due Tuesday, November 25
- Multimedia Projects—due Thursday, Dec. 4 (last class)
- Start to discuss final exam newscast project

**Week 15—December 2 and 4—Thursday is our last class of semester (all classes end Monday, December 8—exams begin Wednesday, December 10)**

- Go over Final Exam Newscast Guidelines
- Thursday, Dec. 4—Multimedia Projects due
- Continue to go over Final Newscast Project

**FINAL EXAM DATE— Tuesday, December 16, 12-3 p.m.: bring projects to classroom—must be turned in by 3 p.m. or will be considered late!**

(Final Grades are due by Friday, Dec. 19 at noon—available to view on Cougar Trail Tuesday, December 23 at 8 a.m.)

###

