

TV News-- Newscast #1 Assignment Monday, April 7, 2008

On Monday, April 14 each of you will each deliver a two minute newscast during class. The scenario is that this is a live afternoon newscast broadcast daily by the College of Charleston News Service. The report will have news, sports, and weather.

Here is the format:

- Open: “It’s 2 o’clock. Time for your College of Charleston News update. I’m...(your name)”
- Follow with four short news stories (readers), each about 20 seconds long. They can be world, national, state, local or campus stories. But there must be at least two College of Charleston-related stories. (they can all be C of C stories too)
- Follow with a brief sports report, about 20 seconds long...time only for a few quick items, a couple scores, etc. Must include at least one C of C sports item.
- End newscast with a quick look at today’s weather. Include current weather description and temperature, and the forecast for tonight and tomorrow.
- Close by saying, “For the College of Charleston News Service, I’m _____.” I’ll be back with another update in one hour.” (hold your look ‘til cleared)

Your news stories must be timely for the day and time you deliver this newscast. Find your stories using your own enhanced news gathering and news judgment skills!

Find other stories using The Post and Courier, the George Street Observer, the C of C website and e-mail, or other C of C news/information/calendar sources (even flyers posted around campus). Rewrite, put in your own words...don’t plagiarize! If your news is not current, you will get a lower grade. Strive for ways to update stories, to say what’s happening now. Avoid “yesterday” and “last night” in leads. News can be all “hard” news or can be a mix of hard and “soft” news such as events, happenings.

Write each story on its own page in the proper TV news split-page format. Have proper heading information for each story. See sample scripts that will be distributed.

Dress appropriately. Practice/rehearse as much as you can. You need to be familiar enough with your script to maintain eye contact with the camera/audience. It’s OK to read from your script, but not to read the entire newscast.

Look for opportunities to use transitional and/or connective phrases between stories. Look for opportunities to group stories by significance (order of importance), subject/topic, location/geography and/or chronology (most recent stories first usually). Use script marks to stress key words and to speed up or slow down delivery and to help with difficult to pronounce words and phrases. Also, it’s a good on-air technique to look down between stories as you change pages. This helps cue the viewers to the end of one story and the beginning of a new one. Lowering your voice during the last few words of a story, then raising your voice at the beginning of a new story—this also helps indicate a change in stories.

You will be given hand signal cues during the newscast to help ensure that it runs two minutes. Cues will be given at one minute left, 30 and 15 seconds left. A wrap up gesture will be given if it looks like you will run long and a stretch signal will be shown if you are running short. Final times should be no shorter than 1:50 and no longer than 2:05. You will be graded on accuracy, writing (remember broadcast writing rules!), story selection and order, scripting, delivery, and length of newscast.

