Department of Mass Communication  
Stephen F Austin State University  
SCRIPTWRITING  
MCM 421 Section 090 Spring 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MW 1:00 – 2:15 BO 209 Class</th>
<th>3 Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Al Greule</td>
<td>Phone: 468-1345 or 468-4001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office: 301-H BOYNTON</td>
<td>E-Mail: <a href="mailto:agreule@sfasu.edu">agreule@sfasu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours: M 8-10:45 &amp; 2:15-2:45</td>
<td>TR 1:50-2:50</td>
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<td>W 2:15-2:45</td>
<td>Other times by appointment</td>
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Course Description
Problems and practice in the writing of dramatic and non-dramatic programs for broadcast purposes. Prerequisite: Advanced standing. Writing enhanced.

Program learning Outcomes
The following apply to the Mass Communication major. Some may be partially addressed in this course

1. Demonstrate the ability to write effectively across a variety of platforms appropriate to the discipline.
2. Gather, organize and analyze discipline-appropriate research and communicate information about it.
3. Understand the role of media in society.
4. Comprehend legal and ethical principles relating to media.
5. Demonstrate the application of media technology, terminology and techniques.

Student Learning Outcomes
By the end of this course, students should:

- Understand basic broadcast writing style.
- Know terminology as practiced today in radio, television, cable (including satellite) and new media technologies.
- Have a better understanding of the writer’s role in the creation of dramatic and non-dramatic program materials
- Understand how to motivate an audience and be able to write persuasive commercials and announcements
- Convert information from sources into proper script format and active voice.
- Identify and script to sound bites and actualities from an interview.
- Write a script to match video images
- Edit and rewrite copy for accuracy and brevity.
Assessment Assignments

To measure success of student acquisition of these skills the following course specific student learning outcome measures are in support of the program learning outcomes listed above and are an important component in the successful completion of this course.

Students will prepare and present a program length script as a major assignment of the course. This assignment requires application of research and demonstration of acquired writing skills.

Questions requiring students to demonstrate mastery of terminology will be embedded in exams for the course.

WRITING ENHANCED COURSE

This course is officially designated in the College of Liberal and Applied Arts as “Writing Enhanced,” (WE) and may be used to help meet the graduation requirement of WE courses:

Students in each of the courses will, at a minimum:

1. Write at least 3000 words on projects and/or assignments throughout the semester.
2. Be required to revise and re-submit at least one assignment during the term.
3. Complete at least one out-of-class writing assignment.

Total writing assignments for the course will count for a minimum of 50% of the course grade. Enrollment in the courses will be capped at 20 students to provide adequate instructor feedback to the student. These standards will be easily exceeded in this course.

Required Texts

Robert L. Hilliard Emerson College, Emeritus
Cengage Publishing

Other Content Materials

Some additional required content and additional homework materials will be found on D2L

Elaboration About Studio Production

The course is designed to serve majors in radio-TV and strategic communication in introducing the principles, techniques, and style of writing for the electronic media including commercials, public service announcements, narration, instructional and other Radio-TV entertainment scripts. The students will practice writing on deadline, timing for broadcast, editing scripts, researching subjects, expanding creativity, legal issues, ethics, and scripting to video. Instruction will include lectures on relevant topics as well as critique of in-class and take-home writings.
Policies and Procedures

- **Academic Integrity (4.1)**
  Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

  **Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
  Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.
  Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.
  Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

  If there is a reason to suspect you have been academically dishonest, the instructor will contact you and present the evidence and describe the procedure. If you are guilty you will receive an F for the entire course.

- **Students with Disabilities**
  To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)

  Students with disabilities should meet with the instructor prior to January 22 to discuss any expected accommodation.

- **Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**
  Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances.
Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

- **Acceptable Student Behavior**
  Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy 10.4). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

  **The instructor does not tolerate:**

  - Lateness. The student is expected to be in a seat, ready to take notes and side conversations stopped by the start of class time. **Arriving Late or leaving early will also count as an absence as it is disruptive to the learning environment so be ready to take notes at the start of class and take care of bathroom and trash disposal before or after class.** Laptop or tablet use is allowed ONLY for note taking. Using computers or tablets for non-class activities or talking with classmates is not full attendance and the student will be marked absent if found using devices in this manner.

  - Distractions by other electronic devices. Cell phones & other electronic devices **must be off** during class and lab. Phones ringing, students texting etc. is disruptive to the attention of the student, other students and the instructor and will count as an absence (and if behavior persists the student will be made to leave class). **Vibrate settings and text messaging will not be tolerated.**

  - Recording of any portion of any class/lecture without the instructor’s permission is prohibited.

  - Department Policy prohibits food or drink in classrooms. The instructor will allow bottled water with a cap only—and only in class but not labs.

  - Sleeping in class. This will also count as an absence.

  - Surreptitious or covert videotaping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is unacceptable. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only
with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class might be recorded.

- **Attendance**
  The final grade may be affected by the attendance regulations. As this is a course designed to prepare the student for a profession, professional standards are applied. Just as an employee is expected to be on time and at the assigned work place, so too is the student in this course. Missed crew assignments, tests, quizzes, late homework and productions will earn the student a failing grade for those assignments. Should severe illness strike or other legitimate (university sanctioned) excuse become the case, notify the instructor **IN ADVANCE** of the absence in an effort to obtain approval. The instructor reserves the right to not accept an excuse. Each time a student misses a lab assignment, that student will lose 10% off their lab grade. For regular class meetings where no graded assignment or activity is due on the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th unexcused absence the final course grade will be reduced by 5% for each absence. On the 7th unexcused absence, the student will receive a grade of **F** for the course. Also see policy for semester production below.

- **Grading**
  As per the policy for writing enhanced courses, there will be almost daily in class writing assignments (for the purposes of coaching) and almost daily out of class writing assignments. Several assignments will be re-written.

  If you are not prepared for class because you have not read the assigned readings, critically analyzed the course material, considered the thoughts of fellow students, finished your project, and thought through the materials presented in class you may not be achieving your educational goals.

  Your grade will be determined in the following manner:
  
  30 % In class writing & re-writes
  30 % Out of class writing & re-writes
  20 % Long-form writing project (semester project)
  20 % Tests and quizzes

  $90 - 100 = A \quad 80-89 = B \quad 70-79 = C \quad 60-69 = D \quad 0-59 = F$

  Final grades may be altered based upon the attendance & conduct policies.

  There will be at least 2 tests based upon the text, lectures and other materials. There will be several writing assignments for each area of course topics (scripts, PSA’s, radio commercials, TV commercials & program length script in the form of the semester project).
**Semester Project:** In addition to the numerous daily in class and out of class writing assignments that make up the major part of your non-test grades, each student will complete a major script project outside of class and Due IN CLASS no later than April 16. A list of options may include:

1. A script for at least one episode of a 30 minute television situation comedy.
2. A script for a 60 minute television drama
3. A script for a 60 minute radio drama
4. A script for a 30 minute radio documentary (for example a “rockumentary” but music or other pre-produced items will be in addition to the time required).
5. A script for a television documentary 30 or 60 minutes (may be in 2 parts)
6. A script for an instructional television program(s) with the episodes totaling 60 minutes
7. A series of television or radio reviews totaling at least 60 minutes

This is a semester long project so you will want to get started on it from the beginning of the course and work on it some each day. Tip: Decide on the topic and content and begin putting ideas down. It is easier to be doing a rewrite and polish the nights before it is due rather than starting from scratch.

**Course Calendar: (Tentative schedule)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Read</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 20</td>
<td>Intro to course/ Writing for the ear</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 25/27</td>
<td>Genre overview/ Basic style</td>
<td>Ch. 1 &amp; p 183</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 1/3</td>
<td>Tease copy Promos &amp; PSA’s gaining attention</td>
<td>P 152-158</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 8/10</td>
<td>Scripting from press releases &amp; fact sheets</td>
<td>p34-46</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 15/17</td>
<td>Radio Commercial copy-- Appeals</td>
<td>P84-98</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 22/24</td>
<td>Hard &amp; soft sell Commercial/campaigns/Review</td>
<td>P 106-128</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exams I/ multiple voices &amp; formats</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 8/10</td>
<td>TV Commercials</td>
<td>Ch.</td>
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<td>March 14/16</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>Program length scriptwriting/</td>
<td>Ch 6 &amp; 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>MARCH 23</td>
<td>LAST DAY TO DROP/ formats</td>
<td>Ch 7 &amp; 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 28/30</td>
<td>Easter Break (Mar 28)/Genre differences</td>
<td>Ch 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 4/6</td>
<td>Writing the video</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11/13</td>
<td>Storyboards</td>
<td>P100-105 <strong>Project due(13th)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 18/20</td>
<td>TV Promotion</td>
<td>P 129</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 25/27</td>
<td>Editing &amp; rewriting</td>
<td>Project Rewrite due (27)</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2/4</td>
<td>Rewrites and Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 11</td>
<td><strong>Exam 2 at 8 AM</strong></td>
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