**COMM 212:** **WRITING FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION**

Syllabus, Spring 2020; T-Th 11-12:15, Jan. 20-March 13 (updated 1/20/20)

Instructor: Dr. Steve Hill ([shill@uwsp.edu](mailto:shill@uwsp.edu)), CAC 303, 346-3887

Office Hours: T-Th 10 a.m.-11 a.m. and by appointment

**Required & Recommended Texts**:

* *Writing for Strategic Communication Industries* by Jasmine Roberts; PDF posted on Canvas
* *Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law* (available for purchase from Amazon or other online sources; a few copies may be available at the university bookstore)
* RECOMMENDED: William Strunk, Jr.: *The Elements of Style* (any version OK, but the 2018 update of the classic version (published in 2018 Spectrum Ink is preferred. (ISBN-10 is 1643990004; ISBN-13 is 978-1643990002). $3.99 on Amazon in Kindle format

**This is an eight-week course, so the pacing will be faster than normal**. Our **purpose** is to help students from various majors learn fundamental journalistic and strategic-communication writing skills that are useful across disciplines – especially writing and thinking skills. Much of the work is rooted in basic journalism and media skills, and all is rooted in understanding of English grammar and composition. Mastering assignments will leave you better equipped to analyze and communicate clearly about events in our world, regardless of your ultimate profession. Due dates for all assignments are listed in each Canvas assignment and a complete summary of the course calendar (subject to minor changes) is also on the course home page. See also the “Assignments and grading policies” document.

*COMM 212 was designed as a writing-emphasis course, so you’ll be required to write quite a bit to receive credit in this course. It also is a hybrid course, meaning class meetings will be limited. Much of your learning will occur online. There will be substantial peer editing. Please see class rules in Canvas for more details on attendance, which is mandatory in that I am required to report non-attendance.*

Our **learning outcomes** are that students will be able to:

* write news stories in the proper inverted pyramid format;
* understand and effectively utilize other story formats and styles;
* demonstrate appreciation of writing deadlines and an ability to meet them;
* effectively use the Associated Press stylebook so writing confirms to journalistic style;
* improve their understanding and use of basic English grammar;
* demonstrate competence in core journalism skills such as listening and observing, fact-checking, organizing and structuring information, rewriting, and editing;
* demonstrate an understanding of effective questioning that indicates attentiveness and engagement; and
* demonstrate competence as a peer editor.

We'll measure progress toward these outcomes by assessing how you demonstrate skills & knowledge on both a steady stream of online quizzes and drills, plus a small number of writing assignments. See the “Assignments and grading policies” document and individual assignments in Canvas for more details.

My teaching philosophy is based on four concepts: community, personal responsibility, effective communication and relevance. A short explanation of this philosophy is posted on Canvas. I hope you’ll read it and understand how respecting this philosophy in class will contribute to a positive learning experience for yourself and your colleagues.

I try to keep **class rules** to a minimum, but those that I have are posted on the Canvas content area.

**Grading Policy**

Your grade will be based on the number of points that you earn. There will be at least 1,100 points available during the semester. Point totals required for grade levels are these (note that 930 points is roughly 85 percent of 1,100 and 600 is roughly 55 percent of 1,100):

A: 930 or more A-: 900-929.99

B+: 870-899.99 B: 830-869.99 B-: 800-829.99

C+: 770-799.99 C: 730-769.99 C-: 700-729.99

D+: 670-699.99 D: 600-669.99

F: Fewer than 600 points

**Deadlines are critical** to journalists. **If any of your first-draft written assignments are late, you’ll lose 25 percent** of the assignment’s potential value for each 24-hour period that it’s late. The clock starts ticking at the time that it’s due. All work is turned in electronically unless otherwise noted. If a 50-point assignment is due on Tuesday at 11 p.m., it loses 12.5 points at 11:01 p.m. Tuesday and another 12.5 at 11:01 Wednesday. For more information on deadlines, see the late policy on the Canvas home page. *Quizzes and writing revisions may* **not** *be submitted late.*

**PLEASE NOTE: ANY ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT, INCLUDING MISREPRESENTING ANY WORK IN ANY WAY, WILL RESULT IN A GRADE OF “F” FOR THE COURSE.**

**Statements of University Policy. You are responsible for understanding university policies, especially regarding academic misconduct. That policy can be found at** http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/stuaffairs/rights/rightsChap14.pdf**.**

*Students with Disabilities*: Any student with a disability who needs an accommodation or other assistance in this course should make an appointment to speak with me as soon as possible.

**UWSP 14.01 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES.**

The board of regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the University of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin system. The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

**UWSP 14.03 ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

(1) Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:

(a) Seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;

(b) Uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;

(c) Forges or falsifies academic documents or records;

(d) Intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;

(e) Engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance; or

(f) Assists other students in any of these acts.

(g) Violates electronic communication policies or standards as agreed upon when logging on initially (See uwsp.edu/it/policy).