

Comm 3502 — News Lab Practicum, Fall 2009

(Section 01, 30839, M 4 to 4:50 p.m., ST 176)

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University Journal Office hours: MWF, 12 to 12:50 p.m.

Description — This laboratory course is designed to give students work experience in writing, editing, photojournalism and other tasks associated with the twice-weekly publication of the *University Journal*, the SUU student newspaper, and its companion Web site, suunews.com. Students' work will be directed by student editors and critiqued by faculty and staff.

Textbooks — Our text is the *University Journal* Staff Handbook. Read it; know what is in it. The *Journal* Style Supplement and the Editors' Design Supplement are part of the handbook. They contain rules governing the way *Journal* stories are supposed to be written and how newspaper pages should be designed. Please become familiar with the supplements and consult them as you write stories, cutlines, and headlines or design pages.

Duties — Your responsibilities will vary depending on the number of credits for which you are enrolled:

- ◆ Students enrolled for **1 credit** must complete one story or photo assignment each week.
- ◆ Students enrolled for **2 credits** must complete two stories or photo assignments each week.
- ◆ Students enrolled for **3 credits** must complete three stories or photo assignments each week.

Portfolio — At the end of the semester, you will hand in a portfolio containing a current resume (updated to include your work at the *Journal*) and clippings of all the work you did at the *Journal* during the current semester. The portfolio will help me assess your contribution to the paper for grading purposes. (For example, if you are enrolled for 2 credits but your portfolio only includes 24 items, I will know that you did not fulfill the minimum requirement to receive two credits.) Also, if you're wise enough to keep your portfolio current in future semesters, it will help you as you apply for jobs in the news industry after you graduate.

Meetings with the Professor — Each student enrolled in the class (writer, photographer or editor) is required to meet with me to get help or feedback at least twice during the semester. I will be present in the newsroom on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the noon hour. If you need help with a story, cutline or page, that's the time to ask. It is your responsibility to see that you consult me for help. I will keep records of meetings and dock the grades of students who fail to meet with me twice during the semester.

Staff Meetings — Attendance at staff meetings is required. In the real world, you would not dare skip a staff meeting or show up late without advance notice. Don't do it here, either. Staff meetings begin at 4 p.m. every Monday (except Sept. 7 and Oct. 19; we meet on Tuesday those weeks). If you need to be absent from staff meeting, you must contact me via email **before** the meeting to request an excused absence. Also, send a copy of your request to the *Journal* editor. Roll will be taken at staff meetings. Failure to attend weekly staff meetings will affect your grade negatively.

Double-Dipping — Students enrolled in upper-division courses such as Feature Writing or Advanced Reported are assigned to write for the *Journal* as part of those classes. They may not submit work done in those classes for credit in this course, even if that work is published in the *Journal*. Any attempt to use the same stories for both classes will be construed as academic dishonesty and will be dealt with appropriately.

Deadlines — News is a deadline-oriented business. Good reporters and photographers meet their deadlines. If you can't meet a deadline, contact the assigning editor or supervisor before the deadline to report the problem. Missing deadlines on a regular basis will be detrimental to your grade in the class.

Cheating — Scholastic dishonesty is not tolerated. Any act of cheating (especially plagiarism or fabrication) will result in a failing grade for the course. "I didn't know it was wrong" is not an acceptable excuse.

Students with Disabilities — Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities who desire academic adjustments, accommodations or auxiliary aids must contact the Southern Utah University Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in Room 206F of the Sharwan Smith Center.

The Fine Print — Other than policies on grading, deadlines, makeup work and attendance, information in this syllabus is subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.