**Writing for the Electronic Media**

School of Journalism and Mass Communication

JOMC 121.1 – Spring, 2014

Tuesday and Thursday 12:30 to 1:45PM

Carroll Hall **132**

Instructor:  [**David Cupp**](http://jomc.unc.edu/faculty-staff-journalism-faculty/cupp-david)

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**Office Hours:**

**1:00PM to 2:00PM**

**Mondays and Wednesdays,**

**By Appointment, And By Chance.**

JOMC-121 cannot be taken concurrently with any course in which the lab or group meeting conflicts with JOMC-121 time periods. Students pursuing Electronic Communication majors are encouraged to take JOMC-221 during the same semester that they take JOMC-121.

Be sure your registration is up to date. If you are not officially registered for JOMC-121 by this semester’s deadline you will not be permitted to continue to attend class.

**National Standards:**

The standard expected of every student enrolled in the School's JOMC-121 sections is at the level of national excellence. By the time you complete JOMC-121 you will be a competent broadcast news writer.

**The Discipline and the Course:**

The study of broadcast journalism combines the skills of news writing, reporting and production.  To succeed in the course, you’ll need to achieve competence in all three areas.  JOMC-121 is the first course in the broadcast journalism sequence; which consists of JOMC-121, JOMC-221, JOMC-421 and JOMC-422. All four courses are required to complete the Electronic Communication Sequence in the School.

**Oral Communication Component:**

No prerequisite exists for oral communication skills. Unlike many courses in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication this course includes an oral communication component.  Broadcast journalists must be able to speak clearly and confidently into microphones, and those working in television must be able to do so in front of cameras. You cannot receive a passing grade in this course if your oral communication skills are deficient.  If you have any doubts about your ability to achieve competency in this area before completing the course, check now with the instructor.

**Basic Objectives:**

Basic objectives of JOMC-121 include the following:

* To improve your broadcast news writing and reporting skills.
* To integrate your broadcast news writing skills with basic reporting practices into the production of professional, network-quality audio news packages.

# Audio Recorder:

To record material for your stories you will need to purchase a digital voice recorder or a mini-disc recorder. To review the various options, download the document entitled “Choosing an Audio Recorder” which is available on the course [Sakai Site](https://www.unc.edu/sakai/).

JOMC will provide you with a microphone and a cable to use this semester, but please note that **you will need to pay a rental fee**. You can obtain this equipment at Carroll 263. At the end of the semester you must return the equipment in good condition before you can receive a grade for the class.

**Attendance**

As in the broadcast industry, punctuality is essential and deadlines must be met. Classroom experiences are a vital part of the educational process. Therefore, regular class attendance is essential. The following policy governs absences and their effect upon your grade:

* I expect you to arrive on time, and to stay for the entire class period. For clock-setting purposes, visit [**http://time.is/**](http://time.is/)or, for a more entertaining way to check the time, visit **The** [**Human Clock**](http://www.humanclock.com) Arriving late, coming in and out during class and/or leaving early will have an impact on the class participation aspect of your grade. Do not schedule activities related to other classes or to news stories that will conflict with your ability to attend these class sessions.
* One (1) absence – no penalty.
* Each additional absence will result in the deduction of one grade level (A- to B+) from your **final grade**.
* Medical absences are not considered separately. Hardship medical cases and other personal emergencies will be considered **when the situation arises**. If you find yourself dealing with a contagious illness or an emergency situation notify me in **advance** of class by phone or e-mail to avoid grading penalties.
* If you are absent on the day a quiz is given, you may make arrangements to make up the quiz within 24 hours, but a standard three-point deduction will be made for any quiz taken late.

**Inclement Weather:**

In the event of inclement weather, please check the [**UNC Website**](http://www.unc.edu/) to see if class has been canceled. Also be sure to check your e-mail for any messages from me.

**Participation**

One of the primary forms of participation in this class will be discussion. We will talk as a class and groups, thinking through issues together and critiquing our own work and the work of others. In order to create a good climate for everyone to participate, please follow these discussion guidelines:

* Be ready to share and explain your opinions. Feel free to disagree with others, but be specific in your own assertions and back them up with evidence.
* Listen carefully and respond to other members of the group. Be willing to change your mind when someone demonstrates an error in your logic or use of facts.
* Do not hesitate to ask for clarification of any point or term you do not understand.
* Make your point succinctly, avoid repetition, and stick to the subject.
* Be honest but sensitive in critiquing the work of others, whether you know the people involved or not. Keep the focus on the work, not the individuals, and critique their work product as carefully as you would hope to see someone else critique your own.
* When critiquing your own work, try to divorce yourself from your emotional connection to it and be as objective as possible.

To get the most out of our discussions, we must be prepared. That means you are responsible for having read that session’s material and for having thought through any questions given out ahead of time.

# Undivided Attention:

If you become a broadcast journalist you will utilize electronic devices daily, but all reporters must learn to listen well and take good notes without the aid of a computer. Before class begins please turn off all your electronic devices – laptop, PDA, cell phone, pager, etc. During class, all computers are to remain off at all times unless I ask you to turn them on. Use of the computer for non-class purposes (such as e-mail or Web surfing) will result in a 10-point deduction for your next assignment

**Stories and Assignments:**

Before writing your script, review the advice you will find in News Story Problems & Solutions in the Course Documents section of the [Sakai Site](https://www.unc.edu/sakai/).

Stories and assignments are due at the beginning of class.

All assignments must be word-processed. No assignment will be accepted in longhand. Printed news scripts you submit should contain hand-marked pauses **//** for breath and **/** meaning and by-hand highlighting of meaning-laden words. Aside from those markings, no longhand marks should appear on the front of any submission.  On the back of each assignment, please write (longhand permissible) the name and phone number of each person you interview for your story.  Failure to list your sources and their phone numbers on the back of your assignment will result in a 10-point deduction.

All copy must be printed on a laser or high-contrast printer.  If you do not have access to a laser or high-contrast printer, make arrangements now to locate one.

The .mp3 or .wav audio file with your assignment should be labeled with the name of the reporter/student and the title of the story, and should be placed, by your deadline, in the proper folder in your Sakai Drop Box. Otherwise, you could receive a ten-point deduction.

Stories displaying considerable intellectual depth, originality, creativity, news value, and flawless writing and production will earn the highest grades. Your stories may be considered for use on the Carolina Connection radio program, which will be broadcast live on Saturday mornings at 8:30 on [WCHL 1360](http://www.wchl1360.com/)

**Syllabus:**

If schedules and/or assignments change, I will attempt to contact all students via email through the Sakai web site. I will also revise the Syllabus posted on the Sakai site and will enter the revision date. I encourage you to check the online Syllabus frequently to make sure you are working from the latest version. You will find it at

<http://Sakai.unc.edu/>

**Readings:**

Just as if you were a professional broadcast journalist, I expect you to have a daily working knowledge of major news developments as reported by reputable news organizations. The scope of your acquaintance with issues needs to be broad, encompassing not only national and international events but also state, local and on-campus developments. Many of our classroom sessions will include a quiz and/or a discussion of current events.

News quiz questions will be drawn from events that receive coverage in the mainstream media during the 48 hours prior to each quiz. If I hear, read, and/or see news stories regarding an event from two different sources, I may include that event in the next news quiz. To give you an idea of my own news consumption, on a day-to-day basis I tend to read online and/or print versions of the New York Times, the Washington Post, the News and Observer and the Daily Tar Heel. I listen to CBS and NPR radio newscasts, and to local radio newscasts on WCHL. I watch morning and evening network television newscasts, and I rotate stations in viewing local evening television newscasts.

For a better understanding of how local news organizations can effectively localize national stories, on an ongoing basis I encourage you to visit the [Poynter Institute web site](http://poynter.org/). You can subscribe to receive its information by e-mail. Some **extra credit questions** on your 121 news quizzes will be drawn from the [Latest News](http://www.poynter.org/category/latest-news/) site on Poynter. Others may be drawn from from [TVSpy.](http://www.mediabistro.com/tvspy/)

As an up-to-the minute quick source of information I recommend checking the Top Stories tab of [*Google News*](http://news.google.com/).In addition, you should make it a point to check out local and national television newscasts and listen to radio news including:

* [WUNC-91.5](http://www.wunc.org/) NPR. Streaming audio available.

On WUNC you will hear award-winning local and national radio newscasts.

[*This American Life*](http://www.thisamericanlife.org/), an award-winning radio documentary series airs Saturday afternoons. Segments are repeated Sundays.

The quality of your work in JOMC-121 is expected to rise to the level of National Public Radio.

* [WCHL 1360](http://chapelboro.com/wchl/) CBS

This station provides the only Chapel Hill news coverage available on a commercial radio station. The web site provides live streaming, and a podcast of the morning newscast is made available each morning after 10AM

Several JOMC-121 students have worked for WCHL after successfully completing this course.

[Carolina Connection](http://carolinaconnection.org/), the weekly radio newscast produced by UNC students, airs on WCHL on Saturday mornings at 8:30. Past broadcasts are archived and available. Again, stories you produce for this class may be recommended for use on Carolina Connection.

* [WPTF 680](http://www.wptf.com/) Independent all news/talk.

**Required texts:**

Bliss Jr., E. & Hoyt, J.L., *Writing News for Broadcast*, Third Edition, Columbia University Press, New York, ©1994.

Kalbfeld, B., *Associated Press Broadcast News Handbook*, McGraw-Hill, ©2005.

##### Recommended Resources:

[*Utterback*](http://onlinevoicecoaching.com/), A.S., *Broadcast Voice Handbook*, 5th ed.

No print version of this book is available. A .pdf version of the book on compact disk is available **at the desk on the top floor** of the Student Store or may be [*purchased directly*](http://onlinevoicecoaching.com/?page_id=10) from Dr. Utterback.

Stern, David Alan, *The Speaker's Voice.* Three CDs with companion text/drill manual are available from [Dialect Accent Specialists](http://dialectaccentspecialists.com/store/index.php/cat_4). A copy is on reserve at the Park Library. This is an excellent resource for anyone doing self-guided voice work.

Dr. Stern has also produced a series of recordings to help speakers who hope to [reduce their accents](http://dialectaccentspecialists.com/store/index.php/cat_3), whether domestic American or foreign. I strongly encourage anyone who is dealing with an accent issue to order the appropriate recording.

Tuggle, C.A., Forrest Carr and Suzanne Huffman, *Broadcast News Handbook,* [Fourth Edition](http://www.mhprofessional.com/product.php?isbn=007351196X), McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ©2010. This book provides an excellent resource for students studying broadcast journalism, and it also serves as a text for JOMC-421.

One fast way for a broadcast journalist to call her/his credibility into question is to mispronounce a word. [*Dictionary.com*](http://dictionary.reference.com/) now provides audible word pronunciations.

Voice of America provides an [*audible pronunciation guide*](http://names.voa.gov/) for foreign names in the news.

Merck provides an audible pronunciation guide to [medical terms](http://www.merck.com/mmhe/resources/pronunciations/index/a.html).

Online services are great, but are not always available. I recommend that you keep a pocket-sized dictionary and a pocket-sized thesaurus handy.

**Supplementary Readings:**

In addition to the assigned readings, supplementary reading materials may be distributed in class.  Please be sure you collect a copy of the handout on the day it is distributed. Handouts will be distributed one time only.

**Notifying Sources:**

Each source you contact must be told at the beginning of your conversation that she/he is being interviewed for a story that may be used on the air.  After giving such notification, you must obtain each source's permission to be quoted and/or to have his/her voice recorded.  If you do not follow this procedure, you will be committing an Honor Code violation.  Also, as noted above, on the back page of each assignment you must write the name and phone number of each source you interviewed for that news story. Failure to include source names and phone numbers will result in a 10-point deduction for that particular assignment.

**Additional Considerations:**

All work must be original and solely for this class. No assignment that was prepared for credit as part of any other class may be submitted for credit in JOMC-121.

In the news business accuracy is vital. In the work you submit, misspelling of any word will result in a two-point deduction. Each style error as defined in the Kalbfeld text will result in a two-point deduction. Misspelling of a proper name, or a factual error, will result in a 10-point deduction.

Finally, under no circumstances should any journalist fabricate a source, a quote or a sound bite. If you engage in such a fabrication, you risk failing the course and being referred for an Honor Code violation.

Assignments and CDs not retrieved by the last day of class become the property of the School and may be discarded.

The instructor in the course serves as a news director/executive producer with final determination over the acceptability and quality of any story.

**Grading Breakdown:**

To receive a passing grade in the course, you must receive a passing grade in all of the following graded components:

1. Textbook exam.

2. Writing / reporting assignments.

3. Quizzes / current events discussions.

4. Oral communication competency (P/F).

# Each project will be judged on the following criteria:

|  |
| --- |
| News Value |
| Choice of Interviewee(s) |
| Writing |
| Field Audio Quality |
| Editing |
| Use of Natural Sound |
| Overall effect |

| Course Element | % of Grade |
| --- | --- |
| Class Attendance and Participation in Discussion | 10% |
| Writing and Current Events Quizzes | 15% |
| Test on Textbook Materials | 20% |
| Four Reporting Assignments | 25% |
| Final Project | 30% |

You cannot receive a passing grade in the course unless all assignments in the course are completed. A numerical grade scale will be used on all papers and tests.  Here are the letter equivalents:

FINAL GRADES

94 -100  A

91 – 93.9   A-

88 – 90.9   B+

84 - 87.9   B

81 - 83.9   B-

78 - 80.9   C+

74 - 77.9   C

71 - 73.9   C-

68 - 70.9   D+

64 - 67.9   D

61 - 63.9   D-

60.9 and below F

**Late Assignments:**

You are responsible for getting your project turned in on its due date even if you will be absent from class that day. Projects will be accepted after their due dates, but late projects will face a penalty of one grade level (A- to B+) for each 12 hours that pass between the deadline and the time that the assignment is submitted. You cannot receive a passing grade in the course unless all assignments are completed. An assignment that’s not turned in within a week of the due date will receive a zero grade.

**A word of warning**: In all likelihood at some point in this class you will encounter real-world last-minute problems over which you will have little or no control – problems that will compromise your ability to get an assignment turned in on time. Stories shift. Plans fall through. Interviewees cancel appointments. Equipment malfunctions. Illness strikes. Know this and build a time cushion for yourself. To prevent such problems from damaging your grade I strongly encourage you to set your own personal deadlines, planning to have all elements for each story recorded 48 hours in advance and to have all editing completed 24 hours in advance of deadline.

**Weekly Schedule:**

The following schedule may change during the semester, depending on the time necessary to critique individual writing assignments, production schedules, studio availability, coverage of current events, schedules of guest speakers and other factors. Please check the [Sakai Site](https://www.unc.edu/sakai/) frequently as the schedule may change without e-mail notice.

| **Date** | **Topic** | **Readings DUE** | **Project DUE** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week 1** |  |  |  |
| **Thursday January 9** | Review Syllabus  Review Course Objectives  Discuss texts.  Discuss equipment. |  |  |
| **Week 2** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday January 14** | Review assigned readings.  Hindenburg to Buchenwald | **Bliss & Hoyt,**  **Chapters 1 & 2** | Purchase recorder. |
| **Thursday January 16** | Review assigned readings | **Bliss & Hoyt, Chapters 3 & 4** |  |
| **Week 3** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday, January 21** | Review assigned readings | **Bliss & Hoyt, Chapters 5 & 6** |  |
| **Thursday January 23** | Quiz Review  How to Record Great Sound  Assignment Meeting  Review assigned readings | **Read Bliss & Hoyt, Chapter 7**  Visit [Sakai](http://blackboard.unc.edu/) Course Document area where you will find a document explaining operation of your Olympus DM-10 digital recorder and simple editing instructions for Audition 1.5.  NOTE: Prior to class, please go to **Carroll 239** to check out a microphone and a cable and bring them with you to class. | Bring your digital recorder  to class.  Familiarize yourself with your recorder's operation.  **Quiz 1** |
| **Week 4** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday**  **January 28** | **Radio Project**  **One Assignment Made**  A Tour of Audition 1.5  Edit stories | AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, **A, B & C** words listed on Sakai web site. | Record  natural sound, an interview sample, and your own voice trackwith your digital recorder. |
| **Thursday**  **January 30** | **Voice & Diction**  **Students from Other Classes May Attend.** |  | **Quiz 2** |

| **Week 5** |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tuesday February 4** | **Ethical Decision-Making**  Quiz Review | AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, **D, E & F** words listed on Sakai web site. | **Blue Team**  **121 Project One Due** |
| **Thursday February 6** |  | **Read Bliss & Hoyt, Chapters 8 & 9**. | **Quiz 3**  **White Team**  **121 Project One Due** |
| **Week 6** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday February 11** | Review Project One  **Radio Project**  **Two Assignment Made**  Quiz Review | Read AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, **G, H & I** words listed on Sakai web site.  **Read Bliss & Hoyt, Chapters 10 & 11** |  |
| **Thursday February 13** | Review Project One | **Read Bliss & Hoyt, Chapter 15**. | **Quiz 4** |
| **Week 7** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday February 18** | Quiz Review | AP Broadcast News Handbook, pages **9 through 46**  Read AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, **J, K & L** words listed on Sakai web site. | **Blue Team**  **121 Project Two Due** |
| **Thursday February 20** |  | Read *AP Broadcast News Handbook*, pages **47 through 114** | **Quiz 5**  **White Team**  **121 Project Two Due** |
| **Week 8** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday February 25** |  | Read AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, **M, N & O** words listed on Sakai web site. |  |
| **Thursday February 27** | Complete Reviews of Project Two | Read *AP Broadcast News Handbook*, pages **115 through 134** | **Quiz 6**  **Blue Team**  **121 Project Three Due** |
| **Week 9** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday, March 4** | Quiz Review | Read AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, **P, Q & R** words listed on Sakai web site. | **White Team**  **121 Project Three Due** |
| **Thursday**  **March 6** | Review Project Three |  | **Quiz 7** |
| **Friday**  **March 7** |  |  | **Final Project Proposals Due Via E-Mail**  Each student must submit three proposals, two to three sentences per proposal. Also, please list three proposed sources per story. |

| **Week 10** |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tuesday, March 11** | **Spring Break**  **No Class** | **Spring Break**  **No Class** | **Spring Break**  **No Class** |
| **Thursday March 13** | **Spring Break**  **No Class** | **Spring Break**  **No Class** | **Spring Break**  **No Class** |
| **Week 11** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday, March 18** | Review Project Three |  |  |
| **Thursday, March 20** | Review Project Three | Read AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, **S & T** words listed on Sakai web site. | **Blue Team**  **121 Radio Project Four Due**  **Quiz 8** |
| **Week 12** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday, March 25** | Review Project Three  Review Quiz Seven |  | **White Team**  **121 Radio Project Four Due** |
| **Thursday, March 27** | Review Project Four | Read AP Broadcast News Handbook, Part 2, **U through Z** words listed on Sakai web site | **Quiz 9** |
| **Week 13** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday, April 2** | Review Project Four  Quiz Review |  | **Blue Team**  **121 Anchor Intro and First 60 Seconds of Final Project Script Due**  **Just Script, No CD** |
| **Thursday, April 3** | Review Project Four |  | **White Team**  **121 Anchor Intro and First 60 Seconds of Final Project Script Due**  **Just Script, No CD** |
| **Week 14** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday, April 8** | **Text Exam** | **Text Exam**  Test over  Bliss & Hoyt text,  *AP Broadcast News Handbook*,  Sakai readings, and audio/video examples used in class. | **Text Exam**  **Quiz 10** |
| **Thursday, April 10** |  | **RETURN MICROPHONES!** | **Blue Team**  **121 Final Project Due** |
| **Week 15** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday, April 15** | Review Final Projects | **RETURN MICROPHONES!** | **White Team**  **121 Final Project Due** |
| **Thursday, April 17** | Review Final Projects |  |  |
| **Week 16** |  |  |  |
| **Tuesday, April 22** | Review Final Projects |  |  |
| **Thursday, April 24** | **LAST DAY OF CLASS** | **LAST DAY OF CLASS**  **Reverse the Curse** | **LAST DAY OF CLASS** |
| **Friday, May 2 12N**  **Reserve Scheduled**  **Slot For**  **Final Exam** | **Text Exam**  **Backup Date**  **TBD** | **Exam**  Test over  Bliss & Hoyt text,  *AP Broadcast News Handbook*,  Sakai readings, and audio/video examples used in class. | **Exam**  **Quiz 10** |

**Note: This schedule is subject to change.**