

Tompkins Cortland Community College
Master Course Syllabus

Course Discipline and Number: COMM 160
Course Title: Media Writing

Year: 2025-2026
Credit Hours: 3

I. Course Description:

This is an intensive writing seminar based on basic principles and techniques of writing for media which may include but are not limited to writing for TV, print, radio, and online formats. Students will learn how to write news, persuasive copy, and public relations materials. Prerequisites: RDNG 116 if required by placement; prior completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, ENGL 101. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Spring semester.

II. Additional Course Information:

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| 1. This course is required for Broadcast Production: Radio Concentration and Communication & Media Arts: Broadcast Journalism majors. |
| 2. This course would be an interesting introduction for anyone interested in learning about media writing. |
| 3. Students will be given access to microphones and recorders housed in the media cage. |

III. Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

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| 1. Write clear, concise, content using appropriate technology and college-level verbal, presentation, and written skills, for delivery to news media outlets, under deadlines. . |
| 2. Create works for a professional portfolio using analytical, problem-solving, aesthetic, critical thinking, and creative means suitable for transfer to a four-year institution or an entry-level broadcast facility. |
| 3. Research and analyze data to think critically, creatively, and independently to solve problems and reach conclusions. |
| 4. Describe the legal and moral implications of reporting and the duties of journalists in society and conduct themselves by the standards of practice outlined by the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics. |

IV. Tompkins Cortland General Education Goals & SUNY Competencies

☒ Critical thinking

Students will work on research assignments in the course. Students apply knowledge gained from lectures, readings, and media presentations to help them make informed decisions about planning and delivering their group project and writing assignments. In addition, students will develop problem-solving skills such as team building, effective collaboration, and creative brainstorming as they complete hands-on course projects.

☒ Social/Global Awareness

Students explore creative works in media and the impact of media from around the world. Students will be comparing media formats and styles as they learn to write their own.

☒ Information Management

Students use the computer to submit their work for weekly discussions and to do their basic research. They will also use the computer to locate, evaluate, and synthesize information for their groups and research projects both on their own and with the help of a research librarian.

V. Essential Topics/Themes

1. Media Writing Foundations: writing style & language conventions
2. News Settings: a) reporting and interviewing, b) hard news & feature writing, c) electronic news writings-radio & television, d) copyediting, e) media law & ethics
3. Digital Settings: a) writing for social media, b) web copywriting
4. Persuasive Settings: a) basic persuasive writing, b) public relations, c) advertising, d) business communication

VI. Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% of Grade
1. Weekly writing assignments	25% 20-30%
2. In-class writing assignments and homework	15-25%
3. Quizzes	15-25%
4. Participation and attendance	5-15%
5. Final project	20-30%

VII. Texts – Required Recommended Used for more than one course (list courses)

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| 1. Kuehn, Scott A. and James Andrew Lingwall. <i>The Basics of Media Writing: A Strategic Approach</i> . 1st ed., 2018. Sage Publications, Inc. ISBN: 1506308104 |
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Editions listed are current as of date of syllabus. More recent editions may be used.

VIII. Bibliography of Supplemental Materials

1. Bender, John, Davenport, Lucinda, Drager, Michael & Fedler, Fred. <i>Writing and Reporting for the Media 12th Ed.</i> London. © 2018.
2. Benedict, Helen, <i>Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes</i> . Oxford, NY, © 1992.
3. Bundell, Bill. <i>The Art and Craft of Feature Writing</i> . New American Library, NY, © 1986.
4. Cappon, Rene, J. <i>The Associated Press Guide to News Writing, 4th Ed.</i> Highlands Ranch, CO, © 2019.
5. Franklin, John, <i>Writing for Story</i> . Mentor, NY, © 1986.
6. Kramer, Mark & Call, Wendy. <i>Telling True Stories: A Nonfiction Writer's Guide</i> . NY, NY, © 2007
7. Murray, Donald. <i>Writing for Your Readers</i> . The Global Perquot. Chester, Conn., © 1983.
8. Raus, Charles. <i>Conversations with American Writers</i> . McGraw-Hill, NY, NY, © 1984.
9. Rich, Carole. <i>Writing and Reporting News: A Coaching Method</i> . Thomson/Wadsworth, 8th edition, © 2016.
10. Stovall, James Glen. <i>Writing for the Mass Media</i> . 9th ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2014.
11. Wulfemeyer, K. Tim. <i>Radio-TV Newswriting: A Workbook</i> . Ames: Iowa State UP, 1995.

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IX. Other Learning Resources

Audiovisual

None specified.

Electronic

None specified.

Other

None specified.

Attendance Policy: *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

Services for Students with Disabilities: *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for accommodations. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

Academic Integrity: *Every student at Tompkins Cortland Community College is expected to act in an academically honest fashion in all aspects of his or her academic work: in writing papers and reports, in taking examinations, in performing laboratory experiments and reporting the results, in clinical and cooperative learning experiences, and in attending to paperwork such as registration forms. Any written work submitted by a student must be his or her own. If the student uses the words or ideas of someone else, he or she must cite the source by such means as a footnote. Our guiding principle is that any honest evaluation of a student's performance must be based on that student's work. Any action taken by a student that would result in misrepresentation of someone else's work or actions as the student's own — such as cheating on a test, submitting for credit a paper written by another person, or forging an advisor's signature — is intellectually dishonest and deserving of censure. Several degree programs offer student learning opportunities (such as internships, field work, and clinical experiences) outside the standard classroom setting. As part of the learning process, students must understand and engage in conduct that adheres to principles guiding employment within the professional workplace. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, academic integrity, accountability, reliability, respect, use of appropriate language and dress, civility, professional ethics, honesty, and trustworthiness. Disciplinary action may be initiated for inappropriate conduct occurring while participating in any course-related project or event.*