

Journalism 2311 News Writing

12:30-1:45 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, ACR, Room 203

Steve Lang, Instructor

Spring 2015

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3-4 p.m., BAB, Room 108; or by arrangement

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Suggested Text: *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law*

Class Intent: *To provide a basic but comprehensive exposure to the aspects of news writing, including hard news, profiles and sports, and to provide students with the opportunity to improve their writing and interviewing skills through active participation. Students will:*

***Demonstrate the ability to research, write, report and edit relevant news stories acceptable by a professional news outlet.**

***Understand the history of journalism, be familiar with coverage of diverse groups in society and learn the role of journalists in society.**

***Understand the ethical guidelines and practices that govern the profession and the legal implications and considerations that inform the profession.**

*** Demonstrate the ability to apply tools, concepts and technology appropriate for the presentation of images and information in the profession.**

*** Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the profession.**

***Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.**

Course will include numerous guest speakers who will both lecture and be interviewed for news stories.

Course may also involve assignments outside of class, including attending at least one Brewster County Commissioners, Alpine City Council and/or Alpine Independent School District board meeting, and possibly athletic events, special events or guest speakers on campus. Student stories may be selected for publication in The Skyline and other media outlets. The course is intended to stimulate student interest in writing for Sul Ross student publications, including The Skyline student newspaper and The Brand yearbook.

Wednesday, Jan. 21: *Introduction to News Writing, class objectives; Stylebook review*

Monday, Jan. 26: *Mock Interviews based on random topics (by drawing)*

Wednesday, Jan. 28: *Write News Stories based on Mock Interviews.*

Monday, Feb. 2: *Interview Dr. Larry Guerrero, Dean, College of Professional Studies*

Wednesday, Feb. 4: *In-class story on new courses in College of Professional Studies*

Monday, Feb. 9: *Interview Mary Bones/Liz Jackson, Museum of the Big Bend on Trappings of Texas*

Wednesday, Feb. 11: *In-class story on Trappings of Texas*

Monday, Feb. 16: *Interview Dr. Rob Kinucan, Dean, College of Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences*

Wednesday, Feb. 18: *In-class story on ANRS programs/research endeavors*

Monday, Feb. 23: *Interview Dona Roman, Professor of Theatre*

Wednesday, Feb. 25: *In-class story on Sul Ross Theatre program, 50th anniversary of Theatre of the Big Bend*

Monday, March 2: *Interview Travis Hendryx, newspaper reporter/sportscaster*

Wednesday, March 4: *In-class story on contrasts/similarities of print, broadcast reporting*

Monday, March 9: *Random story assignments (by drawing)*

Wednesday, March 11: *In-class Mid-term exam based on story assignment*

Monday, March 16: *Spring Break, no classes.*

Wednesday, March 18: *Spring Break, no classes.*

Monday, March 23: *Interview Anna Sandoval, Student Regent*

Wednesday, March 25: *In-class story on campus leadership/participation/career opportunities*

Monday, March 30: *Interview John Pearce, Lobo football coach*

Wednesday, April 1: *In-class story on John Pearce and student-athlete/coaching philosophy*
Monday, April 6: *Interview Liz Castillo, playwright and director of Student Support Services*
Wednesday, April 8: *In-class story on Liz Castillo's insights on writing, student life*
Monday, April 13: *Interview George Covington, author, columnist, former law and journalism professor*
Wednesday, April 15: *In-class story on George Covington's news writing insights*
Monday, April 20: *Interview Gwin Grimes, Editor and Publisher, The Alpine Avalanche*
Wednesday, April 22: *In-class story on present-day news coverage*
Monday, April 27: *Interview Dr. Bill Kibler, Sul Ross President*
Wednesday, April 29: *In-class story on Dr. Kibler's first-year observations of Sul Ross*
Monday, May 4: *Interview Marilyn McGhee, Director of Sponsored Programs*
Wednesday, May 6: *In-class story on grants impact at Sul Ross; Last Class Day, final exam info*
Monday, May 11: *Final Examination, 12:30 p.m., ACR 203*

GRADING CONSIDERATIONS:

Attendance/Classroom participation: 25%: *This class will be regarded as a workplace, and like a job, attendance is important in this learning environment. More than 4 absences for any reason will lower the overall grade by 20%. Make-up work will be allowed if students are absent due to participation in official university functions. Please notify me in advance if you will be absent because your attendance is required at a university function. According to University Policy, effective Fall Semester 2014, attendance records will be kept, and a student will be dropped from the class with a total of nine (9) absences. An absence is defined as non-attendance in 50 minutes of class; non-attendance in a one-hour and 15-minute class, such as News Writing, constitutes one and one-half absences.*

Daily assignments: 25%

Mid-term exam: 25%

Final exam: 25%

UNIVERSITY RULES/REGULATIONS: *Rules and regulations regarding plagiarism, dishonesty, and other issues concerning classroom participation can be found in the University Rules and Regulations and Student Handbook.*

ADA NEEDS: *It is Sul Ross State University policy to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. If you would like to request such accommodation because of a physical, mental, or learning disability, please contact the ADA Coordinator for Program Accessibility in FH112D or call (432) 837-8203. You should relate all requests for special accommodations to the instructor by the third class period.*

CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY (Revised Fall 2014)

Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Each instructor will keep class attendance records, and the instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term. The instructors will drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine absences. A student will be dropped for excessive absences in remedial courses after nine absences.

An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three hour class will constitute three absences. An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized absence.

Every effort will be made by departments to minimize missed class time of students by careful scheduling of authorized University activities. When a student has to miss a class due to an authorized University activity, it will be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor of the class in advance. The department responsible for the authorized University activity will also notify instructors through the Student Life Office by providing an explained absence list to the office. Instructors will give students participating in an authorized University activity the opportunity to make up class work, including tests, within a reasonable time and at the convenience of the instructor.

A student who is dropped from a course for excessive absences will be notified in writing by the Director of Records and Registration after the drop has been approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs. **Any student dropped for excessive absences will receive either an “F” or a “W” depending on the faculty member’s discretion.**