Instructor: Richelle F. Rogers
E-mail: rrogers2@luc.edu (Please allow up to 24 hours for a response to e-mail. Remember to include your name and the course on your subject line. Please use your Loyola e-mail account when sending e-mails.)
Office: SOC 204
Office Hours: Wednesday, 4pm-6pm and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will take a practical and analytical look at traditional and enterprising narrative communication techniques. Using a project–based approach, students will learn how to think critically about various narrative techniques and audience impact. Through a collaborative classroom environment, students will enhance their understanding of narrative development, delivery and acquire skills in working with others as a member of a team.

IDEA COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team.
- Developing creative capacities.
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments and points of view.
- Acquiring an interest in learning more by asking questions and seeking answers.

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TEXT AND ASSIGNED READING MATERIALS

Storycraft: The Complete Guide to Writing Narrative Nonfiction (Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing) [Paperback] Author: Jack Hart

In addition to the required text, students are required to read additional assigned materials during the course.

GRADING:

A
B
C
D
F

Grades will be based on:

In-class and outside assignments (30%)
Day in the life project (video and blog) (40%)
Final exam (30%)

GUEST SPEAKERS

This course will often feature guest speakers. Students are required to be well prepared for all discussions and participate in question and answer sessions. These guests are often the best in the business so let's ask lots of questions!

WRITING/PROOFREADING SUBMITTED ASSIGNMENTS

It's important that all submitted assignments are free of typos, misspellings and grammatical errors. Work submitted that has not been proofread is subject to a lower grade.

Assignments must be handed in on the due date. Late work will not be accepted. Do not email assignments unless the instructor gives specific instructions

STUDENT – INSTRUCTOR CONSULTATION (REQUIRED)

Every student is required to meet with the instructor once during the semester. Sign up is available though the Sakai class web page. If a student requires additional guidance, the instructor is available during office hours and/or by appointment.

COMM 405 - DAY IN THE LIFE NARRATIVE PROJECT

Assignment: Working in groups of two, students will create an engaging and informative Day in the life project.

The project will include:

- A three to five minute day in the life profile video.
- Each group will create and maintain an engaging and informative blog that will document your project's progress.
- Groups are required to update their blogs with 2-3 posts a week.
- Blog posts should combine text, photography, video, audio, and graphic illustrations. You may also post additional interviews and footage from your project.
- Each blog should link to a social networking site. All sites should be active and develop a following over the Semester.

Groups can choose to profile a person, an organization or an issue from one of the following topics. Each topic has received considerable media attention and is a part of the city's ongoing dialogue:

- Education
- Crime
- Health
- Socio-economic
- Digital media

Project Deadlines

Groups are expected to meet project deadlines. Outlines and scripts must be submitted in the correct format and proofread. If a group fails to meet a deadline, it will impact your final grade.

A significant amount of class time is devoted to your video project and blog. It's imperative that groups use class time in a productive manner. It's recommended that all groups try to stay one week ahead of schedule.

Day in the life project deadlines

February 12, 2014 – Topic proposals due – Groups will submit a three- page detailed proposal to the instructor and preview the topic to the class via a ten-minute presentation.

Topic proposals should include:

- A project title – Make sure titles are specific. A good example of a title could be, Why is Jake Homeless? or "Why Johnny can't read" .
- Topic background – Briefly summarize the background associated with your topic. Also include relevance and why this topic is part of the city's conversation. Be sure to cite sources.
- Approach to the project –As you consider your audience, come to an editorial consensus about your purpose: Will your topic inform, entertain, or persuade? Give careful consideration to how you will visualize your topic.

February 26 – **Day in the life blogs launch!**

March 12, 2014 – **Production outline/story maps due** – Groups will submit a detailed outline.

Production outlines should include:

- A production plan that lists what you will need to film your project. Consider the constraints of your deadline and the resources you will need as you plan your project.
- A logistics plan detailing your shoot schedule (allow time for reshoots).
- A detailed story map of audio and imagery.

March 19, 2014 – **Script – First draft is due** – Groups will review scripts with the instructor and make revisions.

April 12, 2014 – Post-production outline/ Revised scripts due – Groups will submit a detailed outline.

Post -production outlines should include:

- A rough script that outlines what the viewer will see and hear.
- Editorial decisions your group has made. Include audio and picture decisions and any concerns require attention.

- As part of your revision process, get feedback from your target audience to gauge their interest level and to see if they understand your message.

April 16, 2014 – Group presentations - Each student will present their Day in the life project to the class. Presentations should not exceed twenty minutes. After the class screens a project, the group will take questions from their peers.

April 23, 2014 - **Project critiques are due**.

Group projects will be evaluated according to the following:

- Topic selection, development and execution
- Creativity
- Story Structure and Pacing
- Use of audio/video
- Overall presentation and enthusiasm
- Q and A with classmates

Plagiarism Statement: *quoted directly from the Loyola University Chicago undergraduate online catalogue. Please see the catalogue entry for additional information:*

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest (e.g. failing to properly credit a source or using someone else's ideas without clarifying that they are not yours).

This is an academic community; being uniformed or naïve is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing your sources.

It is dishonest to:

Turn in the same work for two classes; Turn in a paper you have not written yourself; or copy from another student or use a "cheat sheet" during an exam

SPECIAL NEEDS

Students are urged to contact the instructor should they have questions concerning course materials and procedures. If you have a special circumstance that may have some impact on your course work and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the instructor early in the semester so that arrangements can be made with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD).

In addition, any student with a learning disability that needs special accommodation during exams or class periods should provide documentation from Services for Students with Disabilities confidentiality to me as soon as possible.

The instructor will accommodate your needs in the best way possible, given the constraints of course content and processes. It is the student's responsibility to plan in advance in order to meet their own needs and assignment due dates.

THE COURSE (Subject to change)

Week 1: Getting acquainted/Story Map – The narrative arc
January 15: Introduction to Course/Syllabus review/ Understanding the components of narrative
Assignment: Read Structure chapter, pages 20-40 from text/Construct a story map of John Branch's *Snowfall*
Link: http://www.nytimes.com/projects/2012/snow-fall/?ref=johnbranch&_r=0#/?part=tunnel-creek

Week 2: A conversation with Pulitzer Prize winner John Branch
January 22: Video chat with John Branch/Q and A to follow (subject to breaking news)
Class exercise: Class profile preinterview and Interview exercise begins
Assignment: Read Character and Point of View Chapters, pages 41-61 and 75-88 from text

Week 3 – The character – There's one in every story
January 29: Understanding and analyzing character development
Conversation with A&E Intervention Story Producer Nate Starck
Link: http://www.aetv.com/intervention/index.jsp
Class exercise: Class profile preinterview and interview exercise continues
Assignment: Read Voice and Style Chapters, Pages 62-75 from text

Week 4: Screen class profile interviews and feedback
February 5: The class will screen profile projects and offer feedback.

Week 5: Day in the life topic proposals due
February 12: Each group will give a ten-minute presentation introducing the class to their subject. The instructor will meet with each group and provide feedback. All groups will use class time to amend their proposal and move forward with their project.

Week 6: Imagery and sound in story
February 19: How pictures and sound drive narrative
Class exercise: Adobe Premiere exercise

Assignment: Read Scene and Action Chapters, Pages 89-107 from text

Week 7: Blogging as a narrative
February 26: Exploring narrative techniques in blog posts
Groups will use class time to create blog content

Week 8: Spring break
March 5: Class does not meet

Week 9: Blogs launch! Production outline/story maps due
March 12: Groups will review production outlines/story maps with Instructor

Week 10: Day in the Life first draft script due
March 19: Groups will meet with the instructor to evaluate scripts and make revisions.

Week 11: PRODUCTION DAY – CLASS DOES NOT MEET
March 26 : Groups can use class time to schedule interviews, edit or write content.

Week 12: Post production outlines due/revised scripts due
April 2: *Post production outlines due /Groups will meet with the instructor for guidance

Week 13: Day in the life project consultations
April 9: Class time can be used to finalize projects and/or seek additional guidance

Week 14: Day in the life project presentations
April 16: Each student will present their Day in the life project to the class. Presentations should not exceed twenty minutes. After the class screens a project, the group will take questions from their peers.

Week 15: Course review
April 23: Project critiques due/Course review/Final exam handout