

Spring 2023

**South Plains College Newswriting
Syllabus M/W 11 – 1245 p.m.**

Course Number: 2311-001 Format: Face to Face
Instructor: Margaret Kirby Office: CM 154 Levelland Campus
Phone: 716-2451

e-mail: mkirby@southplainscollege.edu The fastest way to reach me, other than coming to my office during office hours, is to e-mail me at the above address. I should respond within 24 hours unless you e-mail me on a Friday. In that case, it may be Monday before I can respond to you.

Office Hours: Face to face hours are held in my Levelland office, CM 154. Virtual meetings can be scheduled on Collaborate by appointment only.

- Mondays 9 – 10 a.m.
- Tuesdays 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.; 230 – 3 p.m.
- Wednesdays 9 – 10 a.m.
- Thursdays 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.; 230 – 3 p.m.
- Fridays 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Prerequisites: None **Credit:** 3 semesters hours

Description: Fundamentals of writing for the mass media. Includes instruction in professional methods and techniques for gathering, processing, and delivering content. The first half of the semester will concentrate on the basics of news and reporting as well as online news writing. The second half will concentrate on broadcast news writing.

Supplies Needed: Items used to take notes; folder or notebook where you will save syllabus, schedule, notes, handouts, and graded stories.

Course Requirements: Students should attend all class/ lab meetings and complete all assignments.

Required Textbook: Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual.
NY: The Associated Press

Evaluation: Students' grades in this class will be determined by the following:

Classwork and Homework Assignments = 50% of your final grade. This will include writing assignments, exercises, and stories. You will write 2 big online stories this fall. The goal is to publish as much of your writing as possible on the SPC online newspaper.

www.TexanMosaic.com

The story topic, along with many of the parts of the first big online story, will be given to you. Each student will write their own story using the parts given. Only one story will be submitted to the managing editor of the school's online site.

You will work in pairs to write your second big online story. Each of these will be sent to the school's online site after copyediting revisions.

There will be several shorter stories you will write as well throughout the semester.

Once we pass midterm, you'll start working on broadcast stories. You will all help to shoot and gather information for the first video story.

Midterm Exam and AP Quizzes = 25% of your final grade; the midterm exam will be a traditional exam covering material learned at the beginning of the semester including writing a short Internet news story under deadline pressure. Associated Press Style Quizzes are scattered throughout the first half of the semester.

Final Exam = 25% of your final grade. Your final exam will be the completion of one digital news story- much like a news package for TV. Your topic will be assigned. You will choose what interview clips to use from each, help choose what video you want to include in the story.

Tutoring Info

SPC Tutors

Tutoring is FREE for all currently enrolled students. Make an appointment or drop-in for help at any SPC location or online! Visit the link below to learn more about how to book an appointment, view the tutoring schedule, and view tutoring locations.

<http://www.southplainscollege.edu/exploreprograms/artsandsciences/teacheredtutoring.php>

Tutor.com

You also have 180 FREE minutes of tutoring with Tutor.com each week, and your hours reset every Monday morning. Log into Blackboard, click on the tools option from the left-hand menu bar. Click on the Tutor.com link and you will automatically be logged in for free tutoring. You may access tutor.com tutors during the following times:

Monday – Thursday: 8pm-8am

6pm Friday – 8am Monday morning

For questions regarding tutoring, please email tutoring@southplainscollege.edu or call 806-716-2538.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate proper media writing and editing styles.
2. Modify writing styles to fit various media platforms.
3. Demonstrate effective information gathering skills and techniques.
4. Demonstrate understanding of laws, ethics, and responsibilities of media writing.

Technical Requirements: It is in your best interest to have reliable access to Internet service and a computer so that you can send and receive e-mail, access lectures, write stories as long as 3 pages, submit assignments, participate in Collaborate sessions, and take exams. Please do NOT try to complete this class using on the SPC app on your smartphone.

Please visit with me about computer issues! I can't help you if I don't know what your issues are.

Technical Skill Requirements. Be comfortable with the following:

Microsoft Word or being able to save Word compatible files (.doc); an

alternative is to convert assignment files to .rtf or .pdf

Using email for communication, attaching documents

The ability to download video files, or to stream files

The ability to take digital photographs and upload them as .jpg files into assignment windows on Blackboard

Absence Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes and labs in order to be successful in this course.

I'm sure there will be multiple reasons why you might be absent this semester this semester, such as quarantine, isolation, illness, an official trip authorized by the college or an official activity.

Please do **NOT** assume that I will contact you to tell you about missed work. It's safe to assume there will be multiple classwork assignments given each day of class.

Do NOT assume that I will move deadlines for you unless you contact me and offer reasons why you cannot meet deadlines that are already in place.

In the event that you miss an exam, you must notify me within 48 hours about why. You may or may not be able to "make up" the missed exam. If you miss an exam due to COVID-19, you will take

the exam the day you return.

Deadlines: The assignments in this class will be deadline driven. You must keep track of deadlines and submit work when it is due.

ALL deadlines are absolute. You need to get used to deadlines that exist in the off-campus world. All assignments will be due at the beginning of each class. Late assignments will be penalized harshly if they are accepted at all.

Excuses: Don't bother to try any. I've heard most of them and have used some of them myself. Only deaths of immediate family members (parents, grandparents, siblings – ONLY), or your own, may be considered for an excused absence. Of course, you will need to provide proof (such as the obituary notice). Student athletes or those participating in other college-sponsored activities that require an absence, will be excused, with prior notice to me and appropriate documentation.

Withdrawal Policy: The last day to withdraw/drop with a grade of "W" is April 27th. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from this course. Otherwise, students will be assigned their earned letter grade at the end of the course. Course averages will be updated frequently, and guidance will be provided throughout the term to help students decide whether they need to drop the class or not. For more information regarding drops/withdrawals, please visit <https://www.southplainscollege.edu/admission-aid/apply/schedulechanges.php>.

Students are officially enrolled in all courses for which they pay tuition and fees at the time of registration. Should a student, for any reason, delay in reporting to a class after official enrollment, absences will be attributed to the student from the first class meeting.

Students who enroll in a course but have "Never Attended" by the official census date, as reported by the faculty member, will be administratively dropped by the Office of Admissions and Records. A student who does not meet the attendance requirements of a class as stated in the course syllabus and does not officially withdraw from that course by the official census date of the semester, may be administratively withdrawn from that course and receive a grade of "X" or "F" as determined by the instructor. Instructors are responsible for clearly stating their administrative drop policy in the course syllabus, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of that policy.

It is the student's responsibility to verify administrative drops for excessive absences

through MySPC using his or her student online account. If it is determined that a student is awarded financial aid for a class or classes in which the student never attended or participated, the financial aid award will be adjusted in accordance with the classes in which the student did attend/participate and the student will owe any balance resulting from the adjustment.

Tardiness Policy:

I enforce a 5-minute rule. I use the clock in the classroom or on my computer. You may come to class **up to 5 minutes** late. That's the cutoff. If you arrive **after** that 5-minute window, you'll be given one warning. Any time(2) after that, you'll be asked to turn around and leave if you passed the 5-minute window. It will be an unexcused absence. I may or may not have taken attendance already if you arrive 5 minutes late. It's up to you to make sure you are marked present.

COVID-19 Statement

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms, please do not attend class and either seek medical attention or test for COVID-19.

- Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscles or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste and smell

Please also notify DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN, Associate Director of Health & Wellness, at dedens@southplainscollege.edu or 806-716-2376. Proof of a positive test is required. A home test is sufficient but students must submit a photo of the positive result. The date of test must be written on the test result and an ID included in the photo. If tested elsewhere (clinic, pharmacy, etc.), please submit a copy of the doctor's note or email notification. Results may be emailed to DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN at dedens@southplainscollege.edu.

A student is clear to return to class without further assessment from DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN if they have completed the 5-day isolation period, symptoms have improved, and they are without fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Students must communicate with DeEtte Edens, BSN, RN prior to their return date if still symptomatic at the end of the 5-day isolation.

Kirby Face Covering Policy

I may choose to continue wearing a CDC-compliant face covering/mask throughout the semester. You are welcome to do the same.

Disabilities Statement

Students with disabilities, including but not limited to physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a

student requesting accommodations must provide acceptable documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, call or visit the Disability Services Office at Levelland (Student Health & Wellness Office) 806-716-2577, Lubbock Centers (located at the Lubbock Downtown Center) 806-716-4675, or Plainview Center (Main Office) 806-716-4302 or 806-296-9611.

Non-Discrimination Statement

South Plains College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Vice President for Student Affairs, South Plains College, 1401 College Avenue, Box 5, Levelland, TX 79336. Phone number 806-716-2360.

Title IX Pregnancy Accommodations Statement

If you are pregnant, or have given birth within six months, Under Title IX you have a right to reasonable accommodations to help continue your education. To activate accommodations you must submit a Title IX pregnancy accommodations request, along with specific medical documentation, to the Health and Wellness Center. Once approved, notification will be sent to the student and instructors. It is the student's responsibility to work with the instructor to arrange accommodations. Contact the Health and Wellness Center at 806-716-2529 or email dburleson@southplainscollege.edu for assistance.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement-

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in South Plains College buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and South Plains College policy, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations and Frequently Asked Questions, please refer to the Campus Carry page at: <http://www.southplainscollege.edu/campuscarry.php>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all South Plains College campuses. Report violations to the College Police Department at 806-716-2396 or 9-1-1.

Diversity Statement- In this class, the teacher will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group difference and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

Civility Code:

As future professionals, you are to communicate with each other in a professional and civil manner. Any successful learning experience requires mutual respect on the part of the student and the instructor. Neither instructor nor student should be subject to others' behavior that is rude, disruptive, intimidating, aggressive, or

demeaning. Student conduct that disrupts the learning process or is deemed disrespectful or threatening shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

Plagiarism and Cheating: Students are expected to do their own work on all projects, quizzes, assignments, examinations, and papers. Failure to comply with this policy will result in an F for the assignment and can result in an F for the course if circumstances warrant.

Plagiarism violations in this class include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Turning in a paper or story that has been purchased, borrowed, or downloaded from another student, an online term paper site, or a mail order term paper mill;
2. Cutting and pasting together information from books, articles, other papers, or online sites without providing proper documentation or attribution;
3. Using direct quotations (three or more words) from a source without showing them to be direct quotations and attributing them.

Cheating violations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Obtaining an examination by stealing or collusion;
2. Discovering the content of an examination before it is given;
3. Using an unauthorized source of information (notes, textbook, text messaging, internet, apps) during an examination, quiz, or homework assignment;
4. Entering an office or building to obtain unfair advantage;
5. Taking an examination for another;
6. Altering grade records;
7. Copying another's work during an examination or on a homework assignment;
8. Rewriting another student's work in Peer Editing so that the writing is no longer the original student's;
9. Taking pictures of a test, test answers, or someone else's paper.
10. Making up quotes for a story; falsifying sources for a story.