AGCJ 314
AGRICULTURAL MEDIA WRITING II
FALL 2013

Instructor: Tom Nelson
265 Agriculture and Life Sciences Building (AGLS)
Tom.Nelson@agnet.tamu.edu Cell: 979-485-8510
tomnelson63@gmail.com (first choice) Office: 979-845-2954
Writing labs (when scheduled): Noon to 4 p.m. Th&F

Teaching Asst.: Samantha Alvis samantha.alvis@agnet.tamu.edu Office: 979-458-7993

Lecture/Lab
Sec. 901: M&W 11:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. Room 132, AGLS
M 12:40-2:20 p.m. Room 111A, AGLS
Sec. 902: M&W 11:30 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. Room 132, AGLS
W 12:40-2:20 p.m. Room 111A, AGLS

Textbooks and Materials


Inside reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism, Tim Harrower. This is the same book you used in AGCJ 203.
(www.amazon.com or www.thriftbooks.com or craigslist College Station for used copies)

Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language. This one! Collegiate edition. See AP Stylebook bibliography section.


The Battalion, Campus five-day daily newspaper.

Please note: You are expected to read newspapers, magazines and Internet news, and watch television news. Be informed. Warning: unannounced current events quizzes.
1. **How to approach this course:** I’m your city editor and you are a reporter on my staff. Consider it your job. You will conduct yourself as a professional journalist. You will dress appropriately for all assignments. You will write a complete story for readers of all ages, not just young adults. No potty language. You are writing for a family publication only.

2. **All assignments are due no later than 5 p.m. Friday:** Yes, some assignments will be due in class or immediately after the event. Consider the 5 p.m. Friday deadline as the deadline for our newspaper. E-mailing stories to me is OK – use Word and attach to your e-mail. You must contact me if you will be late with any writing assignment. If you do not contact me, the penalty is 25 points for busting a deadline. E-mail to me at tomnelson63@gmail.com

3. **Attendance:** You are expected to attend the lecture and lab periods. We keep a roll. I give unannounced current events and AP style quizzes. If you have five or more unauthorized absences, your grade will be lowered one letter. If more than 10, lowered two grades. As always, students with University-excused absences will be allowed to make up their missed work (http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07).

4. **Grades:** AP Style tests and current events tests are 20 percent of your final grade.

   In-class writing assignments are another 20 percent of your final grade.

   The remaining 60 percent of your final grade will be from six assignments typically due on Fridays: a single-source feature, a multisource feature, a speech story, a critical review, a newspaper column and a “your choice,” which can be a feature or column or sports story, etc. Each writing assignment is 10 percent of your grade, for a total of 60 percent of your grade.

5. **Microsoft Word only, double spaced, 12-point, indent paragraphs:** Each page is approximately 250 words. Word has a word count. Please type your name and the assignment on the upper right corner (single-source feature). Use -30- to end your story. AP style only. I will give you minimum and maximum word counts for most assignments.

   **Question:** How much do I write?
   **Answer:** Whatever it takes to tell the story.

6. **Rewrites:** If you rewrite an assignments, submit rewrite with the original edited copy. It is not enough to just make the corrections suggested. **Rewrite must be better reporting than the original.** Grades are not averaged. I reserve the right to upgrade the grade, or to not accept the rewrite if it is not better than the original.

7. **Late writing assignments** lose 25 points for busting a Friday deadline and 5 points for each weekday late. **A zero is given if the assignment is more than 5 weekdays late.**

   Only University-excused absences (see Texas A&M University Regulations (http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07) and absences approved by Mr. Nelson or Miss Alvis can be made up, and these must be cleared within one week. You are responsible for documenting and keeping a personal record of your absence. Send an email to Mr. Nelson and copy Miss Alvis on all non-university absences.
8. **What you will learn (Course Outcomes)**– When you complete the course, you will know the fundamentals of journalism reporting and how to write straight news stories, features, columns and reviews. The emphasis will be clearly, concisely, accurately and objectively writing stories for print, Internet and broadcast. We also will take a serious look at social media as a news tool. The journalism skills you learn in this class apply to agriculture publications, daily news and public relations. This is a writing course, so don’t be surprised that you have to write…

9. **Grading** – A = 90-100 / B = 80-89.99 / C = 70-79.99 / D = 60-69.99 / F = 59 or less – NO “I” IS GIVEN.

**TO PASS THE COURSE, YOU MUST TURN IN ALL ASSIGNMENTS.**

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**UNIVERSITY-REQUIRED STATEMENTS**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Services, in Cain Hall, Room B118, or call 845-1637. For additional information visit [http://disability.tamu.edu](http://disability.tamu.edu)

**Academic Integrity**

For additional information please visit: [http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu](http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu)

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do.”