

**Office:** 329 Dan Rather Building, 294-3651  
jabridges@shsu.edu

Office Hours: M 4:30-5:30, T 2:00-3:00, W 2-3:30, before/after class and by appointment

**Text(s):** Required: Joyce Lain Kennedy, *Resumes for Dummies*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Indianapolis: Wiley Publishing, 2007.

Recommended: Richard Nelson Bolles. *The 2008 What Color is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers*. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press, 2008. (The 2007 should be adequate if you have it. Just watch page numbers.)

NOTE: The Bolles book is Strongly Recommended. One copy is on reserve in library reference [NOT reserve], but there are about 55 students enrolled in this course. Since a good portion of our readings are in the *Parachute* book, I recommend you purchase your own copy -- it is less than \$20.00 and has material useful beyond this class.

**Catalog Description:** This capstone class summarizes, updates and puts in context skills, concepts and theories addressed in lower level MCM classes and helps students develop portfolios, resumes and interviewing skills to prepare them to enter the media marketplace.

**Prerequisite:** Senior standing; MCM majors only. Credit 1

NOTE: Students who have completed media law and ethics, introduction to mass communication, and global media will have an advantage.

The professional seminar course is designed to prepare each student for a professional job search in the media job market, to assess the student's preparation for this market and to identify professional weaknesses that can be remedied.

As a result of completing this course, students should be able to:

1. locate job openings
2. present their professional attributes in a professional resume
3. present evidence of their professional attributes in a professional appearing portfolio
4. research both a media company and the salary ranges available for relevant jobs
5. understand the professional job interviewing process
6. present evidence of competence in media law, global media and knowledge of the overall mass communication field

The course will have two primary focus points:

1. to prepare you for the professional job hunt (an application of materials)
2. to present assessment evidence required by the university

Focus #1: The course will furnish an overview of the various techniques used in job hunting, resume preparation and portfolio preparation. We will work with the university Career Center and the research librarians.

You will have an opportunity to present and discuss the marketability of your professional portfolio with at least one of our alumni working in your field.

Focus #2: In addition, the course will assess your background in three of the required MCM courses: law, global communication and introduction to mass communication. An assessment quiz will be given for each topic: media law, global media and the mass communication field.

For each “assessment” quiz you will be given a study guide of either (a) three essay questions or (b) a list of multiple-choice questions or (c) both to answer outside of class. One of the three essay questions and/or a selection of the multiple choice questions will be asked in class, and you will be required to answer without books or notes. Your grade for each assessment quiz will be based on the in-class written answers.

In the course: You will be expected to read the assigned material, be in class and prepare assignments on time.

All out-of-class assignments must be typed, double-spaced on one side of the paper. **No handwritten, out-of-class assignments will be accepted.** Late assignments are accepted but lose 10 percent per day.

**IMPORTANT:** No make-up tests or assignments will be permitted except for **unforeseen, documented** excuses approved by the instructor. A doctor's appointment at class time is not an acceptable excuse if your absence is not required for the entire day. Because weekly quizzes (see “reading assignments,” below) are over material which has not been discussed in class, **no make-up quizzes** are given. Assignments and quizzes may be administered early for excused absences only. Students are responsible for any and all assignments made in class. Missing an announcement is not considered an excuse to make up an assignment.

**Beepers and cell phones, including the text function, must be turned off during class.**

Grades will be based on 1200 points: 90%+ (1080+ points) equals an “A”; 80% to 89.99% (960 - 1079 points) equals a “B”; 70% to 79.99% (840 - 959 points) equals a “C”; 60% to 69.99% (720 - 839 points) equals a “D”; 59.99% and below (719 points and below) equals an “F”). Points will be assigned as follows:

Portfolio	300 points
Written Assignments (3)	300 points
-research a company:	100 points
-research on salary data:	100 points
-present a finished resume:	100 points
Assessment quizzes (3 @ 100 points each)	300 points
Final Interview paper*	100 points
Daily Grades/Quizzes**	100 points
Class participation***	100 points

Any additional, optional points that may be assigned during the term will be added to the existing total, but your grades will be assigned on the base of 1200 points.

\*In place of a written final exam, students will interview a professional who hires graduates in their field. The interview will result in a 4-5 page paper explaining the professional's expectations from an interviewee and the interviewee's resume/portfolio. The interview report/paper should tie together the material we have covered in class.

\*\*15-point quizzes are assigned over the readings; the highest 7 grades will be counted.  
\*\*\*class participation is based primarily on attendance - see Attendance Policy, below.

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** Students are allowed no more than five Q-drops during their academic career at Sam Houston State University. Classes that are dropped prior to the Q-drop date will not count toward the limit. Students who have used their limit of five Q-drops will need to petition their respective dean to drop a class. If the dean refuses to grant permission to drop the class, the student will be required to remain in the class.

The Q-drop limit took effect with the start of the fall 2004 semester. Any drops accumulated prior to the fall 2004 semester will not be included in the five Q-drop limit. Neither will Q-drops from other universities.

NOTE: A Q-drop is a drop made after the last day for tuition refunds (12th class day for fall/spring; 4th class day for summer) but before the date for which a drop would result in a grade of 'F' - as published in the Academic Calendar.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating in any form is academic dishonesty that can result in an "F" for the assignment and possibly the course, and the university's policy is clear. However, two particular forms of academic dishonesty need to be identified here.

Plagiarism: Plagiarized papers will not be accepted. Plagiarism occurs when one person claims credit for another person's work. It is a form of intellectual dishonesty that

is treated with great severity by professionals and by the university. Students are encouraged to review the university's policy on plagiarism.

Students should be certain they understand the meaning of plagiarism: a paper using quotes without quotation marks and attribution is plagiarized. But plagiarism is more than unrecognized quotes. Conclusions that are not the student's, information that is not common knowledge, and specific facts must be attributed: tell who said it and cite or footnote it, even if this information is not a direct quote.

Although quoted material is not plagiarized, a paper made up of a series of quotations is not a paper written by the student. Students should use quotes sparingly and for specific reasons, such as providing evidence to support a point. Not understanding the material is not an acceptable reason for using a quotation.

**IMPORTANT:** Students must also learn how to cite an author or work used/quoted by a second author.

Double Dipping: Double dipping is a form of academic dishonesty that is a misuse of your OWN work and occurs when one paper or assignment is presented to fulfill requirements for another course. This does NOT mean you cannot do additional work on a topic that interests you, but you must be certain you are developing new and original material for each class assignment. Check with your instructor to be certain.

### **READING ASSIGNMENTS/Class Schedule:**

The reading assignments are scheduled for the WEEK specified. These dates are the earliest you can expect to be responsible for the material. Because the course is project-oriented, changes may be made in the reading schedule as specific needs arise.

#### WEEK OF:

Jan. 22      Introduction: explanation of class and assignments

Jan. 29      Resumes: Read Chapter 1, *Parachute*, and chapter 2, *Resumes*: quiz 1 over both. Bring to class a description of the type of company you plan to work for and what you would like to do there. This will be handed in.

Feb. 5      Resumes: Chapters 1 and 5 in *Resumes*: quiz 2. Unless notified, we will meet at the Career Services Center to discuss resumes. Quiz will be taken in the Career Center.

You will also receive a study guide for the first assessment quiz.

Feb. 12      First assessment quiz.

Feb. 19        Resumes: Chapters 6 and 7 in *Resumes* (don't memorize the lists of words): quiz 3.

*\*\*Written assignment #1: Finished resume is due at class time.*

Feb. 26        Portfolio Preparation: Unless notified, we will meet at Career Services (Review pp. 99-101 in *Resumes*). Read Chapters 19 and 9 (pp. 151-158, 172-3) in *Resumes* and Chapter 5 (pp. 59-63) in *Parachute*: quiz 4.

You will receive a study guide for the second assessment quiz.

Mar. 4         Second assessment quiz.

Mar. 11        Spring Break: Enjoy

Mar. 18        Interviewing Skills (Chapters 17 and 21 in *Resumes*): quiz 5.  
Unless notified, we will meet at the Career Center and take the quiz there.

You will receive a study guide for the third assessment quiz.

Mar. 25        Third assessment quiz.

Apr. 1         Meet at Library: How to research (a) a company and (b) projected salary ranges.

Apr. 8         Portfolio Presentations for Alumni. If there is a problem with logistics in getting alumni to campus, we will switch April 8 and 15. You cannot make up this portfolio-assessment meeting. Portfolios will be turned in at this time. Portfolios NOT presented at the alumni session can earn no more than 200 points. Late penalties also apply.

Apr. 15        Getting the Interview: Chapter 16 in *Resumes* and chapter 5 (pp. 65-76) in *Parachute*: quiz 6.

Apr. 22        Interviews: Chapter 6 in *Parachute*: quiz 7.

*\*\*Written assignment #2: Report on your company is due at class time.*

Apr. 29        The Market: Chapters 2 and 3 in *Parachute*: quiz 8.

May 6         Salaries: Chapter 7 in *Parachute*: quiz 9.

*\*\*Written assignment #3: Report on salary data is due at class time.*

May 13        **Final Paper -- interview with professional -- Due by 3 p.m.**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY: Dr. Bridges**

You are expected to attend class, to have completed the readings, and to participate in class discussions. 100 points are built into the course for class attendance or “participation.” Each student is permitted two (2) unexcused absences -- the equivalent of two weeks of class. Each additional, unexcused absence will result in ten (10) points deducted from the 100-point participation grade. Students who come to class after the roll has been taken will be counted absent. If students choose to leave class after the roll has been taken or after a quiz, a second roll will be taken before the class ends. Students must be on both rolls to be counted present.

Unless you added the class late, your attendance is counted from the first day of class. Therefore, if you were on the original class roll and you were not in class on January 22, you have used one of your “free” absences.

### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES REGARDING ACADEMIC CLASSES**

The university has policies that apply to all students within the classroom. A brief summary of each of these policies is below. Detailed information may be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/>

1. Academic Dishonesty: Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences, both in and out of the classroom. [Also see my statement on academic dishonesty in this syllabus.] The University subscribes to – and I use -- **Turnitin**, the worldwide standard in online plagiarism prevention.
2. Students with Disabilities: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs, nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center.
3. Observance of Religious Holy Days: Students are allowed to miss class and other required activities including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Students remain responsible for all work.
4. Visitors in the Classroom: Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar’s Office.
5. Classroom Decorum [Classroom Rules of Conduct]: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students are to treat faculty and students with respect. Students are to turn off all cell phones while in the classroom. Under no circumstances are cell phones or any electronic devices to be used or seen during times of examination. Students may tape record lectures provided they do not disturb other students in the process.