

MCM330.02

Course number: MCM 330.02

Course title: Information Analysis

Credit hours: 3

Semester/year: Fall 2007

Class times: Wed. 12-12:50 p.m./online

Classroom: LDB 203

Instructor: Ruth Massingill

Office: CJ CL29

Office hours: Wed: 10-noon. TT: 10-11 a.m., others by appointment.

Office phone: 936-294-1494

Email: rmassingill@shsu.edu

NOTE: Although I monitor email regularly, do not send email over the weekend or an hour or two before class and assume I will see it before class convenes.

I will NOT accept assignments via email.

Texts and Materials Required

TEXTS: Research Strategies for a Digital Age by Tensen & Math Tools for Journalists by Wickham

It is expected that you purchase and read the texts. Test material will be taken from the readings and the course notes.

OTHER MATERIALS:

You may wish to purchase a portable storage device for back-up storage of computer files.

Description and Purpose

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION

Comparative survey of communication investigation, including practical training in ethical gathering, interpretation and presentation of data. Students will be introduced to persuasive and research methods, including direct interviewing,

questioning techniques, electronic document retrieval and manipulation, database management and Internet skills.

PURPOSE

This course introduces students to skills and processes necessary to successfully complete advanced communication courses. Students will become competent in discerning methods of research gathering, problem solving and critical thinking necessary for the successful manipulation of information in the mass media. The goal is to give students a solid foundation in analysis, problem-solving and data gathering necessary for successful employment in mass media.

At the completion of this course, students will have the skills to:

- 1) Compare and contrast primary and secondary data collection methods,
- 2) Design a variety of data collection instruments
- 3) Prepare and validate data for various distribution venues,
- 4) Analyze a communication scenario to determine the most effective strategy to frame the problem, and
- 5) Understand the roles of law and ethics on data gathering.

METHOD:

This is a hybrid course, which combines classroom meetings with online meetings. Your instructor will explain in detail.

Policies & Procedures

GRADING

Course grade will be based on a 500-point scale, which will include quizzes, research and writing projects, and a final.

Specifically, points will be accumulated as follows:

- 1) 4 quizzes/online participation exercises 200 possible points.
- 2) 3 individual projects @ 75 pts each: 225 possible points.
- 3) Final individual group project @ 75 pts per person: 75 possible points.

Ultimately, letter grades must be assigned to evaluations of course work. Under the definitions established by Sam Houston State University, students who receive the following letter grades are considered to have reached the level of attainment defining that letter. Thus, letter grades received for journalism courses may be interpreted this way:

A= Excellent D= Barely passing
B= Well above average F= Failure

C= Average

Grading throughout the semester; however, is conducted on a point scale. The combined value of all assignments is 500 points. Points are added or subtracted from that according to standards described in this syllabus.

500 - 450 pts = A

449 - 400 pts = B

399 - 350 pts = C

349 - 300 pts = D

< 300 = F

ATTENDANCE

A commitment of your time to this course is essential. Regular attendance--both in the classroom and online-- is expected and will be necessary for successful completion of the course. You are responsible for any assignment made during class in your presence or absence. Save your late approvals for when you are ill or have an emergency. Otherwise, NO late work will be accepted and you will lose the points allotted for that assignment. It will not be possible to make up missed class sessions. Deadlines are as specified in the assignment description.

TIME REQUIREMENTS

This class meets for one hour in the classroom and meets twice a week online. You will also be assigned out-of-class readings, and you may want to work on your assignments during scheduled open lab times.

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES

You may wish to purchase a portable storage device to use for back-up storage.

ETHICS

Ethical behavior is the cornerstone of responsible journalism. Honesty is expected--and demanded--of all students. Violations of professional ethical standards will lead to an automatic "F" in the course.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. See Student Syllabus Guidelines.

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.

ABSENCES ON 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. See Student Syllabus Guidelines.

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. See Student Syllabus Guidelines.

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.

Absolutely NO smoking. NO food or beverages are permitted in the classroom/lab.