# COMM. 2315.001 News Reporting (F2F)
**Course Syllabus:** Spring 2024

*"Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide personal, dynamic learning experiences empowering students to succeed."*

## Instructor: Mandy Smith
**Office:** Humanities 116
**Phone:** (Office) 903-434-8254 (Cell) 903-466-6377
**Email:** msmith@ntcc.edu

| Office Hours | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Online |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1:30-4:30 | 1:30-4:30 | 1:30-3:30 | 1:30-3:30 | | Email anytime |

## *This syllabus serves as the documentation for all course policies and requirements, assignments, and instructor/student responsibilities.*

*Information relative to the delivery of the content contained in this syllabus is subject to change. Should that happen, the student will be notified.*

**Course Description:**
3 credit hours.
Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture each week.
This course focuses on advanced news-gathering and writing skills. It concentrates on the three-part process of producing news stories: discovering the news, reporting the news, and writing the news in different formats.

**Prerequisite(s):**
COMM 2311

**Student Learning Outcomes:**
Upon successful completion of this course students will:
1. Evaluate newsworthiness of information
2. Demonstrate an understanding of story idea creation.
3. Demonstrate the basic structure and format of a news story (lead, body and conclusion).
4. Demonstrate an understanding of beat reporting and feature writing.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of multimedia journalism and alternative story forms.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of journalistic ethics.

**Evaluation/Grading Policy:**
Your assignments will be evaluated using the following point values:

| | |
|---|---|
| Newspaper article assignments | 30% |
| Online (Eagle Express) article assignments | 15% |
| Social media posting assignments | 10% |
| Broadcast script writing assignment | 10% |
| Current event/AP quizzes | 5% |
| Editing assignments | 10% |
| Final digital portfolio/clip book | 15% |
| Attendance | 5% |
| | **Total 100 percent** |

Assignments will be graded within two weeks of receipt or before your next assignment is due.

**Required Instructional Materials:**
Harrower, Tim. *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism (3rd Edition)*

**Publisher:** Boston: McGraw-Hill:2013          **ISBN Number: 13:978-0-07-337891-6**

The textbook is required and provides essential information for successful completion of this course. You can purchase your textbook at the NTCC College Store.

**Optional Instructional Materials:**
None

**Minimum Technology Requirements:**
You will need access to a computer to complete the writing assignments for this class. You will be typing your assignments and submitting the assignments through Blackboard.

**Required Computer Literacy Skills**:
Blackboard Learning Management System, Microsoft Word processing, average email usage

**Course Structure and Overview:**
The goal of this course is to help students develop a variety of skills needed for journalistic writing including interviewing, reporting, writing, editing and revising. Students should acquire and apply these techniques to a number of journalism writing styles comprising of news, feature, opinion, sports and entertainment.
ASSIGNMENTS:
Conscientious and timely completion of assignments is essential for success in this writing course.

Writing Assignments:
During the semester, you are required to complete a variety of news writing assignments that will be graded for the class and could receive publication in *The Eagle* newspaper and/or on the newspaper website. Your articles will be submitted through rough draft and final draft assignments in Blackboard. If your story is used for the newspaper, you will also be expected to submit your story to The Eagle drive in Google.
Please follow these instructions when writing your articles:
● Writing assignments must be typed in 12 pt. Times font.
● Double-space and no indent.
● News writing assignments vary in length according to the type of article assigned. Length of stories will be discussed with the instructor when the assignment is given.
● Pay attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. Articles will be written using AP style.
● Deadlines for all writing assignment will be assigned during class or lab time.
● Submit your papers to your instructor in class or through email.
● **Professional journalism depends on deadlines. Therefore, you will be expected to meet all writing assignment deadliness or lose points toward your final grade. Writing assignments, including rough drafts, must be submitted <u>on the due date</u> in order to receive full credit**.

Reading Assignments:
Students are expected to read all reading assignments before coming to class. Students may be asked to respond to readings by writing in class or during class discussions. Failure to read and respond effectively to the reading assignments will affect your grade in the course.

**Test/Exams:**
Current event quizzes will be given as pop-quizzes throughout the semester. Students should be prepared for the pop-quizzes each class period. Students will also study AP Style and may be subject to random AP style quizzes throughout the semester.

**Communications:**
Office hours are listed on the top of the front page of this syllabus. I have also listed my cell phone. I do accept calls and text messages on my cell. Emails will be answered within 24 hours. Please note that NTCC email is the official form of communication used by the college.

**Institutional/Course Policy:**
To complete this course successfully, you should do the following:
- Read all of the textbook assignments
- Participate actively and meaningfully in all group discussions
- Prepare and submit all writing assignments on time
- Attend class regularly

Please try to make it to class on time. Many times we begin writing (including current event quizzes) and reading assignments at the start of class; if you're late you will not be able to make up those assignments. Please don't engage in casual conversations during our lecture, discussion and group times or while we're working on other assignments. I reserve the right to act as necessary to maintain a productive class environment, including asking disruptive students to leave, and in extreme circumstances, dropping chronic disruptors from my course. I will not tolerate uncivil behavior toward other class members during class discussions. Uncivil behavior includes interrupting others while they have the floor, rude responses to the ideas expressed by others, and the use of racial, ethnic, sexual, gender, or religious slurs.

**Attendance policy:**
Attendance will be taken either orally or by a sign-in sheet. If you come to class late, it is your responsibility to make sure that the instructor counts you in attendance for that day. **Students who miss more than five class periods will be subject to failure in this course.**

**Course Evaluations:**
Toward the end of the course you will be asked to complete an online course evaluation. Students are encouraged to fill out an online evaluation for each of their courses. This will be your opportunity to share important feedback on each of the courses you take at NTCC and the faculty member who teaches the class. Please watch for info about the evaluation on your NTCC email account and make sure you participate in evaluating your experiences in the classroom.

**Withdrawal policy:**
It is your responsibility to drop or withdraw from a course. Failure to do so could result in receiving a failing grade for the course.

**Statement Regarding the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology:**
Absent a clear statement from a course instructor, use of or consultation with generative AI shall be treated analogously to assistance from another person (collusion). Generative AI is a subset of AI that utilizes machine learning models to create new, original content, such as images, text, or music, based on patterns and structures learned from existing data (Cornell, Center for Teaching Innovation). Unauthorized use of generative AI tools to complete an assignment or exam is not permitted. Students should acknowledge the use of generative AI and default to disclosing such assistance when in doubt. Individual course instructors may set their own policies regulating the use of generative AI tools in their courses, including allowing or disallowing some or all uses of such tools. Students who are unsure of policies regarding generative AI tools are encouraged to ask their instructors for

clarification. **(Adapted from the Stanford University Office of Community Standards-- accessed August 31, 2023)**

**NTCC Academic Honesty/Ethics Statement:**
NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. The college expects all students to engage in their academic pursuits in an honest manner that is beyond reproach using their intellect and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. This course will follow the NTCC Academic Honesty and Academic Ethics policies stated in the Student Handbook. Refer to the student handbook for more information on these subjects.

**Eagle Assist**
At Northeast Texas Community College, we understand that students often need support that extends beyond the classroom. "Eagle Assist" is the place to start when looking for that type of assistance. Our support system is here to help you succeed in both your academic and personal growth. www.ntcc.edu/eagleassist

**Services provided:**

- Mental Health Counseling
- Classroom Accommodations
- NTCC Care Center Food Pantry
- NTCC Care Center Hygiene Closet
- NTCC Care Center Cook Nook
- Financial Literacy
- Child Care Assistance
- Emergency Aid

Can't find what you are looking for? Send us a message at eagleassist@ntcc.edu
Mental Health Counseling Services are available to all NTCC students.
- Visit the following page to get your account activated:
  www.thevirtualcaregroup.com/ntcc
*Dual credit students please email cstansell@ntcc.edu if interested.

**ADA Statement:**
It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations. An appointment can be made with the Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations located in Student Services and can be reached at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the special populations page on the NTCC website.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**:
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students." In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory information" may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as: the student's name, permanent

address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

**News Reporting – COMM. 2315**
**Assignment Calendar Spring 2024**

*Tentative Course Timeline (\*note\* instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to this timeline at any point in the term):*

**Week 1**    Welcome to the class introduction writing assignment
Course and Syllabus review
Beat assignments
<span style="color:red">Receive newspaper article assignment</span>
<span style="color:red">Receive social media posting assignment</span>

**Week 2**     **Submit rough draft of newspaper article assignment**
Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
Peer edit articles in class
**Submit final draft of newspaper article assignments**
<span style="color:red">Receive online article assignment</span>

**Week 3**    **Eagle and/or Eagle Express Newsletter goes online**
Begin reading chapter 3
**Submit online article assignment**
<span style="color:red">Receive newspaper article assignment</span>

**Week 4**    **Submit rough draft of newspaper article assignment**
Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
Peer edit articles in class
Continue reading chapter 3

**Week 5**    <span style="color:red">Receive social media posting assignment</span>
Begin reading chapter 4
**Submit social media posting assignment**
**Submit final draft of newspaper article assignment**

**Week 6**    **Eagle and/or Eagle Express Newsletter goes online**
<span style="color:red">Receive broadcast writing assignment</span>
Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
Continue reading chapter 4

**Week 7**    **Submit rough draft of broadcast assignment**
<span style="color:red">Receive social media posting assignment</span>
Peer edit articles in class
**Submit social media posting assignment**
Begin reading chapter 5

**Week 8**    **Submit final draft of broadcast assignment**
Continue reading chapter 5
<span style="color:red">Receive newspaper article writing assignment</span>

<span style="color:red">**Spring Break**</span>

**Week 9**        **Submit rough draft of newspaper article assignment**
Begin reading chapter 6
Peer edit articles in class
Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz

**Week 10**       Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
**Submit final draft of newspaper article assignment**
Continue reading chapter 6
<span style="color:#c0392b">Receive online article assignment</span>

**Week 11**       Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
<span style="color:#c0392b">Receive newspaper article writing assignment</span>
Peer edit articles in class
**Submit online article assignment**
**Eagle and/or Eagle Express Newsletter goes online**

**Week 12**       **Submit rough draft of newspaper article assignment**
<span style="color:#c0392b">Receive broadcast writing assignment</span>
Begin reading chapter 8

**Week 13**       **Submit broadcast writing assignment**
<span style="color:#c0392b">Receive social media posting assignment</span>
**Submit social media posting assignment**
Begin working on clipbook

**Week 14**       Continue reading chapter 8
<span style="color:#c0392b">Receive social media posting assignment</span>
**Submit social media posting assignment**

**Week 15**       **Eagle and/or Eagle Express Newsletter goes online**
Continue working on clipbook

**Week 16**       **Submit final digital portfolio/clipbook**

**Finals Week – In-class final writing assignment**