

COM 331

TV NEWS BROADCAST FOR THE CAMERA

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REQUIRED:

- **ATTENDANCE:** No unexcused absences are allowed. Excused absences include illnesses documented by a doctor or permission from coaches, other faculty and staff for circumstances that would take priority over this class.

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

You will have the opportunity to experience what it's like to work in a real news room. You will learn the basic principles of solid broadcast journalism and on-camera performance.

YOUR COMMITMENT:

TV broadcasting is a very demanding profession. To prepare you for that reality, this course demands a great deal of personal responsibility. The primary requirement is that you be **TOTALLY DEPENDABLE**. You must always do what you say you will do, and complete it by deadline. The productions depend on it; your classmates and co-workers depend on it, and your grade depends on it.

Just like the real world, "no-shows" will not be tolerated. If you fail to fulfill your assigned task, without making prior written arrangements, you will fail the course. If you anticipate an unavoidable absence or delay, you must notify me and get the absence approved. Attendance is required for every scheduled session.

This course also requires personal enterprise. To maximize your success, get fully involved and pro-active. Volunteer; ask questions; **MAKE** your stories and your productions happen

VETERANS: those who have experience will be expected to help the newcomers. Please do so willingly and cheerfully, remembering that you, too, once benefited from a helping hand.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

You are expected to master the language of the profession.

You will also be expected to watch local newscasts, and you will sometimes be assigned to record them so they can be critiqued by the class.

Minimum requirements for grades:

Reporters: at least 3 video stories during the course of the semester, as assigned or enterprised (unless you have my permission to work on a series, investigative, or other intense project.) The stories must be a minimum of 1 package; 1 VO/SOT and 1 VO.

A: Complete 3 stories (1 pkg, + 1 VO/SOT & 1 VO)

Positive and enthusiastic class participation

No unexcused absences.

(it will be pretty easy to get an A as long as you follow the above – anything less will be a C or below)

WHAT COURSE WILL INCLUDE

- Overview of the “day-in-the-life” of a newsroom, hierarchy, jobs, responsibilities, etc.
- Critiquing and discussion of local news stories and on-air talent.
- Writing exercises and discussion of writing techniques and story telling.
- Field trip to a professional newsroom.
- Visiting in-class guests from the TV broadcast profession.
- On-camera performance (script reading and ad-lib)
- Completion of news stories as explained above.

TV NEWSROOM JOB DESCRIPTIONS:

REPORTER/ PHOTOJOURNALIST /EDITOR:

Covers news stories, as assigned, with careful attention to truth, accuracy, fairness and balance. May be required to perform any or all of the following: originate story idea, set up story coverage, interview newsmakers, shoot story, write script, edit, create chyrons and graphics, etc. and other tasks. May also present stories live on set and from the newsroom.

Covers stories assigned by Producer and News Director. Responsible for all stories under "beat", which includes regular contact with primary newsmakers. Responsible for monitoring all developments of current events by watching other newscasts, reading daily newspapers, magazines, etc.

PRODUCER:

The line Producer is the primary architect of the news program; "the Boss" of the show. Controls the editorial and production qualities of the news show. In coordination with the News Director, the Producer determines what stories will be included in the show, with what focus, what length, what format, what order, what graphics, what effects, etc.

Responsibilities include long-range planning, preparing the show's rundown, back timing, writing scripts as needed, overseeing script preparation and distribution, adjusting rundown during live broadcasts, and coordinating tapes.

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER (AP)/SCRIPTS WHIP:

Works with the producer on show day to make sure all scripts are assigned, keeps track of who's writing what, and coordinates the acquisition of scripts. Responsible for the assembly and duplication of show scripts, and their distribution, as well as coordinating last-minute script changes up to and during show time.

EDITOR:

Edits last-minute additions, breaking news, net feed stories, etc. under the direction of the Producer. Also assists reporters/photographers with editing, as assigned. Assists with Videonics.

VIDEO TAPE COORDINATOR (VTR):

An hour before show, creates play list from rundown, then gathers all the videotapes to be use, verifies labeling, and checks to verify that they're cued. During show, plays tapes as instructed by director. After show, transfers tapes to archivist.

ARCHIVIST:

Dubs all locally-produced video stories and selected other stories onto archive tapes. Maintains archive log and "red-dot" generic archives. Maintains file for hard copies of show scripts. Maintains "bloopers reel."

SPORTS DIRECTOR:

Responsible for the successful coordination of all HSU-TV sports coverage, including the delegation of story assignments to reporters, in coordination with the Assignment Editor. Also requires constant monitoring of CNN sports feeds, and then integrating them into the presentation. The Sports Director or a delegate must attend sports news conference each week.

Must build and maintain sports CG pages, including backgrounds, as well as field production of packages, VO/SOTS, etc. May also include on-set anchoring.

NEWS ANCHOR:

Responsible for thorough and up-to-date knowledge of current events, local, regional and national, and proper pronunciation of newsworthy names, places, and words. Must have a pleasant, relaxed on-air demeanor, and a professional-looking wardrobe available for newscasts.

Anchors are the primary writers for the newscast, under the direction of the Producer.

One-half hour prior to air, anchors will report to studio for camera shots, and to familiarize themselves with scripts.

GRAPHICS COORDINATOR:

Working on the Videonics, responsible for all pre-produced on-screen information, full-screen visuals including graphics, locators, IDs, underlines, backgrounds, etc. Must show imagination and initiative in creating on-screen images and backgrounds.

Depending upon the complexity of the tasks, begins work several days or hours before the show.

CHARACTER GENERATOR (CG) OPERATOR:

Before show, works with producer on developing list of needed CGs for CG operator. Enters data into master control CG, proofs all CGs with AP prior to air time.

WEATHER PRODUCER/ANCHOR:

Requires genuine interest in weather-related phenomenon, an ability to present complex information in an easily understandable manner, and a pleasant, upbeat personality for on-air presentation.

Responsible for the acquisition and organization of all elements of the Wx segment. Includes building and entering CG and Videonics information, monitoring and dubbing relevant video from CNN feeds, downloading U.S. Weather Service graphics from Web to video on Media 100, shooting and editing weather video for each show, monitoring the weather radio, monitoring the Weather Channel for background information, establishing and maintaining contact with the local weather service for local current conditions and information, and arranging guests, as needed.

Must be willing and able to work extra hours and long hours, as needed, to respond to weather conditions.

DIRECTOR:

Requires the ability to successfully juggle multiple tasks under extreme pressure, while maintaining patience and good humor.

At least one hour prior to show, begins to block out show, mark scripts and rundown, etc. Half-hour before show, works with floor director and camera operators to set up studio shots, check lighting, intercom, over-air quality, etc. Responsible for verifying control room personnel's readiness. During show, in coordination with the line producer, responsible for directing crew's actions, to present a flawless on-air product.

ASSIGNMENT EDITOR:

In coordination with the News Director and the Producer, determines what stories will be covered, by whom, when, in what format, and with what time budget. Assigns stories to HSU-TV reporters.

Maintains constant contact with reporters and producers to monitor and coordinate story coverage during the week.

Responsible for carefully monitoring newspapers, magazines, and other broadcasts for current events. Maintains story files and futures files. Maintains personnel schedules and contact numbers, in coordination.

You are encouraged to *work smart*; for example, if you have a few hours on a Saturday, team up with a colleague, plan your day carefully with set-up phone calls, shoot two feature packages (one for you to produce/write, one for your buddy to produce/write) and shoot a couple of VO/SOTs, too. Script & edit later. In painless fashion, you've accomplished three obligations.

Here's another example of working smart. Let's say you have to cover the progress on the renovation of a computer lab. That's story #1. But while you're there, you discover that there's a student working on her 3rd BA. You shoot plenty of B-role, supplement it with an interview with that student studying in the lab, and you have enough to build two packages, one for today, one for later. And maybe while you're there there's a group of new freshmen touring the site. You get a couple of interviews, and you've also gathered a VO/SOT. 1-stop shopping. It's working smart.