Magazine & Feature Writing
Mass Media 3313

Professor: Dr. Cathy Johnson

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Office Location: B318

Office hours: Tue/Th 11-1
Wed/Fri 8-10
or by appointment

Course Description
Concepts and a practical approach to research, writing and marketing of feature stories for magazines, newspapers, and online.

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Concepts and practical approach to research, writing and marketing of feature stories for magazines, newspaper/newsletters, and online.

Textbooks

AP Stylebook
Available in the reference section of the library:
2018 Writers Market.: PN 161 W83
Learning Outcomes

1. An ability to generate, develop and organize ideas for feature articles

2. An ability to write various kinds of feature stories and to adapt writing to specific audiences

3. A familiarity with many markets for feature stories and an ability to approach markets for publication

Activities/Instructional Strategies
Lecture/discussion and a writing workshop format in which stories will be critiqued by other class members

Reading
Follow the course schedule for assigned readings in To Tell the Truth. Read the assigned chapters before they are to be discussed in class.

You should also be reading well-written feature stories in various publications. By looking at good writing, you will become familiar with the kinds of material and writing skills relevant to feature articles. In addition, some reading assignments will be made other than from the textbooks.

Stories (90 points possible, 18 per story)

You will write five feature articles. You will submit your stories to editors for possible publication. One of your stories must be at least 1,200 words in length. Other than that, no specified word count is required for the other articles except that the length must correspond with the requirements of the entity for which you are writing. Note: These must be full-length, non-fiction, prose articles.

On the story submission dates indicated, you will submit to me a copy suitably prepared for mailing (with correct postage) but not sealed for possible publication or you will have verifiable evidence of a digital submission. This will be the checkpoint to ensure that you have submitted the article. If the editor accepts e-mail submissions, I must have a copy of the e-mail that indicates a time and date sent. You may make changes to the graded story before submitting it to an editor.

Your articles may be on anything about which you choose to write that is feature subject matter, i.e. not hard news, an opinion piece or fiction. Stories must be developed/written specifically for this class. In other words, your articles cannot be something for which you are also getting academic credit elsewhere, such as something you are also working on in an internship or for another class.

You could, however, choose a single topic and write several kinds of stories about that topic. For example: using antique cars as your topic, you could write a how-to story about
restoring antique cars, a trend story about antique car collectors, a profile about a local man who restores antique cars as a hobby, etc.

Story 1 Profile
Story 2 How-to
Story 3 Personal Experience
Story 4 choose a category from the following: trend story, seasonal story, travel/place story, as told to, Q&A, historical, or human interest
Story 5 Your choice of any of the above

Each article must be turned in with a green cover sheet (provided) that includes the following:

• Feature category (profile, how-to, human interest, personal experience, travel, etc.)

• A brief summary (25-25 words) of your story that describes the angle

• Market (specific publication for which it was written) and a copy of the publication for which you have written

It will be assumed you are using the Associated Press Style. If you are using another style because it is specified by your targeted publication, you should indicate that information on the green cover sheet.

**Daily Assignments** (10 points possible)

**Course Guidelines**

*Everything* you turn in to me or ask me to look at, with two exceptions, must be typed double-spaced, paragraphs indented. The two exceptions are: journal entries and the green cover sheets, which may be handwritten.

Articles and article submissions are due at the beginning of class (10 a.m.) on the dates indicated. Work turned in *any time* thereafter will be automatically lowered 1.5 points per class period.
Evaluation Procedures/Criteria

5 stories @ 18 points each (90 points total)

- 2 points per story for complete draft (no partial credit here)
- 14 possible points per story for final copy
- 2 points per story for submission with cover letter

Daily grade @ 10 points  (assignments not accepted late)

100 points = 100%

Note: Plagiarism or fiction will result in a “0” for the assignment.

Other university policies and procedures

Notice to Students with Disabilities: Angelo State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Office of Student Services, 325-942-2047, or Houston Harte University Center, 112.
If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

Grade Appeal Process. As stated in Angelo State University Operating Policy and Procedure (OP 10.03 Student Grade Grievances), a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see Operating Procedure 10.03 at www.angelo.edu

Honor Code Policy: Violations of academic integrity are very serious matters. The work a student submits in a class is expected to be the student's own work and must be work completed for that particular class and assignment. Plagiarism means intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own. This may include your own previous work. Plagiarism includes quoting or paraphrasing from other sources without acknowledging/citing the source of your information or presenting quoted material as your own words. You must be very clear about attribution of sources.
## Tentative course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 29</td>
<td>Introduction to the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Ch. 1 - An introduction to storytelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 5</td>
<td>Ch. 2 Distinguishing among forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ch. 3 How writers work</td>
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<tr>
<td>12, 14</td>
<td>Ch. 6 When characters are real people</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Ch. 9 Bringing research to the process</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Ch. 4 The story takes shape</td>
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<td>story 1 (profile) draft due Sept. 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>26, 28</td>
<td>How-to writing</td>
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<td>story 1 (profile) final due Sept. 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 3, 5</td>
<td>story 2 (how to) draft due Oct. 5</td>
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<td>Ch. 7 Narrative persona; Art, facts, and the “I” of the story</td>
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<tr>
<td>10, 12</td>
<td>personal experience</td>
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<td>story 2 (hot to) final due Oct. 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>17, 19</td>
<td>Ch. 8 Finding story in situation: resonance and theme</td>
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<td>24, 26</td>
<td>Ch. 5 Writing scenes—painting word pictures</td>
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<td>story 3 (personal experience) draft due Oct. 24</td>
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<td>31, 2</td>
<td>Other story types</td>
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<td>story 3 (personal experience) final due Oct. 31</td>
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<td>Nov. 7, 9</td>
<td>Other story types</td>
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<tr>
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<td>story 4 (choice from list) draft due Nov. 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>14, 16</td>
<td>Other story types</td>
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<td>story 4 (choice from list) final due Nov. 16</td>
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21 Other story types

23 Thanksgiving holiday

28 work on story 5

Dec. 5 story 5 draft due Dec. 5

7 story 4 submission due Dec. 7
    story 5 final due Dec. 7
    contest story due Dec. 7

Note: no stories accepted for credit after Dec. 7

Final exam period: Tuesday, Dec. 12, 1-3 p.m.
    story 5 submission due