



MRTS 2010

Introduction to Media Arts Writing Course Syllabus

Instructor – Frances Perkins

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Office Phone – (940) 565-4578

Office Hours

Media Arts Office Hours 263 (right next to the Media Arts office)

Tuesday 12:30-2pm

Wednesday 1-2pm

Honors Hall Office Hours - in the dorm lobby

Tuesday 5-7pm

Thursday 3-5pm

Virtual Office Hours - Book a meeting here:

[Frances' Virtual Office Hours](#)

Course Description

Introduction to media writing and study of the basic theories, methodologies, techniques, principles and formats for the scripting of narrative and non-narrative media, including “New Media.” Related software for screenplay, television, industrial and multi-media writing is explored. Required writing course for all MRTS majors.

Prerequisite(s): MRTS/CBCM major status, completion of 12 credit hours at UNT, and 2.75 GPA.

Course Objectives

In this course, we will explore several areas of Media Writing:

1. MEDIA PRODUCTION WRITING. Non-fiction television, radio, short form
2. DIGITAL MEDIA WRITING. Broadcast, social media, online content
3. DOCUMENTARY WRITING.
4. NARRATIVE MEDIA WRITING. Screenwriting for film, television, episodic TV series
5. SCHOLARLY WRITING. Academic papers, analysis, reviews, APA Style review
6. ETHICS IN WRITING. Across all forms of media

Therefore, in this course, students will:

- Learn about the major forms of modern media writing, including broadcast, online content, documentary, narrative, scholarly
- Explore and develop storytelling skills
- Develop original scripts in multiple forms
- Learn to become better writers – practice and purpose
- Develop ideation and story development skills
- Explore storytelling opportunities related to format
- Develop a storytelling approach that establishes clear ethical standards
- Learn how to employ research to tell better stories
- Learn scholarly writing expectations and apply to research papers
- Write a final script that will be well-positioned for production

****The class schedule/assignments may change - be flexible****

Required/Recommended Materials

NO REQUIRED TEXTBOOK, but you will be doing a lot of writing.

How to Succeed and Assignment Policy

Come to class ready to work and listen. Work ethic, or your ability to create on your own, is an important part of this class and industry. You are entering a competitive industry, so be ready to engage and learn.

Keep at it. In storytelling, the hero often times wins by not giving up. This class will not only help you to develop writing skills, but will also expand your creativity, so the more you push, the more original your work will be.

Respect and a Safe Creative Space. I expect everyone to respect each other's perspectives and creativity. Everyone will have a different approach to storytelling and just because it is different than yours, it doesn't mean it is the wrong approach. We seek to not judge, but to understand what the writer is trying to accomplish and provide feedback that gets them there in a positive way.

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

No double-dipping. All work created in this course cannot be used for assignment work in other classes, and vice versa: don't use work from other classes for assignments here.

Let's talk about AI. AI is a tool, like anything else. It can be used properly or misused, and this has become a bigger issue over the past few years. We will discuss this in class, but for now, always remember - **what you submit must be in your words.** If your work gets flagged for AI, I will read the report and check your submission with two or more other AI detectors to ensure that it is a fair report. As I have found, sometimes it is not. I find AI helpful in giving me ideas and options with how to develop a specific effect, but that is as far as I take it - I use it as another research tool, but my writing is what truly makes work original.

The [Writers Guild of America addresses AI](#) really well and it is a good policy to follow.

The following [AI Disclosure Statement](#) is required if you use AI in any of your assignments.

Original Work/Adaptations. Original work means that it is **ENTIRELY** your concept. **No aspect of another written or produced screenplay will be accepted, following Writers Guild of America guidelines for registered work. Adaptations are accepted as long as you have permission or if it is from public domain.**

Statement on Communication

You may contact me via email or the Canvas inbox. I will respond to your question or email within 24 hours. Responses might be slightly delayed on holidays and weekends. Assignments will typically be graded within 6 days of the assignment due date, with the exception of the FINAL WRITING PROJECT.

Grading

Grades will be available through Canvas and students may access them to determine where they stand in this course at any time. Your grade will be calculated according to the *"Assignments are weighted by group:"* table displayed in this syllabus page. Please make sure to check your grade book to see your instructor's feedback on your projects and activities. To see in-line feedback, go to the assignment, then click on View Feedback if applicable. It is your responsibility to check for your instructor's feedback and make appropriate improvements to assignments if necessary. Most of the graded assignments will provide you with feedback to help you as you develop your final writing project.

Assignments and Points

Assignment	Points	% of Total Grade
Audio/Radio Story	100 points	10%
TV Pack script	100 points	10%
Promo/Digital Media Story	100 points	10%
Short Documentary script	100 points	10%
Short Narrative script	100 points	10%
Ethics Research paper	100 points	10%
FINAL WRITING PROJECT	250 points	25%
Article reports (5 @ 20 pts each)	100 points	10%
Discussions & Participation	50 points	5%
TOTAL CLASS POINTS POSSIBLE	1000 POINTS	100%

UNT Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	90+ - The work is consistently outstanding.
B	80+ - The work is consistently strong and occasionally outstanding.

- C 70+ - The work is adequate, fulfilling minimum requirements.
- D 60+ - The work fails to meet minimum standards.
- F below 60 - The work is incomplete, or evidence of plagiarism.

Requirement/Description of Assignment Groups

Media Writing Knowledge [10% of Grade]

You will be reading and completing reports on the latest articles about media writing. It is important for all media writers to stay up to date on what is being developed and the latest industry trends!

Story & Script Development [50% of Grade]

Over the course of the semester, you will be developing numerous media scripts in different formats. This work will include classroom workshop writing development.

Scholarly & Research Papers [10% of Grade]

Using APA-style writing guidelines, you will develop properly formatted papers with a clear thesis statement.

Final Writing Project [25% of Grade]

You will choose which media format you want to write in, or you can develop an academic research paper (APA style). Rubrics will be provided for each format choice.

Participation [5% of Grade]

In class participation and being a consistent part of feedback, lecture discussions, and supporting your classmates is an important function of this course.

Late Assignments

Information on assignments and readings is available 24/7 on Canvas. It is your responsibility to pay attention to deadlines and ask questions on assignment information and possible due date changes. Misinformation usually occurs when an individual has not paid attention to assignment expectations and asks other students outside of class. Detailed assignment information is found for **every assignment** on Canvas. Contact me if you are confused about ANYTHING – I am always more than happy to clarify assignment and script expectations. **PLAN ON CHECKING YOUR UNT EMAIL DAILY!** I will be sending out reminders, changes, updates on a regular

basis, so remember that an open line of communication between us is an important part of this course. Class readings and assignments must be completed by due date, OR LATE POINTS WILL BE SUBTRACTED.

Late Assignments: past deadline = 50% reduction

late beyond 4 weeks = 75% grade reduction

If you are running into difficulty with completing assignments or are unable to move forward due to confusion, you must contact me immediately. I will help clarify any assignment expectations or course questions that you may have, but I will not seek you out to track your progress. As a college student, it is solely your responsibility to ask questions and seek any information needed for each course.

Academic Support & Student Services

Technology Support

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues:

Phone: 940-565-2324

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Current list of Student Help Desk hours Academic Support Services

- The UNT Academic Resource Center, which provides links to the bookstore, registration and advising information, tuition information, financial aid, and more.
- The UNT Academic Success Center, which offers academic support services and free individual tutoring.
- UNT Writing Lab
- UNT MathLab

Student Services

- Multicultural Center
- Counseling and Testing Services
- Student Affairs Care Team
- Student Health and Wellness Center
- Pride Alliance
- Student Legal Services
- UNT Food Pantry

Course Outline/Calendar

For the full course Outline/Calendar, please visit the Modules section of the course.

Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule of the class. Any alterations will be announced in class, in Canvas or via email by the instructor. Students who do not check Canvas or their email assume full responsibility for missing alterations to the course.

Technical Assistance

Part of working in Canvas involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: UIT Student Help Desk site Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit Canvas Technical Help

- - (Links to an external site.)

UNT Policies

Important Academic Dates

- [Registration Guides by Semester](#)
- [Online Academic Calendar](#)

- [Final Exam Schedule](#)

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences

According to UNT Policy 06.003, [Student Academic Integrity](#), academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to: cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the [Code of Student Conduct](#). The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

The [Dean of Students Office](#) enforces the [Code of Student Conduct](#). The Code explains what conduct is prohibited, the process the DOS uses to review reports of alleged misconduct by students, and the sanctions that can be assigned. When students may have violated the Code they meet with a representative from the Dean of Students Office to discuss the alleged misconduct in an educational process.

ADA Accommodation

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Important Notice for F-1 Students Taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please visit the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations](#) website. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

- (1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
- (2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the [UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office](#) by telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

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Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Visit [Title IX Student Information](#) for more resources.

Undocumented Students

Please see UNT'S [Resources for DACA Students](#) web page for more information.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called [Eagle Alert](#) to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Web Accessibility and Privacy

Please find the web accessibility and privacy statements for UNT, Canvas, and all CLEAR supported technologies below.

UNT

- [Web Accessibility Policy](#)
- [Privacy Statement](#)

Canvas/Instructure

- [Accessibility Statement](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)

CLEAR Supported Technologies

- See [CLEAR's Supported Technologies web page](#) for links to Accessibility Statements and Privacy Policies.

UNT Copyright Notice

Materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection. Materials may include, but are not limited to: documents, slides, images, audio, and video. Materials in this course Web site are only for the use of students enrolled in this course, for purposes associated with this course, and may not be retained for longer than the class term. Unauthorized retention, duplication, distribution, or modification of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited by law. For more information, visit the [UNT Policy Office](#) or [Copyright.gov](#).

Netiquette

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Something about cyberspace makes it easy for people to forget that they are interacting with other real people. The following bullet points cover some basics to communicating online:

- Be sensitive to the fact that there will be cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs, plus just differences in general.
- Use good taste when composing your responses in Discussion Forums. Swearing and profanity is also part of being sensitive to your classmates and should be avoided. Also consider that slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
- Don't use all capital letters when composing your responses as this is considered "shouting" on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message.
- Be respectful of your others' views and opinions. Avoid "flaming" (publicly attacking or insulting) them as this can cause hurt feelings and decrease the chances of getting all different types of points of view.
- Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward, for example: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). After that you can use the acronym freely throughout your message.
- Use good grammar and spelling, and avoid using text messaging shortcuts.
- [Emoticons \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [emojis \(Links to an external site.\)](#) can be used to add emotion to your text or convey invisible body language, as long as they are used tastefully.
- For synchronous meetings, make sure you are in a safe and private place (please do not connect while you are driving or when there might be distractions around you). Also, for a better experience, make sure to use headphones and make sure you are not interrupted.