



Writing is easy: All you do is sit staring at a blank sheet of paper until drops of blood form on your forehead. ~Gene Fowler

Feature Writing

JOUR 3310 -001

Spring 2018

Instructor: Mark Donald

Class: M/W. 11 p.m.-12:20 p.m.

Classroom: GAB 111H

Required Books and Reading: (Paperbacks are fine!)

- ✓ *A Writer's Coach, The Complete Guide To Writing Strategies That Work*, Jack Hart, First Anchor Books Edition, 2007.
- ✓ *On Writing Well, William Zinsser, The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*, 30th Anniversary Edition, Collins, 2006
- ✓ *Telling True Stories, A Nonfiction Writers' Guide*, Edited by Mark Kramer and Wendy Call, Penguin Group,
- ✓ *AP Stylebook 2016*. Always have this with you.

Suggested Reading:

- ✓ New York Times Sunday Magazine
- ✓ New Yorker Magazine
- ✓ <http://www.pulitzer.org/bycat/Feature-Writing> (Pulitzer Prize-winning feature writing from 1995- 2015).

Let's talk!

Office: Sycamore 217

Office hours

Monday: 12:30 p.m. –1:30 p.m.

Tuesday: 9:45 a.m. –10:45 a.m.

Wed: 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Thurs: 9:45 a.m. –10:45 a.m.

By appointment

Virtual office is always open. Just give me 24 hours to respond to your email.

My email: mark.donald@unt.edu

My cell phone: 214-402-6518

Textbook policy: The Mayborn School of Journalism doesn't require students to purchase textbooks from the University Bookstore. Many are available through other bookstores or online.

Course Design: Some of the design of this course is the brainchild of UNT journalism professor George Getschow, and with his permission, I am adopting and adapting its structure, format and syllabus. I have also adapted course materials from Professor Kathleen Culver of the University of Wisconsin and Professor Rachele Kanigel of San Francisco State University, to whom I am most grateful.

Course Objectives and Goals:

You'll learn a number of important concepts about feature writing in this class. These include:

- 1) How to develop good interviewing techniques for feature stories
- 2) How to write a “pitch” for a feature story
- 3) How to create a sense of place and telling detail
- 4) How to develop character
- 5) How to build story structure
- 6) How and when to use quotes vs. dialogue in features
- 7) How revision can transform writing
- 8) How to write a publishable feature story
- 9) How to write a feature story ethically

Course Description:

From the time of the ancients, storytelling has engaged our senses, keeping us entertained as it subtly offers up meaning and helps us make sense of our world. This course is about storytelling through the medium of journalism, which employs feature writing as its vehicle. Feature stories have a different intention than the news stories you learned to craft in courses such as JOUR 2310 and JOUR 3321. They are not merely meant to inform but also to entertain, enlighten and enrich. Some are just good reads; others present issues but make them easier to digest by framing them through the people who live them. And many, if they are working their storytelling magic, put us in touch with our own humanity by allowing us to empathize with the joy and pain of other humans. The feature story does this through the use of narrative devices that, until the last century, were primarily the province of fiction—among them, scene setting, character development, dialogue, telling detail, point of view and voice. It employs these narrative devices while still rigidly adhering to the truth, to accuracy, to journalistic ethics. Pretty tall order, but one I will ask you to meet during this course.

The good news is: we will all be in this together. Each week we will combine lectures, exercises and workshops to help you craft your features stories and make them publishable. To guide us along the way, we primarily will be drawing from the three textbooks listed above, which will offer unique, even contradictory points of view from highly regarded writers, editors and academics. When taken together, this source material weaves a strong foundation for feature writing, integrating techniques of good reporting with solid organizational structure and great writing suggestions. But there are many approaches to structuring feature stories and we will also read from other source materials. Although the real lessons are in the doing, we still can learn from those who have done it well.

As a 21st Century journalist, more “doing” is being asked of you than ever before. Much of it has to do with the promise and challenge brought about by digital media. To address this challenge, I have added several multi-platform components to this course, which will enhance your storytelling as well as your value in journalism job market.

COURSE MANAGEMENT

- WordPress: This semester we'll be using **profmarkdonald.wordpress.com**, as our class website. The site itself is entitled "Denton, Texas: People, Places and Things," The website will be public (unless otherwise indicated), and I will use it to post the class agenda, assignments, readings, resources, syllabus and changes to the class schedule. **It will take precedence over the tentative schedule in this syllabus.** So please check it daily.
- Dropbox: To facilitate the workshopping component of the class, we will use Dropbox, a file sharing system. It will be more appropriate for works in progress—early drafts and class exercises. You will receive an invitation to join Dropbox within the first week of class.
- Blackboard/Canvas: To aid transparency, I will maintain your grades using Blackboard, or Canvas's Grade Center (depending on its launch), which allows me to record your grades while maintaining privacy and allows you 24/7 real-time online access to your grades.
- Pushing Thyself: This class will require you to push yourself in ways that will test your desire to improve as a writer. Ask yourself? What did you do today to become a better writer? Did you devote at least an hour to reading and an hour to writing? What did you learn about yourself as a writer – about your strengths and your weaknesses? Are you working on both? No teacher can push you harder than you are willing to push yourself. But I can certainly try, encourage, support, even cajole. To that end, the following are:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

I. You are required to produce two (2) feature story portfolios for this class.

- Each story will be an original story generated only for this course. No stories produced in other courses will be accepted.
- Scott Parks, the managing editor of the Denton Record Chronicle has agreed to publish the best feature stories produced by this class.

A. Feature Story Portfolio I

- ***Requirements for Feature Story 1:***
 - 1500- 2,000 words in length; four live sources interviewed and quoted; your friends, family members, significant others, employers or employees are not proper subjects for your profiles and will be disallowed. And no professors please –particularly journalism professors.
- ***Subject Matter for Feature Story 1:*** Denton is known as a community of creatives, whether they are those who easily come to mind such as musicians, painters, sculptors, photographers and filmmakers or people who work with their hands such as potters, weavers, quilters, chefs and perhaps even farmers, or those who create with their minds such as start-up entrepreneurs, high-tech wizards and web designers. As with any feature story, you want to capture the main character in action, so the more active, passionate and obsessed they are about their creative endeavor, the better. We will dive deeply into the Denton creative community, profiling these folks and examining if Denton has earned its reputation. The key here is not to pick just any

creative, but to pick those who are indigenous to Denton, who make Denton, Denton, who reflect the distinct personality of the city. If Denton has a sound, they embody that sound. If Denton has a look, they mirror that look. If Denton has an entrepreneurial spirit, they illuminate that spirit. You might also write about a creative trend, an innovation, a cutting edge that has come to light or been birthed in Denton, and then find the people who represent that trend, innovation or edge. Whichever format you choose, we will dive deeply into these people and the issues they represent to produce publishable feature stories.

B. Feature Story Portfolio II

- **Requirements for Feature Story II: (same as F1)**
 - 1500- 2,000 words in length; four live sources interviewed and quoted; your friends, family members, significant others, employers or employees are not proper subjects for your profiles and will be disallowed. Again, no professors please –particularly journalism professors.
- **Subject Matter for Feature Story 2:** Now that you have gotten your sea legs from Feature Story 1, it's time to set sail on your own. Your second feature contemplates that you will come up with your own story idea. Freedom! This can be in any format, on any subject, as long as it is of and concerning Denton or UNT. More on this later...

Feature Story 1 and 2 may be written in any one of the following feature story structures. Not to worry: You will receive instruction in each format:

A traditional news feature:

A story that feature-izes a current news issue, event, development or trend affecting the Denton creative community and puts a human face on it by finding the people who animate that issue. This feature should *not* profile or tell the story of any one individual although one or more individuals might represent a larger group that is similarly affected by or living the issue. Think the Wall Street Journal formula you learned in 2310 and 3321.

A profile of an individual:

A profile of someone in the creative community. Think in terms of characters— people who go against the grain or the norm. Find people who are passionate and obsessive about what they do. People who through their work, their creativity, their approach to life or the sheer force of their personality have had a significant impact.

A true narrative:

A story with a central character who confronts and overcomes obstacles (tension, suspense) to accomplish his or her goal. To help with structure, you might want to make these more Day-in- the-Life narratives, immersing yourself in their lives as they go about

their day- from morning ‘till night. Watch out for length here. You may be stepping into the path of magazine writing. Not that this is a bad thing.

- *Feature Story Portfolio 1 and 2 must contain the following and be posted in Dropbox.*
 1. Story proposal
 2. First draft
 3. Second draft
 4. Digital Elements to enhance your text: To prepare you for a digital age focused on media convergence, you must add to your story portfolio, multi-platform elements such as video, audio, slide shows, photographs and graphics that enhance the interactive reading experience. The number and kind of these elements are less important than their effectiveness at engaging the reader in the storytelling. Place these, if possible, in a separate digital file in Dropbox and then imbed them in your text and upload the file to our website, yours or both.
 5. An Essay (1-2 page) that should include:
 - What you learned from the reporting
 - What you learned from the workshopping process
 - What you learned from the writing process
 - How you revised your story from proposal to final draft
 - *You may include your experience from F1 and F2 in the same essay and this will be due at the end of the semester*
 6. Final Draft (My expectation is that you will make obvious revisions from draft to draft)

II. Blog: Students will contribute to a theme-driven collaborative class blog employing the theme of Denton creatives. The blog will showcase your F1 story but will allow for pages that reflect other work (long and short) you are proud of that resulted from your performance in the class. Your feature stories will be embedded with digital elements to enhance your storytelling. Even though some blogs don’t adhere to the rules of good grammar and style—not so with this blog.

- Blog Czars- We need three tech savvy volunteers who together will help design and maintain the blog as a final project of the class. Each Blog Czar will receive extra credit of up to two points added to his or her final grade.

III. Workshops:

Critiquing other writers will help you focus on the strengths and weaknesses of your own writing. That’s why workshops are an integral part of this class. Each student will learn how to constructively critique the feature stories of all students.

Before attending the workshops, you are expected to read the drafts of those students who will be presenting either in your peer workshop group or the professional-peer workshop. You must then critique the work by preparing a Student Evaluation, which will be found in Dropbox. Once completed, you must post the Student Evaluation (SE) in Dropbox in the corresponding student folder so the workshopped student can use it for revision. Also have access (print or digital) to the SE the next day so you can use it as a discussion tool during the actual workshop. You should focus your evaluation on the strengths and weaknesses of the piece, what works and what doesn’t, with respect to the quality of the research, clarity,

comprehensiveness, creativity, characterization, sense of place, and other storytelling elements. Your student evaluations will be part of your Workshop Work grade (see below).

IV. Story Deconstruction:

You will be assigned to a team, which will be responsible for leading the class discussion on an assigned story, deconstructing the story as directed. *More to come*

V. Question of the Day

Each day, I will ask you to answer one question, which will be taken from your nightly reading assignment or the team deconstruction story that will be presenting that day. At the beginning of class, I will pass out a notecard for each student who will answer the question and return the same notecard to me daily. This will comprise 5 percent of your overall grade and it will also indicate your attendance, a crucial factor in determining close calls on final grades.

More Process and Procedure

With each feature, we will move quickly from story idea to final draft, spending about a week with each step in the process. Each draft will be critiqued and evaluated during the workshops. You should leave each workshop with specific, concrete suggestions on how to improve your draft. Implement the ones that will make your story stronger; reject the ones that make your story weaker. **When revising your draft, please give considerable weight to my comments and critique.**

Reading well-crafted prose is essential for anyone who seeks to become a better writer. And that's why you will examine the storytelling devices employed by nonfiction writers to make their stories come alive on the page. The goal is to make you a better writer. And the best way to accomplish this is to read and examine models of good writing in books, newspapers and magazines. To that end, we will read and deconstruct some of the best feature writing in *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Denton Record Chronicle*, *D Magazine*, *the Atlantic*, *Harpers*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Vanity Fair*, *The New Yorker*, and other newspapers and magazines.

All work must be typed, double-spaced and identified using a variation of this template:
Donald_F1_Draft1 Points will be taken off if you use poor grammar, spelling and do not follow AP style. Edit your own work with the AP style manual at your side.

If you produce shoddy drafts or no drafts for the workshop, this will adversely affect your grade. It will also affect your ability to improve as a writer because you are not taking advantage of the process that the course affords.

Grading:

I. *F1 Story Portfolio* will account for 30 percent of your grade. Of the 30 percent, the following grade scale will apply based on the quality of the writing and reporting.

1. Formal Story Proposal: 2.5 percent
2. First Draft: 2.5 percent
3. Second Draft: 5 percent
4. Final Draft: 20 percent

II. F2 *Story Portfolio* will account for 30 percent of your grade. Of the 30 percent, the following grade scale will apply based on the quality of the writing and reporting.

1. Formal Story Proposal: 2.5 percent
2. First Draft 2.5 percent
3. Second Draft 5 percent
4. Final Draft 20 percent

The remaining 40 percent of your grade will be allocated as follows:

1. Blog (individual and collaborative work): 5 percent
2. Workshop Work: 10 percent
3. Student Deconstruction: 5 percent
4. Question of the Day: 5 percent
5. Class exercises, shorter projects, homework and participation: 15 percent

If a letter grade is given, it will be converted to a numerical equivalent, equi-spaced from each other, based on a 100-point scale. Then, they will be averaged and converted back to the letter grade you will receive as your final grade. As you likely know, UNT has no plus/minus system in its grading.

A+ = 98, A = 95, A- = 92: Outstanding work, publishable as is, or with slight revision

B+ = 88, B = 85, B- = 82: Good work, in need of minor revision

C+ = 78 C = 75, C- = 72: Fair work, needs significant revision

D+ = 68, D = 65, D- = 62: Poor Work; major problems with reporting and writing

F=0-55: Issues with plagiarism, libel or fabrication, deadlines

0: Work not turned in.

Extra Credit:

There are several ways to earn extra credit of up to 2 points added to your final grade:

1. By one of your feature stories being accepted for publication in the Denton Record Chronicle, NT Daily, either in print or online. Students who do outstanding work will be encouraged to submit.
2. By one of your feature stories being accepted for publication in a local or regional newspaper, magazine or online journalism site, including but not limited to the *The Dallas Morning News*, *D Magazine*, *Dallas Observer*, *Fort Worth Weekly*.
3. By becoming a valued Blog Czar
4. By availing yourself of other extra credit opportunities offered during the semester

Deadlines:

Missing a deadline is career suicide. You will be expected to turn in all drafts and portfolios when due. Except for excused absences, missing a deadline on a draft, preliminary or final, will result in the loss of ½ a letter grade (5 points) for each day late. For excused absences, I will allow work to be made up but will only accept it within seven days of the date it was due.

- Except for excused absences, NO story portfolio will be accepted unless it is received within 7 days of the date it was due. If it is received after 7 days, the student may receive a zero (0) for the draft and may be asked to drop the course.
- If you miss a quiz or class assignment and you do not have an excused absence, you will receive a zero (0) for that day's work.
- The unexcused missing of a deadline on homework will result in the loss of ½ a letter grade (5 points) for each day late.
- NO homework will be accepted unless it is received within seven days of the date it was due.

Attendance:

You cannot afford to miss this class. If you're not attending class and the workshops, you will not be able to learn the storytelling techniques that will inform your work. Consequently, attendance at both lectures and workshops is mandatory although I will not take roll. If you have legitimate reasons for an absence (illness, disaster, death, family emergency, religious holiday), email me beforehand. Other situations are subject to my discretion. Plan to provide documentation, such as a physician's note or a note from a relative explaining the emergency. Include a phone number so I may verify the note. Documentation must be turned in during the class period immediately following the absence.

One unexcused absence in the course is the limit without penalty toward your final grade, unless you have communicated with me about an extraordinary problem. After two unexcused absences, you may lose a half a letter grade (5 points) for each unexcused absence thereafter. I reserve the right to drop you from the class after five unexcused absences. The key is communication and I'm more likely to excuse an absence I know about in advance.

Coming to class late (after I check roll) twice will count as one absence; leaving class early twice will count as one absence; any combination of being late to class and leaving class early will count as one absence. If you come to class late, it is your obligation to notify me at the end of class so I can correct the roll. Failure to notify me will result in your being absent without excuse. This is a seminar course, and it requires your attendance and participation each class meeting.

Attendance at the final is mandatory.

First Class Day Attendance:

Journalism instructors reserve the right to drop any student who does not attend the first class day of the semester.

Cell phones must be turned off when entering class. Checking your cell phone for a non-class purpose will severely affect your professionalism grade. Please put them out of sight and reach.

Tentative Course Schedule

Classes of this nature are not set in stone. For the first few classes, I will lecture. Once you start producing work toward your feature stories, we will use much of class time as our workshop. For the most part, we will adhere to the following schedule, and I expect you to read the scheduled chapters, essays and stories *before* you come to class. Peer Workshops and Professional-Peer Workshops are small groups of 3-5 members (W1, W2, W3, W4) who will workshop Story Proposals and Drafts. Workshop group members will switch from story to story. **Please bring laptops to every class so we can do in-class exercises and workshops.**

WEEK 1: Jan. 17

- **W** (Jan.17) Introduction / Course Overview/ Writing Exercise

WEEK 2: Jan. 22, 24

- **M** (Jan. 22)
Lecture on Hard News Stories v. Feature Stories, In-Class Exercise,

To Read: *On Writing Well*-- pp. 3-16; *Telling True Stories* -- pp. 227-230; (Be prepared to discuss these two stories in class)

<http://news.yahoo.com/2012-military-suicides-hit-record-high-349-184857828--politics.html>

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/31/us/31headline.html?_r=1&
- **W** (Jan. 24) Kinds of Feature Stories / Story Deconstruction/ Finding Story Ideas/ In-class exercise, assigned readings

To Do: Find an example of two great feature stories--a news feature story and a profile—and bring a copy of each to class. Be prepared to explain why you chose them by highlighting narrative elements.

WEEK 3: Jan. 29, 31, Feb. 2

- **M** (Jan. 29) Class time will be dedicated to researching Denton as a creative community in preparation of your narrowing the focus of your story ideas. You will need to submit three ideas for your F1 story and class time will be carved out so you can hone topics into actual ideas.

To Do: Draft Student Bios, “Mago” Deconstruction exercise
- **W** (Jan. 31) The Pitchman Cometh: Writing the story pitch. Selling your idea and yourself; assigned readings: Sample Query Letters (Handouts)

Student-Led Deconstruction: Team 1 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment
- **F** (Feb. 2) **To Do:** Please submit three story ideas for F1 in Dropbox by noon Friday
Assignments approved and students notified in Dropbox by noon Saturday.

WEEK 4: Feb. 5, 6, 7

- **M** (Feb. 5) Lecture: The Art of the Interview, In-Class exercise, assigned readings;
Student-Led Deconstruction: Team3 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment
- **TU** (Feb. 6) Student Story Proposals for Feature Story1 due in Dropbox by 5 p.m.
- **W** (Feb. 7) *Student Evaluations of F1 Proposals (your Peer Group only) due in Dropbox at start of class.* Peer Group workshopping of F1 Proposals. (All workshop groups)

WEEK 5: Feb. 12,14

- **M** (Feb. 12) Lecture on Story Structure: Crafting the Feature Lead /Class Exercise, assigned readings
Student-Led Deconstruction: Team2 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment
- **W** (Feb. 14) The Fine Art of Hanging Out Assignment

WEEK 6: Feb. 19, 21

- **M** (Feb. 19) In-class exercise on interviewing for the anecdotal lead
- **W** (Feb. 21) Lecture on Profile Writing: In-class exercise, assigned readings
Student-Led Deconstruction: Team3 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment

WEEK 7: Feb. 25, 26, 28

- **SUN** (Feb. 25) **ALL First Drafts** (*leads and nut grafts*) of F1 due in Dropbox by Noon.
- **M** (Feb. 26) *Student Evaluations of F1 First Drafts (your Peer Group only) due in Dropbox at start of class.* Peer Group workshopping of F1 First Drafts. (All workshop groups)
- **W** (Feb. 28) Lecture on Sense of Place, assigned readings
Student-Led Deconstruction: Team4 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment

WEEK 8: March 5, 6, 7

- **M** (March 5) Lecture on Character, assigned readings.
Student-Led Deconstruction: Team5 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment
- **TU (March 6) All Second Drafts Due in Dropbox**
- **W** (March 7) *Student Evaluations of F1 Second Drafts (your Peer Group only) due in Dropbox at start of class.* Peer Group with Professional workshopping of F1 Second Drafts. (All workshop groups)

WEEK 9: March 12-16- SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10: March 19, 21

- **M** (March 19) F1 Second Draft One –on- One Workshop Revision Meeting (with me)
- **W** (March 21) F1 Second Draft One –on – One Workshop Revision Meeting (with me)

We will use my office hours on both days to insure each student meets with me

WEEK 11: March 25, 26, 28,30

- **SUN (March 25) ALL FINAL Drafts due in Dropbox by 11:59 p.m.**
- **M** (March 26) Class time will be dedicated to researching your F2 feature story idea. F2 is a feature story of your own choosing, limited only by the news value of proximity (Denton/UNT area). You will need to submit three ideas for your F2 story and class time will be carved out so you can hone topics into actual ideas.

Student-Led Deconstruction: Team 6 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment

- **W** (March 28) Lecture on Description, Details and Dialogue, assigned readings in-class exercise
- Student-Led Deconstruction: Team 7 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment*

- **F** (March 30) Please submit three story ideas for F2 in Dropbox by noon Friday. Assignments approved and students notified in Dropbox by noon Saturday.

WEEK 12: April 2, 3, 4

- **M** (April 2) Lecture on Narrative Voice/ Character POV
- **TU** (April 3) F2 Story Proposal Due in Dropbox by Noon
- **W** (April 4) Student Evaluations of F2 Proposals (your Peer Group only) due in Dropbox at start of class. Peer Group workshoping of F2 Proposals. (All workshop groups)

WEEK 13: April 9, 11

- **M** (April 9) Spit Polishing Your Prose-The Art of Revision
- Student-Led Deconstruction: Team 8 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment*
- **W** (April 11) Out- of- class reporting on F2

WEEK 14: April 15, 16, 18

- **SUN** (April 15) **ALL First Drafts** (leads and nut grafts) of F2 due in Dropbox by Noon.
- **M** (April 16) Student Evaluations of F2 First Drafts (your Peer Group only) due in Dropbox at start of class. Peer Group workshoping of F2 First Drafts. (All workshop groups)
- **W** (April 18) Ethical Issues raised by feature writing

Student-Led Deconstruction: Team 9 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment

WEEK 15: April 23, 24, 25

- **M** (April 23) In-class crafting the F1/F2 Essay on what you learned from the workshop and revision process
- **TU** (April 24) All Second Drafts of F2 due in Dropbox by Noon
- **W** (April 25) *Student Evaluations of F2 Second Drafts (your Peer Group only) due in Dropbox at start of class.* Peer Group with Professional workshopping of F2 Second Drafts. (All workshop groups)

WEEK 16 (April 30, May 2)

- **M** (April 30) F2 Second Draft One –on- One Workshop Revision Meeting (with me)
We will use my office hours to insure each student meets with me
- **W** (May 2) Course Wrap Up, Blog Wrap Up
Student-Led Deconstruction: Team10 will lead, all must read deconstruction assignment
- **TH** (May 3) **F2 Final Draft due in Dropbox at 11:59 p.m.**

WEEK 17 (May 7 from 10:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.) The Un-Final Exam Prose Jam

Bring your favorite piece of writing you have developed from this course or elsewhere to share with your classmates. I'll bring the food.

JOURNALISM REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

JOURNALISM COURSE REGISTRATION

- Registration will begin on the dates noted in the schedule of classes each semester. The system is a live, first come/first serve program.
- By registering for this course, you are stating that you have taken the required prerequisites according to your catalog year and major/minor status. If the instructor later determines that you haven't taken and passed these requirements, then you may be dropped at any point in the semester. If you have questions about your prerequisites, please see an advisor.
- A journalism major enrolled in any restricted 3000 and 4000 level classes must have taken and passed the GSP test, all foundational courses, and Math 1680/1681. Students must earn and maintain a 2.5 UNT and/or overall GPA (depending upon catalog year) to be eligible for major-level courses.

RE-TAKING FAILED JOURNALISM CLASSES

Students will not be allowed to automatically take a failed journalism course more than two times. Once you have failed a journalism course twice, you will not be allowed to enroll in that course for one calendar year after the date you received the second failing grade. Once a student has waited one calendar year after failing a course twice, the student may submit a written appeal to the director to be approved to enroll a third time. Students will not be allowed to re-take a failed journalism course more than three times.

FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) UNDERGRADUATES

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative GPA in addition to successfully completing a required number of credit hours based on total registered hours per semester. Students cannot exceed attempted credit hours above 150% of their required degree plan. If a student does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose financial aid eligibility.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so has the potential to affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please visit <http://financial.aid.unt.edu/satisfactory-academic-progress-requirements> for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for you to schedule a meeting with your MSOJ academic advisor or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

All first-time-in-college students at UNT are required to schedule an appointment with their Academic Advisor and receive an advising code to register for classes both fall and spring semesters of the first year in college. ALL students should meet with their Academic Advisor at least one time per long semester (Fall & Spring). It is important to update your degree plan on a regular basis to ensure that you are on track for a timely graduation.

- It is imperative that students have paid for all enrolled classes. **Please check your online schedule daily through late registration to ensure you have not been dropped for non-payment of any amount.** Students unknowingly have been dropped from classes for various reasons such as financial aid, schedule change fees, parking fees, etc. MSOJ will not be able to reinstate students for any reason after late registration, regardless of situation. It is the student's responsibility to ensure all payments have been made.

Spring 2018 Important Deadlines

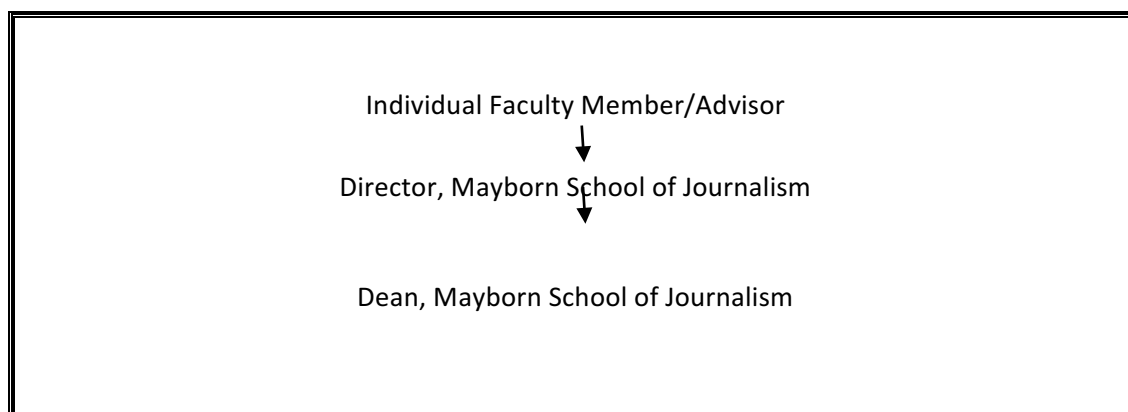
Deadline	Regular Academic Session	8W1	8W2
Martin Luther King Day.	Jan 15	Jan 15	N/A
Classes Begin.	Jan 16	Jan 16	Mar 19
Census.	Jan 29	Jan 23	Mar 26
Beginning this date a student who wishes to drop a course must first receive written consent of the instructor.	Jan 30	Jan 24	Mar 27
Last day for student to receive automatic grade of W for nonattendance.			
Last day for change in pass/no pass status.	Feb 23	Feb 2	Apr 6
Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the semester with a grade of W for courses that the student is not passing. After this date, a grade of WF may be recorded.			
Beginning this date instructors may drop students with a grade of WF for nonattendance.	Feb 24	Feb 3	Apr 7
Spring Break.	Mar 12 - 18	N/A	N/A
Last day to drop with either W or WF.			
	Apr 2	Feb 19	Apr 23
Last day for a student to drop a course with consent of the instructor.			
Beginning this date, a student who qualifies may request an Incomplete, with a grade of I.	Apr 9	Feb 19	Apr 23
Last day to Withdraw (drop all classes).	Apr 20	Mar 2	May 4

Last day for an instructor to drop a student with a grade of WF for nonattendance.

Pre-Finals Days.	May 2 - 3	N/A	N/A
Last Class Day.	May 3	Mar 8	May 10
Reading Day (no classes).	May 4	N/A	May 4
Final Exams.	May 5 - 11	Mar 9	May 11
End of term.	May 11	May 11	May 11

ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Understanding the academic organizational structure and appropriate Chain of Command is important when resolving class-related or advising issues. When you need problems resolved, please follow the step outlined below:



OFFICE OF DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of North Texas and the Mayborn School of Journalism make reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of 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 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 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 see the Office of

Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

COURSE SAFETY STATEMENTS

Students in the Mayborn School of Journalism are urged to use proper safety procedures and guidelines. While working in laboratory sessions, students are expected and required to identify and use property safety guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing, walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that the University of North Texas is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities. All students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider obtaining Student Health Insurance for this insurance program. Brochures for this insurance are available in the UNT Health and Wellness Center on campus. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the UNT Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If you have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, please be sure that your plan covers treatment at this facility. If you choose not to go to the UNT Health and Wellness Center, you may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. You are responsible for expenses incurred there.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or exams; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor, the acquisition of tests or other material belonging to a faculty member, dual submission of a paper or project, resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructors, or any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. Plagiarism includes the paraphrase or direct quotation of published or unpublished works *without* full and clear acknowledgment of the author/source. Academic dishonesty will bring about disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the university. This is explained in the UNT Student Handbook

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course, drop you from the class or give you a “0” for the assignment. The severity of the punishment will depend on the severity of the conduct.

The Mayborn School of Journalism requires that students respect and maintain all university property. Students will be held accountable through disciplinary action for any intentional damages they cause in classrooms. (e.g., writing on tables). Disruptive behavior is not tolerated (e.g., arriving late, leaving early, sleeping, talking on the phone, texting or game playing, making inappropriate comments, ringing cellular phones/beepers, dressing inappropriately).

FINAL EXAM POLICY

Final exams will be administered at the designated times during the final week of each long semester and during the specified day of each summer term. Please check the course calendar early in the semester to avoid any schedule conflicts.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

As you know, your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs within the my.unt.edu site www.my.unt.edu. If you do not regularly check EagleConnect or link it to your favorite e-mail account, please so do, as this is where you learn about job and internship opportunities, MSOJ events, scholarships, and other important information. The website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your email: <http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/>

COURSES IN A BOX

Any MSOJ equivalent course from another university must receive prior approval from the MSOJ academic advisor to insure that all MSOJ degree plan requirements are met. For example, courses that are taken online or from a program that offers course material via CD, booklet, or other manner of correspondence must have prior advisor approval.

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR F-1 STUDENTS TAKING DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSES

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 multiple 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 Advising Office. The UNT International Advising Office 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, students should contact the UNT International Advising Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email international@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

DROPPING AN ONLINE COURSE

A student needing to drop an online course should send their instructor an email with their name, student ID#, reason for dropping a course, and date you are sending the email. This *must be done prior to the UNT deadline to drop a course*.

If approved, the instructor will contact the MSOJ Undergraduate Office in GAB 102 where you may obtain a signed drop form. **It is your responsibility to turn in the completed drop slip to the UNT Registrar's office before the deadline to make sure you have been dropped from the course with a "W".** If you are taking only online courses and your instructor approves the drop, please contact the MSOJ head advisor for instructions.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in an event of emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at www.my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: 1) ensuring you know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas, determining how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and identifying where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, your instructor will communicate with you through Blackboard regarding assignments, exams, field trips, and other items that may be impacted by the closure.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING (SPOT)

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The short SPOT survey will be made available to provide you with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. For the fall 2016 semester you will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Please look for the email in your UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete your survey. Once you complete the survey you will receive a

confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the spot website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu. Spots survey dates:

- Regular session April 16 – May 3
- 8W1 session February 26 – March 8
- 8W2 session April 30 – May 10

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 Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu

SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION, HARRASSMENT, & ASSAULT

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT's Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

Statement of Student Learning Outcomes, UNT Mayborn School of Journalism

Since 1969, the UNT Department of Journalism (Mayborn School of Journalism effective September 1, 2009) has been accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. This national accreditation also extends to the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism, the only accredited professional master's program in Texas. About one-fourth of all journalism and mass communication programs in the United States are accredited by ACEJMC. National accreditation enhances your education here, because it certifies that the department and graduate

institute adhere to many standards established by the council. Among these standards are student learning outcomes, covered by journalism courses in all sequences.

This course, JOUR 3310, will help to meet the student learning outcomes that have been checked by your professor, Mark Donald.

Each graduate must:

- 1). Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications
- 2) Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
- 3). Work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity
- 4). Think critically, creatively and independently
- 5). Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
- 6). Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve
- 7). Critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness
- 8). Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.