**EMF 370**

**Electronic Media News Production**

**Spring, 2018**

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| Section 001 | Professor: Dr. John R. Turner |
| 3 credit hours | Office: MC 112E |
| MW 2:00 to 3:15 p.m. | Hours: MW: 1-2; 3:30-4:00; TR: 10-11; 1-2 |
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Course Description:

Theory and practice of gathering, writing and producing news for television, radio, the Internet and other media using audio/video technology. Prerequisites: EMF 222 and EMF 265 or consent of instructor.

The formula for successful journalism: “Tell me a story.” (Don Hewitt, 1922-2009, creator of CBS’s *60 Minutes*)

“I would have preferred we had it first…But we settled for having it better than anybody else.” (Michael Isikoff, *Newsweek*, 12-31-12)

“Professional electronic journalists should not report anything known to be false.” (from the RTNDA Code of Ethics)

The essence of journalism is “a discipline of verification.” (Bill Kovach & Tom Rosenstiel from *The Elements of Journalism*)

Recommended Textbook:

Redmond, J., Shook, F., Lattimore, D. & Lattimore-Volkmann, L. (2005). *The Broadcast News Process* (7th Edition.). Englewood, CO: Morton Publishing. ISBN 0-89582-679-8

Recommended Reading:

Silcock, B.W., Heider, D., and Rogus, M.T. (2007). *Managing television news: A handbook for ethical and effective producing*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum. ISBN 0-8058-5373-1

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate the process of producing newscasts for the electronic media.

2. Demonstrate proficiency in the elements of electronic media news, including: writing, interviewing, recording, editing, and assembly of newscasts.

3. Know the legal and ethical standards for electronic media news.

4. Determine his or her potential in the field of electronic news.

Course Overview:

The emphasis in this course will be on gathering, writing, assembling, reporting and anchoring news for radio, television, and Internet broadcast. Most assignments will have the student approach the task from the perspective of a news producer. Assignments will require both in-class and out-of-class time for the student. Efficient computer typing skills, familiarity with video and audio editingsoftware, and knowledge of radio and TV studio production techniques are recommended for those enrolling in the course. Students will also learn the [*Inception News*](http://inception.towson.edu) script-writing, news production, and teleprompting software program for broadcast newsrooms. Participation in field trips to the news departments of local radio and TV stations may also be required.

During the first few weeks of the course, class time will be utilized to review and to further develop your electronic media writing and storytelling skills and to discuss issues pertaining to electronic media news. Later class periods will involve not only practice in gathering and writing news for broadcast, but also assembling and presenting newscasts for radio, TV, and the Internet. Many of these assignments will focus on producing a newscast from a real-world “team” approach.

In addition, becoming a good electronic media news producer requires the knowledge to make wise news judgments that lead to relevant, responsible, quality newscasts that will attract and keep listeners or viewers (see recommended reading). This necessitates an awareness of the people, places, events, and issues that are making local, national and international news, along with the legal and ethical considerations of your news coverage. You should allow time in your daily schedule to watch a television newscast, listen to a radio newscast, and/or read a reputable newspaper or web site to keep on top of what's happening in the world.

Exams and quizzes will not only include textbook and lecture material but questions that ascertain your knowledge and understanding of current worldwide news events and issues as featured in [The New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com/), [USA Today](http://usatoday.com), and [Baltimore Sun](http://www.baltimoresun.com). Free copies, provided by the TU Collegiate Readership Program, are available weekdays in the Media Center Lobby and other campus locations. You will also be responsible for knowing about the current issues and trends of the electronic media news profession as reported by [Broadcasting & Cable](http://www.broadcastingcable.com/) and the [RTDNA](http://www.rtdna.org/).

Students must be able to access their @students.towson.edu email accounts and the course Blackboard site.

Repeating the Course:

Students may not attempt this course for a third time without prior permission from the Academic Standards Committee. [Click here](http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/repeating-courses/) to read the full TU policy on “Repeating Courses.”

Grading:

Your final grade in the course will be determined by the number of points you accumulate from the following typical assignments (point totals are approximate):

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| --- | --- |
| Two Major Exams | = 200 points |
| Radio Soundbite Story | = 50 points |
| Live TV Report/Interview | = 50 points |
| Radio Newscast Production | = 100 points |
| Local Radio Newscast Evaluation | = 25 points |
| Local TV Newscast Evaluation | = 25 points |
| TV Newscast Production | = 100 points |
| In-Class Assignments/Quizzes | = 100 points |
| Total Points | = 650 points (approximate) |

All final grades will be calculated according to the percentage of your accumulated points based on the total possible points for the semester.

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| --- | --- |
| **Percentage** | **Final Grade** |
| 93% to 100% | A |
| 90% to 92% | A- |
| 87% to 89% | B+ |
| 83% to 86% | B |
| 80% to 82% | B- |
| 77% to 79% | C+ |
| 70% to 76% | C |
| 67% to 69% | D+ |
| 60% to 66% | D |
| 0 % to 59% | F |

A grade of Incomplete is not given unless you are unable to complete the work required in the course because of verifiable medical reasons or documented circumstances beyond your control. [Click here](http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/grades-grading/) to read the full TU policy.

You can earn extra points (up to 15) by attending three EMF-sponsored events (5 points per event) during the semester and writing a brief summary of what it was about and what you learned. For each event, your typewritten summary must be turned in within one week of the event to receive extra credit points. Among the events for the Spring Semester is the WAMM Festival Feb. 23-24.

Writing Considerations:

All written work will be evaluated not only on the quality of its content, but on how well the student demonstrates university-level writing skills of correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar, along with adhering to proper broadcast writing style and script formatting.

Academic Conduct/Plagiarism:

As responsible members of the academic community, students are obligated not to violate the basic standards of the [Towson University Student Academic Integrity Policy](http://inside.towson.edu/generalcampus/tupolicies/documents/03-01.00%20Student%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy.pdf) found at this link.

In addition, all EMF students, staff, and faculty are committed to collegial and academic citizenship demonstrating high standards of humane, ethical, professional, and civil behavior in all interactions.

We need to be aware of the relationship between our personal conduct and the quality of campus life. What we do and say always has an effect on others, whether we see it or not. Civility means more than respecting campus facilities and grounds. Civility means consistently treating people with consideration and respect. It means being courteous, polite, and fair. It means recognizing diversity and honoring differing points of view. When our behavior is guided by concern for others in our community, we are being civil. Practicing civility requires thoughtful behavior and checking our assumptions and perceptions of others’ race, gender, culture, and belief systems.

**Civility Code**

EMF places a priority on learning. We value the inherent worth and dignity of every person, thereby fostering a community of mutual respect. Students have the right to a learning environment free of disruptive behaviors. Faculty have the right to define appropriate behavioral expectations in the classroom and expect students to abide by them. Faculty have the responsibility to manage and address classroom disruption. Staff have the right and responsibility to define appropriate behaviors necessary to conduct any university activity free of disruption or obstruction.

We believe that in order to achieve these ideals, all EMF students, staff, and faculty are expected to exhibit and practice civil behaviors that exemplify: (1) respecting faculty, staff, fellow students, guests, and all university property, policies, rules and regulations; (2) taking responsibility for one’s choices and actions; (3) delivering correspondence –

whether verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic – with respectful language and in complete sentences; and (4) accepting consequences of one’s inappropriate choices and actions.

The use offensive, threatening or abusive language, writing, or behavior will not be tolerated and can lead to academic dismissal. Further information about civility can be found in Appendix F of the university catalog.

Examples demonstrating civility in the classroom as a student include:

Being respectful of the professor and other students.

Not texting or using cellular phones and other electronic devices (but devices can be left on, under your desk, in order to receive emergency text alerts)

Not using your laptop for activities other than class work.

Not eating or drinking in class.

Not reading newspapers or listening to music during the class.

Not sleeping in class.

Attendance/Absence Policy:

Your instructor will take attendance at the beginning of every class session. Lateness or leaving early will also be noted. After three excused absences, ten points will be deducted from your grade for each further absence up to 10. More than 10 absences result in an automatic “F” final grade.

Your attendance pattern will not only be considered by the instructor in arriving at your final grade in the course but it may also directly affect the number of points you accumulate in the course since many class sessions will involve in-class assignments that will be graded.

Some assignments will also involve working in a group as a member of a radio or TV news team. The opportunity does not exist to make-up these in-class assignments for unexcused absences. Missing class, therefore, may be detrimental to your final grade in the course. For further information, [click here](http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/class-attendance-absence-policy/) to read the full TU “Class Attendance/Absence Policy.”

Because meeting deadlines is critical in the electronic media profession, the importance of meeting deadlines is stressed in this course. That means **an assignment handed in after a deadline set by your instructor receives zero points.**

Make-ups for any missed exams or assignments will be considered only if the following conditions have been met:

1. You called (410-704-3604) or e-mailed ([jturner@towson.edu](mailto:jturner@towson.edu)) the instructor before the time of the examination or due date.

2. You have submitted to the instructor in writing a valid, legitimate, and substantiated excuse for your absence, phone numbers for verification, and a proposal for when you will make-up the missed work.

Students should keep in mind that all make-up exams will consist of a totally essay format requiring numerous detailed and comprehensive answers for a passing grade. This syllabus contains ample contact methods for informing me about any absences you plan to have or to explain those that you didn't plan on happening. Regardless of the reason for your absence, it is your responsibility to know what assignments, lecture notes, and class announcements you missed.

Consultations:

Besides regularly scheduled office hours, I will usually have time before and after class sessions to answer any questions or concerns you may have. If these times are unsatisfactory, an appointment can be scheduled, or you can meet with me online using WebEx at <https://towson.webex.com/meet/jturner>. Don't hesitate to contact me by phone, e-mail, or in person if you have a question or concern about class matters. E-mail is the best and preferred method of contacting me. **If e-mailing me, be sure to put EMF 370 in the subject line of your e-mail.**

Any student who may need an accommodation because of a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours during the first week of class. A memo from Disability Support Services ([www.towson.edu/dss](http://www.towson.edu/dss)) authorizing your accommodations will be needed.

Class Schedule (Spring, 2018)

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| Week of | Topic | Readings |
| Jan. 29 | Introduction to Working in the Electronic News Media/First Day Quiz/Story Assignment Meeting | Chapter 1 |
| Feb. 5 Writing for Electronic Media Ch. 1 | Writing for Electronic Media | Chapter 2 |
| Feb. 12 | Writing the News Story/Hard vs. Soft News | Chapters 4 and 6 |
| Feb. 19 | News Selection/  Local radio newscast evaluation | Chapter 5;  Class handout |
| Feb. 26 | Interviews and Soundbites/Radio soundbite story | Chapter 7 |
| Mar. 5 | Producing the Radio Newscast (work with *Inception News* software) | Chapter 11 (pp. 221-225) |
| Mar. 12 | Radio Newscast Writing & Production |  |
| Mar. 19 | **SPRING BREAK** |  |
| Mar. 26 | Review Monday/**Mid Term Exam on Wednesday** |  |
| Apr. 2 | Legal & Ethical Considerations for Electronic Media News | Chapters 13 and 14; Appendices D & E |
| Apr. 9 | TV News and Script Formats/Local TV newscast evaluation | Chapter 3; Textbook Assignment 11-C |
| Apr. 16 | Live TV report/interview/work with *Inception* *News* Software | Chapter 9 (pp. 185-187); and Chapter 10 |
| Apr. 23 | Producing the Television Newscast | Chapter 11 (pp. 225-237) |
| Apr. 30 | TV Newscast Writing & Production |  |
| May 7 | Final TV Newscast Productions |  |
| Monday May 14 (last class) | TV newscast critiques/Review for Final Exam |  |
| **Monday, May 21st** | **Final Exam (12:30 to 2:30 p.m.)** |  |

**Diversity Statement**:

Towson University values diversity and fosters a climate that is grounded in respect and inclusion, enriches the educational experience of students, supports positive workplace environments, promotes excellence and cultivates the intellectual and personal growth of the entire university community.

**Course Evaluation**:

A single course evaluation instrument has been developed and is being used by all academic departments. Using the *Campuslabs* course evaluation tool, students complete a single course evaluation instrument online for each course in which they are enrolled. Access to the evaluation instrument continues via the *Campuslabs* website. Students will receive emails announcing the availability of the completion “window” and will be given instructions regarding access. Students are allowed to complete only one evaluation per course. A “window” for completing the evaluation of a specific course will occur during the last two weeks of each term and session.

**EMF Media Labs:**

Certain assignments will require the use of the EMF Media Labs. The Lab Handbook including policies, hours of operation, how to obtain an EMF ID Card, equipment lists, manuals, and check-out procedures can be found at the following link: <http://www.towson.edu/emf/medialabs.asp>

**Weapons Policy**:

To promote a safe and secure campus, Towson University prohibits the possession or control of any weapon while on University property. The term weapon includes any potentially dangerous object or substance or replica thereof. The full policy can be found at this link: <http://inside.towson.edu/generalcampus/tupolicies/documents/06-01.11%20Weapons%20Prohibited.pdf>

**Smoking Prohibition**:

Smoking is prohibited on all property owned, leased or operated by the University. See University Smoke Free Campus Policy at <http://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/policies>

**Emergency Text Alerts**:

All students must sign up for the Campus Emergency Alert Text Message Notification System. Go to following link for instructions to do so: <http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/facilities/police/campusemergency/> and watch the emergency preparedness video and print out the pocket guide by clicking on this link: <http://www.towson.edu/adminfinance/facilities/police/campussafety/emergencyprep.asp>

**EMF Google Group List Serve:**

All EMF students are required to join the EMF Google Group List Serve at [http://groups.google.com/group/TowsonEMF](https://outlook.towson.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=4521e61078fb4f81b0d307b3895e47e4&URL=http%3a%2f%2fgroups.google.com%2fgroup%2fTowsonEMF) (Copy and paste this URL into your Web Browser). This will guarantee that you receive daily postings regarding digital media, video, film, and audio production topics including festivals, special screening, guest speakers, film/video crew needs, internships, and jobs.

**EMF Student Groups:**

Students are encouraged to get involved with one or more of a number of extra-curricular groups sponsored by the department. [Click here](http://www.towson.edu/emf/studentOpportunities/studentGroups.asp) to go to the EMF website and read about the various groups and which ones would be of interest to you based on your future career goals.

**Career Center:**

Located at 7800 York Road (Suite 206), [The Career Center](http://www.towson.edu/careercenter/students/) is here to help you achieve your career goals. We offer a comprehensive range of free services to assist you with all of your career-related needs including: developing your career action plan, career counseling and advising, resume and cover letter reviews, mock interviews, job and internship searches, and graduate school essay reviews.