

Mass Media, Communication and Theatre  
Journalism Division (Room 126, Journalism Building)  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Syllabus for J315, (3 credit hours)  
SSI, 2014, 11 a.m-12:50 p.m., M-R, Journalism Building 205/104

**Instructor:** Dr. Lamar W. Bridges, Professor and Journalism  
Division co-ordinator (Room 127)  
**Office Hours:** by appointment or afternoons, please during Summer Session One  
**Telephones:** (903) 886-5229 (office) or (903) 886-4703 (home)  
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**Course description:** "Focus is on the concern of the news editor, including copyediting, headline writing and newspaper design. Laboratory work consists of copyediting, layout, and headline writing for fully-paginated student publications. Prerequisite: J214." (University Catalog). Students may be allowed into the class with Dr. Bridges' permission.

**Textbook:** *None ordered. For this short summer term (20 days), I will not require a textbook to be bought.*

**Course objectives:** Specific objectives for this concentrated period of time are: (1) to acquaint students with a range of ideas in editing content **with the focus of audiences**; (2) to provide practical exercises in editing (**problem-solving in content**) and to begin to develop **judgment** for such situations; (3) to develop further the writing skills of students.

**Class attendance:** Attendance in a short summer term is mandatory; no excuses or absences can be accepted. Absences are recorded, per University policy. I will request that any student who misses a SECOND class be dismissed from the class (dropped). Please be aware of this statement. If you care to see the administrative form, go to the website of The College of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts. The form is on that site.

**I also expect students to be in class on time.** Continued lateness will result in a talk with the student. Promptness is expected in the professional world.

**Cell Telephones:** TURN THEM OFF. They are annoying. DO NOT communicate with anyone outside of the classroom. Your attention should be directed to the class, the instructor, and your classmates for learning about editing. If you cannot focus, let me know.

**Plagiarism:** any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable. Plagiarism of material is obviously included. Academic dishonesty subjects you to possible dismissal from the class and referral to the "Acting" Department Head and/or the designated administrative officer. You will be asked to sign a plagiarism statement. This form stays in the files of Dr. Bridges. If you have a concern about proper attribution, the citing of sources, or the use of materials, see the instructor. *Do not use the excuse of "I did not know."*

*(Continued on the reverse of this sheet)*

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**Course:** Journalism 315 combines instructor-led sessions, discussion, and both verbal and written exercises by students. The emphases will be upon the thought processes (**or problem-solving**) in news content and written **practice** in applying these **processes** to the fields of mass communication. Content is the focus, not the delivery system.

Practical work will be incorporated into the course. Assignments will depend partly upon students enrolled in the class and their backgrounds in mass communication, although the J214 prerequisite assumes the student understands some basics about news and the writing of news.

*Each student should understand that this class in SSI will focus on words and content, not design and "busy work" of folding that content into packaging, whatever the format. The trend today in news circles is upon content. Packaging of that content aids the understanding of content, but the sole emphasis upon the delivery system subordinates the ideas being presented and detracts from the message(s) in that content. **It is the content that matters, regardless of the delivery system.***

The student should also understand that correct usage of the language is essential to the editing of content, but the student should also understand that this is not a grammar course. The instructor hopes your use of grammar may improve, but editing is a process of more than correcting typos and correcting editing.

A short summer term (about a month) means that material must be covered in a condensed time frame. **Therefore, excuses for lack of work cannot be accepted. Nor can any excuses for lateness or absences.**

**Specific requirements:** **First**, this class requires each student to **participate fully in the sessions**; J315 is not intended to be a class in which the instructor simply "talks" about editing. Students will offer ideas about the editing of content. **Second**, each student must present acceptable exercises in content. The format of these exercises will be explained in each class. Third, a final examination will be given at the designated hour, with the format to be determined by the instructor.

**University support:** Students with disabilities may call upon University personnel for assistance. A statement from that office will be distributed to all students during the opening class; that statement will have office numbers and telephone numbers for University personnel who can explain that office's services.

**Class schedule:** For this short summer term, I have decided to give you verbal assignments on a daily basis. Again, some of this will depend upon the background of enrollees. IF this approach bothers you, speak up the first day of class. You will NOT offend me. But, professionals work day-to-day in content in collaborative environments. Get used to it.

**Evaluation:** Here are weights for the above:

(1) attendance/discussion (TBD per student)	50 points
(2) editing exercises (problem-solving in or out)	300 points (newsletter)
(3) final examination	<u>50 points</u>
	400 POINTS

