Southern Illinois University  
Department of Radio/TV/Digital Media  
RTD- 383- 001  
Writing for Media Arts  
Comm 1205- MWF 1:00p.m – 1:50 p.m.

Instructor: Steven S. Giannino  
E-mail: Sgiannino@siu.edu  
Office: Communication Building- 2231  
Hours: Monday 11:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.  
Wednesday 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. —and by scheduled appointment  
*Email is often the best way to contact me.

SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE:  
RTD 383 is a general introduction to the basic principles of writing for the electronic media. The course should assist you in improving your writing skills and help you understand the basic approaches and techniques in writing for the media. Much of what is covered in the course involves the principles of creative writing and the various sub-processes of media writing. You will become familiar with the basic elements of writing and production for television, radio, and the Internet.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:  
1. To develop an understanding of the principles, tools, and practices of writing for the electronic media. You will:  
   a. Have an understanding of the mass media and its television, radio, and internet audience  
   b. Evaluate different writing formats  
   c. Analyze subject matter, and  
   d. Analyze and evaluate censorable and controversial material.  
2. To develop a strong foundation regarding high standards and ethical criteria for responsible writing and production presentations. You will:  
   a. Have an understanding of ethical, logical, and emotional appeals  
   b. Be able to identify, define and evaluate the role of psychographic surveys, and  
   c. Become familiar with laws that govern or dictate to our ethics.  
3. To strengthen your understanding of the techniques for script writing for radio and television productions. You will:  
   a. Explain background research of subjects  
   b. Describe a model of good script writing, and  
   c. Have an understanding of the aspects of technical concerns.  
4. To be acquainted with the writing techniques used in the production of documentaries, news gathering, and episodic productions. Learners will:
a. Describe the different types of formats and styles
b. Identify television and radio writing strategies, and
c. Analyze and evaluate major themes.

**Instructional Modes:** I will incorporate a plethora of instructional methods. They include, but are not exclusive to, lectures, class discussions, small group interactions, peer teaching, cooperative learning, learner demonstrations, and practical applications through “hands on experiences.”

**ASSIGNMENTS/COURSEWORK:**

- Writing assignments (10) (200 points)
- Reality TV show Pitch (150 points)
- Final Project (200 points)
- Attendance and Participation (50 Points)

**TOTAL 600 points**

**GRADING SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% - 90%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>600 - 550 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>89% - 80%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>549 - 500 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>79% - 70%</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>499 - 450 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69% - 60%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>449 - 400 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>59% &amp; Below</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>399 - Below</td>
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</tbody>
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Grades will NOT be rounded up. An A in this class means you have demonstrated significant achievement.

**TEXTS AND RESOURCES REQUIRED:**

b. Personal electronic storage devices, for use in writing lab.
c. Folder or binder for materials and hard copies of your assignments.

**CLASS RULES**

a. Do not use computers during class time for chats, Facebook, eBay, shopping, e-mails, etc. Students who persist in using computers for personal use during class time will be asked to leave. If time permits, you will get a break to feed your Facebook habit.

b. Cell phones should be on silent or vibrate during class. **DO NOT ANSWER CALLS OR SEND TEXT MESSAGES DURING CLASS.**

c. If you have to leave early or excuse yourself from class, please leave quietly and do not disrupt the flow of class.
WRITING POLICY:
Communicate clearly. Assignments should be free of grammatical errors, misspelled words, typos, etc. All assignments must be typed, double-spaced and submitted on time. Keep copies of all your writing assignments, including rewrites. You will have an opportunity to make up some points missed on original assignments through rewriting the assignments and submitting both the original and rewrite on or before the next class session. KEEP ALL assignments in a folder/binder so we can review them during the semester.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
I assume that your personal integrity and ethics should alleviate any potential problems pertaining to academic honesty. However, if the issue does arise, all involved parties will be dealt with accordingly. The University and the College of Mass Communication & Media Arts prohibit the use of someone else’s work without giving appropriate credit. Do not copy another person’s work. If you do, you could be dismissed from the class, fail to meet the class requirements, and/or be dismissed from the University.

ATTENDANCE AND DEADLINES

Attendance
a. You can’t learn if you don’t come to class. No makeup work will be allowed for in-class assignments missed because of an unexcused absence. This will not be a problem if your absences are infrequent.
b. An absence will be excused in three situations ONLY: (1) personal or immediate family health conditions, certified by a physician or counselor AND approved by the instructor; (2) personal or immediate family legal conditions warranting your attention during class time, certified by an attorney or judge AND approved by the instructor; or (3) university business certified by a university official AND approved by the instructor. After three (3) unexcused absences, you will lose 5 points for every day you miss.
c. As always, issues are considered on a case-by-case basis and discretion is left up to me.
d. You are also expected to be on time. Class starts at 1:00 p.m. If you are more than 10 minutes late, you will NOT be permitted into the classroom. You will be stopped if you try to enter the room after 1:20 p.m. unless the instructor has prior knowledge you will be late.

Deadlines
a. Deadlines are a practical fact of life in the media industry and hence, they will be strictly enforced. One minute after the deadline is late. All late assignments will be assessed at least one letter grade and may receive a zero, depending on the circumstances.
b. In class writing assignments are due at the end of the class period. Out of class assignments are due at the beginning of class of the due date.

Plan ahead
a. Computer or transportation problems are insufficient excuses.
b. All outside assignments must be turned in at the start of the class in which they are due. Those who do not turn in their assignments at this time will have missed the deadline.
c. If you want to use the classroom printer, make sure you get to the room early. Chances are you won’t be the only one in the class who plans to use the printer. You may also use printers in the Writing Lab in the Journalism Building, in Middleton Library, and in the Union.

d. Feed your dog so that it will not want to eat your homework. Lock your windows at night so aliens won’t steal it. Keep it off the table so your roommate doesn’t spill coffee on it.

**GRADING**

Your work will be evaluated by:

a. How well your writing assignments are researched

b. Proper grammar, punctuation, spelling, format, etc. (minus 2 points for each occurrence).

c. The incorporation of any unique or unusual items that fit the context of the project

d. Creativity

e. Organization of the project, and

f. Clarity, completeness, and originality.

**48 HOUR RULE:**

If you would like to discuss and/or appeal an assigned grade during the course of this semester, you must make an appointment to see the instructor. Your appointment to meet with the instructor will be scheduled no sooner than 48 hours after receiving the grade in question. However, after 2 weeks has gone by from the time you received your grade and you have not made an appointment, that grade will no longer be available for discussion.

**Building Emergency Response Protocols for Syllabus:**

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT’s website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Public Safety’s website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

**Students with a Disability:** Instructors and students in the class will work together as a team to assist students with a disability safely out of the building. Students with a disability will stay with the instructor and communicate with the instructor what is the safest way to assist them.

**Tornado:** During the spring semester, we have a Storm Drill. Pick up your belongings and your instructor will lead you to a safe area of the basement. No one will be allowed to stay upstairs. Stay away from windows. The drill should not last more than 10 minutes. You must stay with your instructor so he/she can take roll. Students need to be quiet in the basement as the
BERT members are listening to emergency instructions on handheld radios and cannot hear well in the basement.

**Fire:** During the fall semester we have a Fire Drill. Pick up your belongings and your instructor will lead you to either the North or South parking lot depending on what part of the building your class is. You must stay with your instructor so he/she can take roll. As soon as the building is all clear, you will be allowed to return to class. These drills are to train instructors and the Building Emergency Response Team to get everyone to a safe place during an emergency.

**Bomb Threat:** If someone calls in a bomb threat, class will be suspended and students will be asked to pick up their belongings, evacuate the building and leave the premises. Do not leave anything that is yours behind. We will not allow anyone back into the building until the police and bomb squad give us an all clear. DO NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONES. Some bombs are triggered by a cell phone signal.

**Shooter in the Building:** This spring semester we are in the planning stages of a Shooter in the Building Drill. When it is safe to leave, move to a safe area far from the building away from where the shooter is located. If anyone has any information about the shooter, please contact the police after you are a safe distance away. If someone cannot leave, go into a room, lock the door, turn out the lights, and if possible, cover the glass on the door. Students should pile chair desks in front of the glass and door as a barricade and the teacher's desk, podium and anything movable pushed against the door. This is to slow down any attempts to enter or look into the classroom. If it looks like the shooter is persistent and able to enter, make a lot of noise and use everything in your backpacks to throw at the shooter to distract him. Silence all cell phones after one person in the room calls the police and informs them of the location and number of people in the room. Be quiet and wait for the police to arrive. The police are looking for one or more shooters, and they have no way of knowing if the shooter is in the room people are hiding. For this reason, when the police enter the room, no one should have anything in his/her hands and each person MUST raise his/her hands above his/her head.

**Earthquake:** In the event of an earthquake, you are advised to take cover quickly under heavy furniture or near an interior wall, or a corner, to avoid falling debris. Outside the building are trees, power lines and debris from the building itself that you will need to stay away from. In the building, large open areas like auditoriums are the most dangerous. Do not try to escape on a stairway or elevator. Do not hide under a stairway. We do not recommend that you stand in a doorway because the door could shut from the vibrations and crush your fingers trapping you there. Rave Mobile Safety Alert System: We recommend that you sign up for the Rave Mobile Safety Alert System. It is a new system that replaces the WENS system to alert you through emergency text messages on your cell phone and emails for emergencies on campus, weather reports and emergency school closures. You have to sign up. If you were signed up for WENS it does not roll over. You have to sign up for Rave Mobile Safety Alert System. Go to hrss.siu.edu (Human Resources Self-Services System), login with your regular SIU login username and password, click on Personal Information, fill out the information or update the information and save it. For more information, visit dps.siu.edu, contact SalukiTech at 453-5155 or salukitech@siu.edu.
CPR/Defibrillator and First Aid Class: If you would like to take a CPR/Defibrillator and/or First Aid class, contact LaVon Donley-Cornett, lavong@siu.edu or call 453-7473.

Women's Self Defense Classes are offered to female students faculty and staff by the Department of SIU Public Safety. For more information contact Officer Mary Stark marys@dps.siu.edu.
Tentative Schedule
(This schedule may be changed throughout the semester)

**Week 1**
8/24  Syllabus and class introduction
8/26  Overview of RTD 383 and media arts writing
8/28  Writing assignment #1 (Biography)

**Week 2**  **Chapter 1**
8/31  Writing for the media environment
9/2   First Amendment and Ethics
9/4   Writing Assignment #2 (1st amendment quiz)

**Week 3**  **Chapter 2**
9/7   NO CLASS
9/9   Writing for Broadcast
9/11  Writing for Broadcast

**Week 4**  **Chapter 4**
9/14  Script Development
9/16  Continue states of script development
9/18  Writing Assignment #3 (News anchor script)

**Week 5**  **Chapter 4 and 5**
9/21  Writing for Radio
9/23  Writing for Radio Continues/ PSA
9/25  Writing Assignment #4 (PSA)

**Week 6**  **Chapter 5**
9/28  Writing for Advertising
9/30  Radio Advertisements
10/2  Writing Assignment #5 (Radio AD)

**Week 7**  **Chapter 7**
10/5  Documentary and Nonfiction media
10/7  Reality TV (Midterm assignment discussed)
10/9  Continue Reality TV and Answer assignment questions

**Week 8**  **Chapter 7**
10/12  NO CLASS- FALL BREAK
10/14  Reality TV show assignments due and pitches begin
10/16  Finish Reality TV show Pitches
Week 9  
Chapter 11  
10/19  Writing for Websites  
10/21  Blogs  
10/23  Writing Assignment #6 (Blog)  

Week 10  
Chapter 3  
10/26  Incorporating sight and sound  
10/28  Describing sight and sound  
10/30  Writing Assignment #7 (PSA Treatment)  

Week 11  
Chapter 8  
11/2  Visual Story Telling  
11/4  Writing a Movie Treatment  
11/6  Writing Assignment #8 (Movie Treatment)  

Week 12  
TBA  
11/9  Other forms of digital media  
11/11  Other forms of digital media  
11/13  Writing Assignment #9  

Week 13  
Chapter 10  
11/16  Writing sitcoms, soaps, and drama series  
11/18  Continue chapter 10  
11/20  Writing Assignment #10 (TBA)  

Week 14  
11/23  Discuss Final Projects  
11/25  NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING  
11/27  NO CLASS--- THANKSGIVING  

Week 15  
11/30  Individual Meetings  
12/2  Individual Meetings  
12/4  Individual Meetings  

Week 16--- TBA- FINAL PROJECT PITCHES/PRESENTATIONS  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11--- ALL FINAL WRITTEN PROJECTS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS
Name: __________________________________________ e-mail________________________________________

Your favorite pastime, hobby(ies)_______________________________________________________________________

Your career goals___________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Your strength(s) ____________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Area(s) that you would like to improve __________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Your philosophy of life is____________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Your mentor or someone you admire is____________________
Why? ______________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

How can this course help you? _________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Any other comments_________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________________

Plagiarizing Could Cost You Your College Career It is assumed that your personal integrity and ethics should alleviate any potential problems pertaining to academic honesty. However, if the issue does arise, all involved parties will be dealt with accordingly. The University and the College of Mass Communication & Media Arts prohibit the use of someone else’s work without giving appropriate credit. It is not to your advantage to copy another person’s work. If you do, you could be dismissed from the class, fail to meet the class requirements, and even be dismissed from the University. This is very serious and must be treated as such.

You are a PLAGIARIZER when you take (ideas, writings, photos, animation, prints, etc.) from (another) and pass them off as your own. The act of plagiarizing is PLAGIARISM. You commit PLAGIARY when you steal another’s ideas, writings, photos, animation, prints, etc. You are a literary thief whether you steal from William Shakespeare, James Cameron, Usher, Justin Bieber, the person seated beside/in front of you, or your best friend.

To PARAPHRASE means to say in other words; a rewording of the meaning expressed in something spoken or written. It does not mean to remove quotation marks (or not add them) and not give credit for someone else’s ideas, writings, photos, animation, prints, etc., and use them as your own.

I, ________________________________, have read and understand the University’s policy on Plagiarism.
(SIGN HERE) (I have also received my copy of the RT 383 Spring 2015 syllabus)