

JOU 4181
Coverage of Public Affairs
Dr. Kevin M. Petrich

Term: Spring 2014
Title: Coverage of Public Affairs
Course Number: JOU 4181
CRN: 16732
Section Number: 001
Number of Credit Hours: 3
Class Meeting Day, Time, and Location: M, 1:00 – 3:50PM, LA 303D (Davie Campus)
Office: LA 410 (Davie Campus)
Office Hours: M, 4:00-7:00PM; T, 11:00AM-12:00PM; W, 11:00AM-12:00PM; or by appointment
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Catalog Description: Instruction and experience covering government, schools, the courts, and other major institutions. Critical analysis of examples of public affairs reporting. Projects in investigative reporting.

Revised Prerequisites Pending Approval: Must have completed JOU 3101 News and News Reporting with a “C” or better. *Passing Grade in the Journalism Skills Test.*

Requirements Met Through Course Completion: This course partially fulfills the requirements for the Performance and Production area of the Multimedia Journalism track within Multimedia Studies.

Required Textbook:

Killenberg, G.M. (2008). *Public affairs reporting now: News of, by and for the people* (1st ed.). Boston, MA: Focal Press.

“AA” Batteries (for recorders used in gathering material for beat stories)

At least one flash drive (for work on and submission of beat story first and final edits)

Other Required Materials (Not for Purchase):

Rosenbaum, M.D., & Dinges, J. (1992). *Sound reporting: The National Public Radio guide to radio journalism and production* (1st ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt. [In addition to selected chapters from our textbook, you will be assigned a limited number of brief readings this textbook. These readings can be accessed through Blackboard.]

National Public Radio’s Daily Newsmagazine *All Things Considered* (This is the model we’re emulating, in terms of its news agenda as well as its reporting and writing style. You’re expected to listen to this program throughout the semester. Log

onto <http://www.npr.org/programs/all-things-considered/>).

Wavelengths' Weekly Local Newsmagazine *South Florida Journal* (You're expected to listen to this program in its entirety each week our class contributes to it. In addition, you can listen to archived past editions of the program throughout the semester. Log onto http://multimedistudies.fau.edu/?page_id=942 and click on the link for the desired edition of *South Florida Journal*. The archive permits access to all editions produced since February of 2009.

Course Objectives:

This course is a concise but thorough introduction to the basic approaches and techniques used in public affairs reporting. As our textbook's author notes, journalists in a democracy play a crucial role, acting as "surrogates for citizens too busy, too tired, too infirm or too unqualified to govern for themselves" (p. xv). "Reporters," Killenberg continues, "act on the public's behalf when they scrutinize candidates for elected office; request judicial records at the courthouse; investigate the expenditure of municipal tax dollars; attend meetings of the school board; interview prisoners held in the county jail; or stand watch over a limitless range of issues and conditions that touch the lives of citizens" (p. xv).

Our objective, therefore, is to prepare for this profoundly important aspect of journalistic work. We'll do so by studying and practicing the process of effective public affairs reporting. By the end of the semester, you should be able to demonstrate a theoretical and practical understanding of:

1. The functions of public affairs reporting
2. The methods of public affairs reporting
3. The importance of accuracy in public affairs reporting
4. The challenges and opportunities of access for public affairs reporters
5. The fundamentals of public affairs reporting on neighborhoods, government, the police, the courts, the prisons, and a variety of specialized areas such as medicine and science, education, politics, and business.
6. The ethics of public affairs reporting
7. The fundamentals of applying the above (with effective content, organization, and writing) in a broadcasting environment

All of the fundamentals covered in this course are applicable to every platform on which today's digital journalists work. As it happens, Florida Atlantic University's School of Communication & Multimedia Studies affords students the opportunity to gain practical experience through its Internet radio station, *Wavelengths* (http://multimedistudies.fau.edu/?page_id=561) will specifically focus on the practice of public affairs reporting fundamentals for radio and the Internet.

Course assignments will center on the development of content for the *Wavelengths* program *South Florida Journal*. *South Florida Journal* is a weekly local news magazine,

primarily focused on issues and events affecting citizens in Broward and Palm Beach Counties.

Students are encouraged to listen to current and past *South Florida Journal* programs by visiting:

http://multimedistudies.fau.edu/?page_id=942

Course Requirements: The very nature of this course is highly participatory. Adept public affairs reporting, after all, is something that must be practiced rather than simply acquired through reading course materials and listening to lectures. Hence, it is expected that you will arrive in class prepared to intelligently discuss assigned course materials (textbook readings, Blackboard readings, occasional handouts, and regular monitoring of NPR and *South Florida Journal*); develop your understanding of course materials through a variety of in-class activities (including constructive critiques of classmates' work); and demonstrate your understanding via more formal means (exams, as well as written assignments). You will also be expected to work effectively in teams, as some in-class activities will involve group work. And though it should go without saying, effective reporters stay current with the news (local, national, and international).

The professor's experience indicates a strong correlation between the degree of informed participation by students and the types of grades they earn. Being informed means having familiarity and engagement with assigned course materials; it does not necessarily mean agreeing with the views of the professor or other students in every instance. The point is that we should support our opinions with substance.

Moreover, successful students also approach assignments in a persistent and enterprising manner. News stories rarely unfold with ease. To the contrary, journalists routinely encounter an array of obstacles.

Even something as seemingly straightforward as developing a story idea can be fraught. So how should a reporter proceed when an apparently excellent story idea doesn't immediately pan out, whether because sources won't cooperate or because those who cooperate don't say anything that advances the story? How should a reporter respond when a late-breaking event changes the shape, accuracy, or even the relevance of a story that they have already written but not had aired?

Each of the above questions is posed using the word *when*—not *if*—for a reason. Such circumstances are bound to arise. This much is a certainty. Your own responses to these situations, on the other hand, are not. Some students react with paralysis, instantly deciding that the obstacle is insurmountable. Others find creative, yet ethical alternative means of completing their assignment. Your responses to such situations will say a great deal about your likely success in this course, as well as in the world of professional journalism.

Assignments

Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	20%
Beat Report	5%
Beat Story Project First Edit	10%
Beat Story Project Final Edit	30%
Attendance/Participation	15%

Exams (40%): You will have two non-cumulative exams during the semester. These will be objective, consisting of multiple-choice, true-false, and matching questions. The exams will cover course readings, class discussions, and other assignments. It is therefore advisable to stay current with course readings, class discussions, and other assignments.

Group Beat Story Project (45%): You will be assigned to a group and beat during the first class meeting. This beat will be your group's area of specialization for story assignments throughout the semester, with particular emphasis on the group beat story project being submitted at the end of the semester. The project grade consists of three elements: Beat Report (group grade), Beat Story Project First Edit (group grade), and Beat Story Project Final Edit (half group grade, half individual grade).

The categories or beats from which you will choose are:

City Government—all stories dealing with the operation of city government (changes in departments, department service functions, local taxes, licenses, development projections, etc.). Regular coverage of governmental meetings is expected.

County Government—all stories dealing with the operation of county government (changes in departments, department service functions, local taxes, licenses, development projections, etc.). Regular coverage of governmental meetings is expected.

Education—all stories dealing with our local (Palm Beach and Broward) education systems (elementary, secondary, vocational, college, and university). Stories would deal with teacher pay, school consolidation, and construction, funding, curriculum, teaching techniques, integration of new technologies, etc.

Environment—all stories about issues dealing with the environment (land, water, air, etc.). Story examples include reports on city and county waste disposal systems, chemical usage and storage, ozone layer implications, legal actions related to environmental projects, chemical contamination of streams, etc.

Human Services—all stories concerning the projects, activities, and people associated with human service agencies and groups. Generally, stories would relate to activities and

programs associated with providing minimum requirements of clothing, shelter, food, and employment. Specific concerns include: alcohol and drug abuse, children and youth, employment, housing, legal services, availability of food and clothing, support groups, self-help organizations, and related laws and regulations.

The Arts—all stories concerning projects, activities, and people associated with local arts agencies and groups as well as individual local artists. Stories would relate to these entities' specific work (concerts, exhibits, stage productions, etc.), but also to more general issues surrounding their work and their roles in the community. Particular presentations by arts groups and individual artists clearly invite creative and intelligent examinations of the ways in which art educates and enriches us. Yet they also raise serious existential questions relating to art itself. Political, economic, social, and cultural pressures all bear on artistic endeavors. Given these realities, thoughtful arts journalism--not merely PR aimed at selling tickets and subscriptions--is vital to well-rounded coverage of any community.

The second week of the semester, each group you will present a **beat report**. This report will be a brief (i.e., approximately ten-minute), relatively informal presentation. It should outline the group's chosen beat, beat story topic and focus, and any chief officials, newsmakers, elected bodies, or appointed bodies relevant to the project. Each member of any group not presenting on the day scheduled will earn a zero for this portion of the project. This report will be worth 5% of each group member's course grade. In addition, the quality of this report will be considered among other story elements when evaluating your group's overall beat story project at the end of the semester.

In preparation of the beat reports, students may download information found on the Internet, but they should also speak to sources and otherwise demonstrate that they have undertaken a reasonable amount of preliminary work on their group's story. Students are encouraged to begin work on their beat reports as soon as beats are assigned.

Each group's beat story project **first edit** will be due on the date that group comes up in the rotation to submit its first edit. Each member of any group not presenting on the day scheduled will earn a zero for this portion of the project. This first edit will be worth 10% of each group member's course grade.

The **final edit**, worth 30% of each group member's course grade, will be due at the class meeting during which the final exam is administered. Half of each group member's final edit grade will be based on the overall quality of their group's project, with the other half being based on that group member's individual contributions to the project.

The story must make use of a variety of sources, including public documents, interviews, library and Internet research, backgrounding and objective reportorial observation. Stories are required to use and quote (or use sound bites from) a variety of HUMAN SOURCES interviewed by student reporters in the group. These sources must be listed at the end of each story script. This information must include FULL NAME, TITLE and CONTACT INFORMATION. Failure to list sources for the group project or an

individual group member's contributions will result in a deduction equivalent to one letter grade for the project or an individual group member's portion of the project. Of course you also may (and are encouraged to) use additional sources, such as documents and public records.

Speakers and/or participants at events will NOT be counted as a required individual source unless such sources are interviewed separately before or after an event. Students should specify that such quotes came from an interview in their documentation accompanying their script, but not in the story script itself. When conducting e-mail interviews, such should be appropriately noted in a script and in accompanying documentation.

Students should strive to avoid duplicating sources within and among their beat stories and readers. Repeated sources should only be used when relevant or necessary. Student sources also don't count towards the required four UNLESS these students are quoted because they are also integral to a story. Just keep in mind that the instructor considers student sources to be less credible and less worthy of inclusion in assignments for most journalism courses.

The more sources a writer uses, the better the story usually is. And that improves grades. A source quoted from a public meeting will only count if that source is also interviewed.

Beat stories should be at least 15 minutes in length. Scripts should be typed and double-spaced, in 12-point font, and on 8 1/2- by 11-inch paper with one-inch margins. They must be submitted by the deadline dates indicated by the calendar below as well as by the numbers assigned to group during the first class meeting.

These pieces must be written in a conversational (i.e., broadcast) style, as this course is partially designed to prepare students for the work in RTV 4301 Broadcast Journalism and other courses focused on electronic media. They'll also make use of sound bites rather than quotes wherever possible, keeping in mind that quotes don't usually result in the most engaging electronic media content. At the same time, bites and quotes shouldn't monopolize space on the page or airtime in a produced radio story.

Other Requirements and Clarifications:

- Strive for newsworthiness and timeliness. Read current local newspapers and/or magazines. Also check the Internet. But if you use ANY written source material to write your beat story, you will need to attach this material to the news copy you submit to the instructor.
- Each beat story must have a clear focus and relate to local (Palm Beach and/or Broward) events and issues.
- Beat stories are to be **NEWS** stories—not public relations (PR) pieces masquerading as news stories. One sure way to avoid producing a PR piece is to approach each story with a healthy dose of skepticism.
- Each beat story must be set up by an effective lead.

- Each beat story must be clearly organized (i.e., have a definite and engaging beginning, middle, and end).
- Each beat story must be well written, without grammar and style problems.
- Each beat story of at least 15 minutes must offer a minimum of 24 unique attributions (i.e., references to 24 different news sources) and a minimum of 24 sound bites of voices other than your own. (Longer pieces should use proportionally more attributions and bites.) Each unique bite voice will count once toward your total of unique attributions. Yet not every attribution must necessarily be a sound bite. You could, for example, have 24 attributions, of which 18 are sound bite voices (with some of these voices being heard more than once) and six are human sources you've personally interviewed but not recorded. Other attributions could be organization Web sites, newspapers, or other publications you've used to obtain factual information or quotes.
- The required minimum number of sound bites must be gathered from your contacts with news sources—not drawn from radio or TV news broadcasts, Internet sites, etc. You may use material from these other sources. But any bites not resulting from your own contacts with news sources will not be counted toward the minimum number of bites/voices.
- While not required, effective use of ambient sound can only enhance beat stories. Student-reporters' provision of such elements among their audio files will be considered in the grading of beat stories.
- A student group will read their story script aloud during the in-class critique of their piece, pausing for playback of bite material. The student group will choose a group member to record their script's voice tracks. These tracks will be used in the following semester, when the story is produced by members of Dr. Petrich's RTV 4304 Advanced Broadcast Journalism class.
- Each beat story should close with the following standard outcue (SOC): "For *South Florida Journal*, I'm (your name)."

On the day of class at which your group's first edit is due, you'll need to have the following for your presentation and subsequent submission to Dr. Petrich:

- One (1) hard copy of each newspaper article used for your beat story is based
- One (1) hard copy of each other piece of published material used in researching your beat story
- An electronic copy (i.e., document file on a flash drive) of your story's lead
- An electronic copy (i.e., document file on a flash drive) of your story's script
- A flash drive containing your story's edited sound bites, as well as audio files of any work product (raw interviews, ambient sound, etc.)

When submitting final edits, each group will need to include the following materials:

- One (1) hard copies of each newspaper article and other publisher source used for your story
- One (1) flash drive containing your story's lead, your story's script, your story's edited sound bites, all raw interviews from which the bites are taken, and any ambient sound gathered. My RTV 4304 students and I will use this in assembling the story for *South Florida Journal*.

When submitting final edits, each individual group member will need to include the following materials:

- One hard copy of each piece of research (e.g., newspaper articles, public documents, etc.) they contributed toward their group's project
- One (1) flash drive with files containing evidence of contributions they made to the gathering of interviews, development of writing of their group's story concept, lead, script, edited sound bites, etc.
- A written journal of the student's experiences as they worked on the beat story project with their group. Entries should be thorough, made on a consistent and timely basis, and discuss every aspect of their experience (how the project developed, the joys and challenges of researching and assembling the story, impressions as to what was learned about reporting in general and specifically about public affairs coverage, perceptions of other group members' relative contributions to the project, etc.).
- Please be advised that the instructor has a great deal of experience with student journals. He can tell the difference between one following the above guidelines and one hastily assembled at the last minute. He also can discern when a student has truly contributed their fair share of work toward a group project. Hence, students would be wise to provide accurate accounts of their own contributions.

Some excellent models for your beat story can be found on Blackboard. Others can be found in the Wavelengths archives for the programs *South Florida Journal* and *Crosscurrents*:

http://multimedistudies.fau.edu/?page_id=929

Attendance/Participation (15%): The participatory nature of this course makes regular attendance and participation essential to your success. But please note that attendance does **not** automatically constitute participation. Participation will be graded based on the **quantity** and **quality** of a student's contribution to classroom discussion, as well as group activities during class. The following guidelines will be used to determine the grade:

A

1. In most every class, the student offers comments, answers questions, and engages in discussion by responding to comments about the material--comments by both the professor and other students.
2. In most every class, participation indicates excellent preparation. Comments, questions, and discussion reflect that student has done reading and understands key ideas and arguments, also going beyond the material in raising questions and offering additional insights that reflect an intellectual maturity.
3. In most every class, the student demonstrates a high level of engagement in activities, indicating an exceptional synthesis of the course material's theoretical and practical aspects.
4. Participates in no distracting sidebar conversations, text-messaging or other usage of cell phones or laptop computers, incidents of note-passing during class discussions, or any other activities (inside or outside of the classroom) that interfere with the educational mission within the classroom.
5. Qualifies for an "A" in attendance.

B

1. In a majority of the classes, the student offers comments, answers questions, and engages in discussion by responding to comments made about the material--comments by both the professor and other students.
2. In a majority of classes, participation indicates very good preparation. Comments, questions, and discussion reflect that student has done reading and understands key ideas and arguments.
3. In a majority of the classes, the student demonstrates a high level of engagement in activities, indicating an above-average synthesis of the course material's theoretical and practical aspects.
4. Participates in no distracting sidebar conversations, text-messaging or other usage of cell phones or laptop computers, incidents of note-passing during class discussions, or any other activities (inside or outside of the classroom) that interfere with the educational mission within the classroom.
5. Qualifies for at least a "B" in attendance.

C

1. In some of the classes, the student offers comments, answers questions, and engages in discussion by responding to comments made about the material--comments by both the professor and other students.
2. In most classes, participation indicates average preparation. Comments, questions, and discussion reflect that student has done reading but does not adequately grasp some of the key ideas and arguments.
3. In some of the classes, the student demonstrates engagement in activities, but at a level indicating inadequate synthesis of some of the course material's theoretical and practical aspects.
4. Participates in no distracting sidebar conversations, text-messaging or other usage of cell phones or laptop computers, incidents of note-passing during class

- discussions, or any other activities (inside or outside of the classroom) that interfere with the educational mission within the classroom.
5. Qualifies for at least a “C” in attendance.

D

1. The student rarely offers comments, answers questions, and engages in discussion by responding to comments made about the material--comments by both the professor and other students.
2. In most classes, participation indicates poor preparation. Comments, questions, and discussion reflect that student has not done reading or has done reading in such a way that few of the key ideas or arguments are grasped.
3. The student rarely demonstrates engagement in activities, indicating either a lack of interest or a lack of preparation.
4. Participates in no distracting sidebar conversations, text-messaging or other usage of cell phones or laptop computers, incidents of note passing during class discussions, or any other activities (inside or outside of the classroom) that interfere with the educational mission within the classroom.
5. Qualifies for at least a “D” in attendance.

Grading:

The professor will use contemporary newsroom standards in evaluating student work. To do any less would be a disservice, particularly to those desiring a career in broadcast journalism or any other media profession. Hence it is expected that you will adhere to deadlines. And over the course of the semester, the quality of your assignments should compare increasingly favorably with that of a beginning professional journalist.

Grading Scale:

93-100	= A
90-92	= A-
87-89	= B+
83-86	= B
80-82	= B-
77-79	= C+
73-76	= C
70-72	= C-
67-69	= D+
63-66	= D
60-62	= D-
0-59	= F

Attendance: Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class meeting. If you arrive late, be sure to remind the professor after class or during a break, as a tardy will count for a smaller deduction than will an absence. Three instances of tardiness will be counted as

an absence. Absences will be excused in the event of a verifiably legitimate emergency, such as an illness or a court appearance.

AN ABSENCE IS NOT CONSIDERED EXCUSED WHEN A STUDENT SIMPLY NOTIFIES THE PROFESSOR THAT HE OR SHE IS GOING TO MISS CLASS, IS MISSING CLASS, OR HAS MISSED CLASS. THIS CONSTITUTES A COMMON COURTESY, BUT NOT AN EXCUSED ABSENCE. IT ONLY BECOMES AN EXCUSED ABSENCE WHEN, IN WRITING, THE PROFESSOR SAYS, "THIS IS AN EXCUSED ABSENCE." THE PROFESSOR WILL BE HAPPY TO PROVIDE A WRITTEN MESSAGE TO THIS EFFECT UPON REQUEST. SIMPLY E-MAIL YOUR REQUEST FOR A REPLY CONTAINING NOTIFICATION THAT AN ABSENCE HAS BEEN EXCUSED.

For the **first two unexcused absences**, you shall lose only the attendance/participation points for that day. Other than religious observance, the only other exception to this penalty is for a verified university-approved activity, medical reason, court appearance, or other emergency. If you provide verifiable documentation such as a physician's note, a letter from a court, etc. and the instructor approves this documentation, these will be considered **excused absences**. In such instances, the instructor has discretion as to how much attendance/participation credit will be awarded, given the credit's dual role (attendance and participation).

Whatever the reason for an absence, it's difficult to get around the reality that missing class meetings also means missing important elements of the course experience. Thus **three absences, whether excused or unexcused**, will also result in a lowering not only of a student's attendance/participation grade, but also in a deduction of one letter grade from the final course grade indicated on Blackboard. So if you have three absences and your final course grade (i.e., that indicated on Blackboard) otherwise would have been a "B," then your actual final course grade (i.e., that posted on your transcript) will be lowered to a "C." And each additional unexcused absence will result in an additional deduction of one grade level (e.g., from a "C" to a "C-") from the final course grade.

The instructor presumes that college students are mature enough to be aware of their promptness, tardiness, and/or absenteeism throughout the semester. Thus he does not assume responsibility for monitoring each student's cumulative attendance record, checking for each student's risk of exceeding the above guidelines' benchmarks for excessive absenteeism and grade reductions at various times during the semester, or notifying each student of their risk for exceeding these benchmarks at various times during the semester. The instructor will be happy to provide such information upon request. But it is each student's responsibility to make such a request.

Checkout of Equipment: Flash recorders may be checked out for use in preparing beat story projects. All recorders will be due back one week after checkout.

ANY STUDENT RETURNING EQUIPMENT LATE WILL BE ASSESSED A REDUCTION OF ONE GRADE LEVEL (I.E., FROM AN "A" TO AN "A-,"

FROM AN “A-“ TO A “B+,” ETC.) IN THEIR FINAL COURSE GRADE. THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THIS POLICY WILL BE IN THE CASE OF AN EXCUSED ABSENCE.

ANY STUDENT MODIFYING, DAMAGING, OR LOSING EQUIPMENT CHECKED OUT TO THEM WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY EXPENSE NECESSARY TO RESTORE, REPAIR, OR REPLACE SAID EQUIPMENT. THIS IS EXPLICIT IN THE AGREEMENT SIGNED BY THE STUDENT WHEN CHECKING OUT EQUIPMENT.

Use of LA 141, 146, and 147 Studio/Lab Facilities: Students may reserve lab facilities for production work during established and posted hours of the week. LA 141, 146, and 147, in particular, are intended for such use. But no student will be permitted to use the labs outside of the scheduled hours established for the current semester. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Depending upon the seriousness of the infraction, any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to penalties ranging from grade deductions to referral for disciplinary action by the university.

Submission of Assignments: Beat reports as well as materials for beat story project first and final edits are to be submitted electronically. First edit materials for beat story projects should be stored on a jump drive to be used for class presentation. Final edit materials for beat story projects must be submitted on jump drives. These drives will be returned after the semester.

All recorded assignments are to be submitted on a flash drive in WAV, an uncompressed audio—**not data**—format, at a sampling rate of 44,100hz and at a resolution of 16bits. Adherence to this format should facilitate easy use in class discussions of student work, as well as in production of *South Florida Journal* and other *Wavelengths* programming showcasing such work.

Technical glitches will not be accepted as excuses for not submitting assignments in a complete and timely manner. The wisest policy is to avoid exceptional circumstances by not procrastinating and by frequently saving and backing up your computer work in a few places (flash drive, external hard drive, Dropbox, etc.). The professor will listen sympathetically to stories of crashed and malfunctioning computers, but will **not** regard such stories as excuses.

For grading purposes, any assignment not submitted when due, and in accordance with assignment requirements, will be counted as a “0” (i.e., zero) for that assignment. And any assignment meriting such treatment shall remain with a grade of zero. It will be ineligible for any type of upgrade—whether through make-up, extra credit, etc. The only exceptions, as stated elsewhere in this syllabus, will be in cases of absence that the professor can verify as legitimately excusable.

Late Work: **No** makeup exams will be given. **No** late assignments will be accepted for grading purposes. Stories of computer crashes and printer problems will be listened to

with a sympathetic ear, but will **not** be accepted as excuses for late work. The **only** exceptions to this policy concerning late work will be in cases where an absence has been excused. Late work is any work not submitted by the (1:00PM) class start time on the date an assignment is due.

Academic Dishonesty: Each student will be expected to do his or her own work. Academic irregularities are covered by Florida Atlantic University's (FAU's) academic policies, and will be dealt with as indicated in FAU's most recent undergraduate catalog.

The most common form of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. At root, plagiarism is the use of someone else's work or ideas without offering appropriate acknowledgment. This frequently involves a student submitting written work (papers, exams, etc.) in which brief or lengthy passages are actually taken from other sources and presented by that student as though these elements were of the student's own creation. In a broadcast journalism course, plagiarism can take a variety of forms.

One type of journalistic plagiarism involves use of brief or lengthy passages from other sources without crediting those sources. A student, for example, might wish to use information found in a newspaper, broadcast, or Internet story. However, should the story idea itself and/or substantial portions of information emanate from one source, credit must be given to that source.

Giving credit to the source of material used in a student's story, however, isn't sufficient. Another form of plagiarism is committed when a student credits a source but then uses the source's material (other than a quote) verbatim. If the material isn't a quote, then it must be credited **AND** substantially rewritten. A student must not credit a newspaper, for example, and then repeat verbatim what another reporter writes in that newspaper.

Fabrication is another potential type of academic dishonesty violating standards of ethical journalistic practice. For example, a student might report an event that never took place or was never expected to take place. Or, finding it difficult to obtain an interview, a student might ask a family member, friend, roommate, or classmate to pose as the otherwise unobtainable interviewee. Both of these situations would be examples of fabrication. And fabrication is no less an egregious offense than is plagiarism.

New York Times reporter Jayson Blair recently made headlines when he was caught plagiarizing and fabricating stories. Blair and his employer suffered a loss of credibility; Blair lost his job. Such conduct in this course will be taken just as seriously.

At minimum, the professor considers academic dishonesty in this course ample justification for a grade of "F" on a specific assignment. And depending on the situation (e.g., extent of the offense, weight of assignment, past offenses, etc.), such a violation also could be grounds for a course grade of "F," as well as for referral for expulsion from the multimedia journalism track or from the university.

Code of Academic Integrity policy statement: Students at Florida Atlantic University are

expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/Reg_4.001_5-26-10_FINAL.pdf

The FAU Code of Academic Integrity prohibits dishonesty and requires a faculty member, student, or staff member to notify an instructor when there is reason to believe dishonesty has occurred in a course/program requirement. The instructor must pursue any reasonable allegation, taking action where appropriate. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, the following:

(A) Cheating

1. The unauthorized use of notes, books, electronic devices, or other study aids while taking an examination or working on an assignment.
2. Providing unauthorized assistance to or receiving assistance from another student during an examination or while working on an assignment.
3. Having someone take an exam or complete an assignment in one's place.
4. Securing an exam, receiving an unauthorized copy of an exam, or sharing a copy of an exam.

(B) Plagiarism

1. The presentation of words from any other source or another person as one's own without proper quotation and citation.
2. Putting someone else's ideas or facts into your own words (paraphrasing) without proper citation.
3. Turning in someone else's work as one's own, including the buying and selling of term papers or assignments.

(C) Other Forms of Dishonesty

1. Falsifying or inventing information, data, or citations.
2. Failing to comply with examination regulations or failing to obey the instructions of an examination proctor.
3. Submitting the same paper or assignment, or part thereof, in more than one class without the written consent of both instructors.
4. Any other form of academic cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty.

For full details of the FAU Code of Academic Integrity, see University Regulation 4.001 at

http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf

Disability policy statement: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to properly

execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) -- in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 240 (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 117 (772-873-3441) – and follow all OSD procedures. <http://osd.fau.edu/>

Structure of the Semester

The first few weeks of the semester, we'll be laying necessary groundwork by learning the basics of public affairs reporting, story development, use of field recording equipment, use of audio editing software, and beginning our discussion of key course concepts. This will involve workshops and in-class activities, as well as limited lectures focused on course readings indicated for each of these first few weeks.

Beginning with the fifth week, each class meeting (other than exam weeks) will begin with a brief discussion of the week's course reading. Then we'll continue with an in-class critique of beat story first edits. After a brief break, the class meeting will continue by dividing into groups, with some writing reader assignments for that week's *South Florida Journal* and others working on their beat stories.

This structure is rooted in your professor's knowledge that once a certain amount of ground has been covered, class time is better spent with hands-on applications of course material.

From the fifth week forward, therefore, readings indicated for each week, as well as other course material, will of course be part of each class discussion. But they will not be subjects of lengthy formal lectures. Consider these indicated readings as reminders of what, at minimum, you ought to be completing each week so as to intelligently participate in class and stay on a pace to avoid cramming before exams.

Course Outline

Each week's entry indicates textbook reading(s) upon which discussion and activities will be focused during that week's class meeting. During any week that class does not meet, students should complete the reading indicated in order to be prepared for the next class meeting.

January

Monday 6 Course Orientation
 Listening Session: *All Things Considered* and *South Florida Journal*
 The Anatomy of *South Florida Journal*
 The Anatomy of a Reader and of a Beat Story
 Chapter 1: The Roles and Realities of Reporting
 Beat Assignments

Monday 13 Chapter 2: The Ways and Means of Reporting

Chapter 3: Striving for Accuracy
All Beat Reports Due Today!

- Monday 20 **M.L. King, Jr. Holiday--No Class**
Blackboard Reading: "Writing for the Ear," by Scott Simon
Blackboard Reading: "Writing News for Radio," by Carl Kasell and
Marcus D. Rosenbaum
- Monday 27 Blackboard Reading: "Dr. Petrich's Tips for Broadcast News Writing"
Workshop: Writing
Blackboard Reading: "Interviewing," by Robert Siegel
Blackboard Reading: Tutorial for Audacity Software
Workshop: Interviewing, Recording, Downloading, and Editing Audio

February

- Monday 3 Chapter 4: Closed Meetings, Sealed Records and "Off-Limits" Signs
Beat Story First Edit: Group One
- Monday 10 Chapter 5: The Neighborhood Approach (Part I)
Beat Story First Edit: Group Two
- Monday 17 Chapter 5: The Neighborhood Approach (Part II)
Beat Story First Edit: Group Three
- Monday 24 **Exam #1 (Chapters 1-5, Blackboard Readings, and Class
Discussions/Workshops)—Remember Green Scantron and #2
Pencil!**
Chapter 6: Government News for the People (Part I)
Beat Story First Edit: Group Four

March

- Monday 3 **Mid-semester Break--No Class**
Chapter 6: Government News for the People (Part II)
- Monday 10 Chapter 6: Government News for the People (Part III)
Beat Story First Edit: Group Five
- Monday 17 Chapter 7: Public Safety: Crimes to Corrections
Beat Story First Edit: Group Six
- Monday 24 Chapter 8: Into the Legal Maze
Beat Story First Edit: Group Seven

Monday 31 Chapter 9: The Trial and Thereafter
Beat Story First Edit: Group Eight

April

Monday 7 Chapter 10: Special Beats, New Challenges (Part I)
Beat Story First Edit: Group Nine

Monday 14 Chapter 10: Special Beats, New Challenges (Part II)
Beat Story First Edits: Group Ten

Monday 21 Chapter 11: Lessons in Law and Ethics
Beat Story Final Edit Workshop

Monday 28 **Final Exam (Chapters 6-11, Blackboard Readings, and Class
Discussions) 10:30AM-1:00PM—Remember Green Scantron and
#2 Pencil!**
All Beat Story Final Edits Due Today!