



Writing for Multimedia Communication

Course Syllabus and Guidelines

Fall 2009

Loop Center • Houston Community College Southwest
Program: Digital Communication

IMED 1359 • CRN 18431

Start Date: August 25, 2009 • End Date: December 8, 2009

Class Meeting Days: Tuesday/Thursday • Class Meeting Time: 11:30–1:20

Instructor: Paul Roberts • Telephone: 713.718.7892 • Email: paul.roberts@hccs.edu

Office Location: West Loop Room 139A

Office Hours: Mon-Thur 9:00 – 9:30, Mon and Wed 11:30 – 12:00, Tue and Thur 1:30 – 2:00 or by appointment

Digital Communication Department Web site: <http://swc2.hccs.edu/digicom/>

Class Web site: <http://hccs.blackboard.com>

Email for assignments submission only: roberts.hccs@yahoo.com

Course Description

IMED 13559 • Writing for Multimedia Communication: *Co-requisite: ETWR 1371 or ENGL 1301 or Departmental Approval.* Written communication for multimedia environments including professional websites or other digital content. Emphasis on professional communications in electronic marketing. 3 credits (2 lecture, 4 lab).

Required Textbook and Materials

Darrell Christian and others, eds. *The Associated Press Stylebook 2008*. New York: Associated Press, 2008. [ISBN 978-0-917360-52-7]

Jeffrey S. Wilkinson, and others. *Principles of Convergent Journalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. [ISBN-13: 978-0-19-533924-6]

Mass storage device with a capacity of at least 100 Mb

Digital voice recorder capable of producing MP3 audio files

One ream of laser paper

Software Used

- Microsoft Word
- Acrobat Reader
- Web browser
- [Audacity 1.2.x](#)
- iTunes
- Text editor
- Basic bit-map software
- FTP client

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- File compression software

Course Objectives

- Write for general or targeted audiences while correctly using commonly accepted standards of grammar and language
- Generate ideas for multimedia content
- Gather, evaluate, and edit data to use in content development
- Conduct virtual or face-to-face interviews with subject matter experts
- Use Internet technologies to publish information.
- Investigate and practice information gathering techniques using face-to-face interviews and using Internet
- Analyze ethical considerations in dealing with Internet audiences and in achieving professional relationships via the Internet.

Course Requirements

Students must complete the following:

- Conduct face-to-face interviews with information sources.
- Organize interview information into readable text for publication on the Web.
- Participate in a team publication that includes original information.
- Write reports using journalistic style that works for a target multimedia audience.
- Script a written report for Podcast production.
- Optimize writing style to enhance search engine success.

General Requirements and Objectives

- Complete and comprehend the objectives and technologies involved in all graded assignments.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply creative thinking and problem solving to all class projects and assignments.
- Complete all reading assignments pertaining to the subject matter of the course.
- Attend class regularly, missing no more than 12.5% of instruction and lab time (12 hours)
- Arrive at class promptly and be prepared with necessary books, storage media, assignments, and anything else required.
- Exhibit safe and courteous lab habits.
- Develop and share knowledge and information with fellow students.
- Participate in keeping labs clean and organized; shutting down computers when finished; abiding by lab rules; showing respect for instructors, fellow students and lab assistants.
- Participate in class discussions and critiques.
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate in a clear, coherent manner.
- Turn in all assignment on time and in the manner required by the instructor.
- Demonstrate the ability to use computer-based technology and software applications as it applies to be given class.

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- Understand and be proficient in computer file management, including saving and retrieving files.
 - When possible, demonstrate the ability to use and understand both Macintosh and Windows operating systems.
 - Demonstrate knowledge and the ability to use applicable peripherals and storage devices.
 - Develop a portfolio that illustrates concepts, techniques, and programs used in solving class assignment, including a written statement describing project concepts and processes.
 - Demonstrate ability and creativity in using computer-based technology in communicating, solving problems and acquiring information.
 - Accept responsibility for personal understanding of course requirements and degree plan.

Course/Lab Policies

- No handwritten work will be accepted.
- Work turned in past the deadline will receive a failing grade.
- No make-up tests or classroom exercises will be given.
- Information covered in class will not be repeated for tardy or absent students.
- Plagiarism is inexcusable and will result in an automatic F for the course.
- Lab time provided during class is for this course only. Students remaining for lab must use the time for this course. Those doing other work will be asked to leave.
- No software, hardware, or manuals may be removed from the lab. Software and manuals may not be copied. Lab rules are to be strictly followed. Failure to comply with these rules will mean expulsion from both class and lab.
- No food or drink is allowed in the labs for the protection of the equipment.
- Only those currently registered for courses are allowed to use the HCC computer labs. No children, spouses, parents or friends are allowed in the labs. Children especially are not allowed on campus at any time. This is college policy and there are no exceptions.
- Students are required to sign-in and carry their paid receipt when they are in an open lab. If you are asked to show the receipt to a lab aide and cannot do so, you may not be allowed to remain in the lab.
- No outside software is allowed in HCC labs or on HCC computers.
- Open labs are for students to work on school work only. If you have outside work to do, numerous commercial centers are located throughout the city where computer time is available for a fee. Students working on projects other than those assigned for class work will be asked to leave.
- Computers with a scanner attached are reserved for scanning only.
- Students may not change mice or connect peripherals to any computer.
- We expect patrons of the lab to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Those who cannot do so will be asked to leave. When asked to leave, students must do so without argument. This is especially true at closing time.
- Silence cell phones and pagers while in class and lab. Interrupting a class for your telephone call is extremely rude and may be treated in like manner. If you must talk on the phone, please leave the classroom before answering a call or beginning a conversation.

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- Once each class session begins, the door will be closed and will not be opened during lectures and demonstrations. If you arrive for class after lecture/demonstration has begun, you will not be admitted. If you need to leave the room during a lecture or demonstration, you will not be re-admitted until after the lecture/demonstration is complete.

Students may find the following information in the student handbook and college catalog:

- Withdrawal Policy
- Refund Policy
- Plagiarism Policy
- Attendance Requirements
- Grading Scale

“The Houston Community College System seeks to provide equal educational opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or handicap. This policy extends to employment, admission, and all programs and activities supported by the College.”

Projects

You will find practice assignments for various weeks of the semester. These assignments are required for a grade. You shall have each assignment ready for classroom presentation and discussion on the due date noted. Assignments must be submitted to the instructor via email. You will receive points for each assignment completed. The total points for these assignments will amount to 20 percent of your final score.

Do not ignore this instruction: Word files — both printed and electronic — must be double-spaced with margins set at one inch. The first line of each paragraph shall be indented one-half inch. Do not place extra spacing between paragraphs. Use 10-point Times (Times New Roman) or 10-point Arial (Helvetica). Do not use designer or novelty fonts. This instruction applies to all assignments, including midterm and final projects.

You will complete three other assignments for grades—one midterm and two final projects. Each assignment must be in two forms — written in Word and WWML formats and produced as an audio file (MP3) for Podcasting. The work must be loaded to the Digital Communication Department server when submitted. To notify the instructor that you have completed the work, submit a professionally written and courteous email message to the instructor with your name, project designation, due date and the last four digits of your student ID number. Following is the email address for submitting assignments:

roberts.hccs@yahoo.com

Give the exact URL, including the complete file name. If you do not submit notification that the assignment is ready, the instructor will assign a zero grade. You must submit a notice in order to receive credit for your work. This will be strictly enforced. No exceptions.

Note: The above email address is for submitting assignments only. If you have a concern, you may talk to the instructor face to face or leave a message on his voice mail.

Under no circumstances will extra credit be given.

Midterm Project

Your instructor will prepare a presentation on which you are to write a report as a separate assignment. From that assignment, you shall find a narrow topic to pursue for the next assignment. You will interview at least two live

and local sources on that topic and write and report using those interview sources. Then you will expand the information with at least two additional sources, either live interviews, credible Internet resources or other credible and reliable written or recorded sources.

- At least 1,000–1,500 words in length. You must not "pad" your copy with meaningless verbiage. The writing must be "lean and mean." Make every word count. If you find you do not have enough information to satisfy the length requirement, then you need to go to more sources for more facts.
- An appropriate picture to accompany your story (optional)
- Good journalistic style as found in The Associated Press Stylebook.
- Objective writing, using only third person point of view.
- A selection of appropriate keywords to help search engines find your work.
- Submission of Word file and XML file.

Project due date: **October 6, 2009**

Final Projects

You shall complete three final projects: Feature Story, Podcast, and Editorial.

Feature Story • You will watch a thought-provoking movie. From this movie, you must find a feature story idea — one that involves current issues of human interest. Conduct at least two interviews of appropriate live and local sources to give information for your story idea. Your topic must not be a strictly technological subject. Find at least two more sources, either living and local or some other appropriate source.

- Length of 1,500–3,000 words. You must not "pad" your copy with meaningless verbiage. The writing must be "lean and mean." Make every word count. If you find you do not have enough information to satisfy the length requirement, then you need to go to more sources for more facts.
- An appropriate picture to accompany your story
- Good journalistic style as found in The Associated Press Stylebook.
- Objective writing, using only third person point of view.
- A selection of appropriate keywords to help search engines find your work.
- Submission of Word file and XML file.

Feature Story due date: **November 3, 2009**

Podcast • One more segment of the assignment is to prepare its contents as an MP3 audio file for the purpose of publishing a Podcast alongside the written report. Write a script that will run about 90 seconds. This likely will involve abridging the written report. Prepare the style to enable your listeners to stay interested in your message for its duration. Once you have written the script, rehearse it identify tongue-twisters and awkward words. Edit the script to remove tricky passages and underscore content that deserves special emphasis.

- Time length of 75–91 seconds. You must not "pad" your copy with meaningless verbiage. The writing must be "lean and mean." Make every word count. You may need to abridge your written feature story.
- Good broadcast journalism style as discussed in class
- Objective writing, using only third person point of view
- Podcast of about 90 seconds, recorded in the MP3 file format

Podcast script due date: **November 17, 2009**

Podcast production due date: **November 24, 2009**

Editorial • The editorial (opinion) is based on the subject matter of your midterm story or your final feature story. It will be published in diginetXpress. You will use the same source information from the story as a basis for your opinion. The editorial must include the following requirements:

- Length of 500–1,000 words. You must not "pad" your copy with meaningless verbiage. The writing must be "lean and mean." Make every word count. If you find you do not have enough information to satisfy the length requirement, then you need to go to more sources for more facts.
- Good journalistic style as found in The Associated Press Stylebook.
- Must be opinionated but supported by facts and sources. Finally you get to use a subjective point of view if you desire.
- A selection of appropriate keywords to help search engines find your work.
- Submission of Word file and XML file.

Editorial due date: **December 1, 2009**

Attendance

Important! This is not fine print. Please read carefully.

The HCCS Catalog states, "A student may be dropped from a course for excessive absences after the student has accumulated absences in excess of 12.5% of the hours of instruction (including lecture and laboratory time)." That is equivalent to two weeks of class.

Attendance will be checked during the first 30 minutes of each class session. Your attendance is considered to be part of class participation and will affect your final grade. The instructor does not agree to issue administrative withdrawals for students who have excessive absences. Students with excessive absences will receive the grade earned up to the point of departure from the course. The instructor makes no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.

This policy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

Scholastic Dishonesty

The following comes from the HCCS Student Handbook:

Students are responsible for conducting themselves with honor and integrity in fulfilling course requirements. Penalties and/or disciplinary proceedings may be initiated by College System officials against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty.

- "Scholastic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.
- "Cheating" on a test includes:
 - Copying from another student's test paper;
 - Using materials during a test that are not authorized by the person giving the test;
 - Collaborating with another student during a test without authority;

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- Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test;
 - Bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered.

“Plagiarism” means the appropriation of another’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own written work offered for credit.

“Collusion” means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.

VIOLATIONS

Possible punishments for academic dishonesty may include a grade of “0” or “F” on the particular assignment, failure in the course, and/or recommendation for probation or dismissal from the College System. A recommendation for suspension or expulsion will be referred to the College Dean of Student Development for disciplinary disposition.

Students who wish to appeal a grade penalty should notify the instructional supervisor within 30 working days of the incident. A standing committee appointed by the College Dean of Instruction (Academic or Workforce) will convene to sustain, reduce, or reverse the grade penalty. The committee will be composed of two students, two faculty members, and one instructional administrator. A majority vote will decide the grade appeal and is final.

Grading

Your work will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- *Adherence to the assignment:* Although you may go beyond the demands of the assignment, you must meet the outlined requirements. If the assignment is not clear to you, it is your responsibility to ask for clarifications before doing it.
- *Appropriateness:* Follow the assignment guidelines and matters of good taste.
- *Level of difficulty:* More sophisticated work may receive higher scores.
- *Layout:* Consider balance of elements, use of white space, skillful use of fonts, sizes and style.
- *Quality of Execution:* Strive for excellence. All work should be an attempt at portfolio quality. Only work deemed by the instructor to be of **portfolio quality** will receive an A grade.

Using the above criteria, your work will be assessed on five levels:

- A *Exceptional* (This means you have gone beyond the requirements and have reached portfolio quality.)
- B *Excellent* (This means you have met the requirements.)
- C *Acceptable* (This means your work is average and needs improvement.)
- D *Not good enough* (Although it is passing, you show that you really aren’t serious about developing your workforce skills.)
- F *Fail* (Why did you bother?)

These letter grades have corresponding percentage scores. The letter grades correspond to the percentage grades as follows:

- A 90–100
- B 80–89
- C 70–79

D 60–69

F 0–59

You will be able to find your final grade by going to the HCCS Web site at <http://www.hccs.edu/> by December 19, 2005. The course grade will be based on the following:

Participation	10 percent
Assignments	10 percent
Midterm project	20 percent
Final feature	30 percent
Podcast of final feature	15 percent
Final editorial	15 percent

Dates to Remember

August 24	Classes begin
August 28	Last day for change of schedule
September 7	Labor Day holiday (Classes and offices closed)
October 15	Priority deadline for Fall completion of degree/certificate
November 12	Last day to drop classes with a grade of W (4:30 p.m.)
November 25	No night classes before Thanksgiving
November 26–27	Thanksgiving holidays (Classes and offices closed)
December 3	Instruction ends
December 8	Final examination

Students With Disabilities

“The Disability Support Services (DSS) Office assists students with physical, learning, or emotional disabilities in developing independence and self-reliance. Services include adaptive equipment and reasonable accommodations for admissions assistance, testing, academic advising, registration, and classroom instruction. Interpreting service is provided for students who are deaf/hard of hearing and assistive technology devices are provided for students who are blind.

“HCCS is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). If you have any special needs or disabilities which may affect your ability to succeed in college classes or participate in college program/activities, please contact the DSS Office at the college you plan to attend. Upon consultation and documentation, you will be provided with reasonable accommodations. Academic accommodations will be provided only after students have properly registered for services through designated disability services staff.

“It is recommended that you contact the DSS Office at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the term. Additional procedures are outlined in the HCCS Student Handbook.” (Source: *Houston Community College System Catalog*)

Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the Disability Services Office at the respective college at the beginning of each semester. Faculty are authorized to provide only the accommodations requested by the Disability Support Services Office. (*HCCS Institutional Statement*)

Students with verifiable disabilities that offer legal protection under the Americans With Disabilities Act may receive reasonable accommodations to assist in succeeding in the course. If you have a disability and wish to receive such reasonable accommodations, you must see the ADA counselor, Dr. Becky Hauri, at 713.718.7909. Without a recommendation from Dr. Hauri, the instructor cannot make such accommodation.

Important Notice Regarding Repeated Courses

Students who repeat a course three or more times may soon face significant tuition/fee increases at HCC and other Texas public colleges and universities. If you are considering course withdrawal because you are not earning passing grades, confer with your instructor/counselor as early as possible about your study habits, reading and writing homework, test-taking skills, attendance, course participation, and opportunities for tutoring or other assistance that might be available.

Course Withdrawals

The 2007 legislative session passed a law that limits the number of withdrawal (W grade) a students may have to six classes over the course of their entire academic career. This policy is effective for students entering higher education for the first time in Fall 2007 and subsequent terms. Withdrawals accumulated at any other Texas public higher education institution count toward the six-course total.

There are a number of permissible exceptions to the six course limit, such as personal medical emergency, emergency needs of family members, work schedules, military duty, and other exceptions approved by the college.

Policies and procedures for implementation of this new legislation are being developed and will be published as soon as they are available.

This statute applies to all Texas public colleges and universities. Therefore, HCC students affected by this statute, who have attended or plan to attend another institution of higher education, should become familiar with that institution's policies on dropping classes.

Weekly Schedule

Following is a *tentative* outline of discussion topics and class assignments for the term.

Week One

Syllabus, Résumé Doctor

Topics: Introductions
Student profile sheets
Course requirements and grading
Job searching skills
Appropriate use of email

Assignment: Write your résumé using accomplishment statements as directed in class. Do not exceed two pages. Be prepared to present your work in class for critique. Submit your work in Word format to the instructor via email. *Due September 1.*

Week Two

Wilkinson • Chapter 1

Topics: Introduction to convergent journalism
Developing curiosity
News values
Types of leads
Five Ws and the H
Inverted pyramid
AP Style

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Sit for one hour in a place where people congregate and write down everything you see and hear. Submit an electronic file of your notes in Word format to the instructor via email. Be prepared to discuss your experience in class. *Due September 8.*

Assignment: Complete the leads assignment as specified on the handout you find on the Internet. Use the evaluation rubric as s checklist in completing the assignment. Submit your work in Word format to the instructor via email. *Due September 8.*

Week Three

Wilkinson • Chapter 2

Topics:

- Basic skills and roles in convergent journalism
- The complete story
- Short paragraphs
- Reader considerations
- More on inverted pyramid
- Objectivity/Use of third person
- Making assumptions

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Write a complete story from the handout you find at the class Web site. Use the evaluation rubric as s checklist in completing the assignment. Bring your work to class for classroom evaluation. Submit your work in Word format to the instructor via email. *Due September 15.*

Week Four

AP Stylebook • Briefing on Media Law

Topics:

- Keeping an open mind
- Journalism's ethics
- Free expression
- Libel
- Defamation
- Privacy
- Other legal concerns

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Listen to a speech that is available to you on the Internet. Take careful notes sufficient to allow you to write an accurate story reflecting the content of the speech or presentation. Cover the whole of the presentation, writing it in good journalistic style in the inverted pyramid. Use the evaluation rubric as s checklist in completing the assignment. *Note:* This is the preliminary assignment leading into the midterm assignment. Be sure to put quality to this story. Submit your work in Word format to the instructor via email. *Due September 22.*

Week Five

Use AP Stylebook

Topics:

- Sources of information
- Dealing with source demands
- Writer's relationship with sources
- Background information
- Conducting the interview
- Verifying sources

Quotations and paraphrasing
Attribution

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

For Discussion: The instructor will select a movie for in-class viewing. Watch the movie and discuss its implications on your conduct as a writer and your responsibilities as a media consumer.

Midterm Assignment: Choose a narrow topic from the movie presentation or speech assignment that you would like to develop. Identify and interview two credible living and local sources to begin building a story around that topic. Research two additional credible sources to make a well rounded story. Write a 1,000- to 1,500-word story using at least the four sources. Do not pad the story with meaningless words. Make each word count. A story that is well written at 1,000 words will score better than one that is loosely written at 1,500 words. Think about quality rather than quantity. *Due October 6.*

Week Six

Wilkinson • Chapters 3–4

Topics: Attracting Internet attention
Effect of the blogosphere
Role of Internet texting
From print to Internet
Work on Midterm project. See Page 4 for information.

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Work on midterm assignment. *Due October 6.*

Week Seven

Wilkinson • Chapters 5–6

Topics: From broadcast to Internet
Putting it together for publication
XML basics
XML, XSD, XSL, CSS explained
Story structure and use of WWML
Finding appropriate and effective keywords for search engines

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Edit midterm WWML copy in preparation for publication in diginetXpress. This is not an optional exercise. It will affect your final grade. Submit your work in WWML format to the instructor via email.

Due October 13.

Week Eight

Wilkinson • Chapter 7

Topics: Midterm exam
Writing email professionally
Basics of broadcasting
Producing a Podcast
Prospectus for final story

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Watch the movie that is presented in class. The movie is chosen to provoke thoughts about current issues or conditions in the world around you. Apply the movie to your world and find a topic from the movie that is of interest to you. Keep in mind that the movie will have metaphorical qualities that you should be able to apply to something in your own experience if you give it some thought. This is your final feature story topic. Write a prospectus of about 200 words describing the topic you have chosen. Include a description of the thought process that moved you from the movie to your topic. Submit your work in a professionally written email to the instructor..
Due October 20.

Week Nine

Wilkinson • Chapters 8–9

Topics: Basics of print
Internet information
Alternative leads
Feature stories
Human interest

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Final Feature Assignment: Identify and interview at least two living and local sources that are appropriate to your feature story. Use at least two more appropriate sources — either living or published — to round out your story. Apply an alternative to the inverted pyramid in writing your final assignment. Your work is to be written as a feature story with a feature lead. Do not use inverted pyramid. Keep it objective and in third person. Include an applicable picture with your story. Ensure that the picture is not copyrighted materials or you have written permission to use it. Write a cutline (caption) for your picture. Submit your work in Word format to the instructor via email. *Due November 3.*

Week Ten

Wilkinson • Chapter 10

Topic: Adding media to the Web
Subjectivity balanced with facts and sources
Work on final feature story

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Week Eleven

Wilkinson • Chapter 11

Topics: Converging with other emerging media
Submit final features for instructor's evaluation

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Edit final feature WWML copy in preparation for publication in *diginetXpress*. This is not an optional exercise. It will affect your final grade. Submit your work in WWML format to the instructor via email.
Due November 10.

Week Twelve

Topic: Writing copy for Podcast
Adapting style for broadcast media

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Edit final feature to work as a Podcast script. Be aware that wording must work well for an audio presentation. Time length must be 75–90 seconds. *Due November 17.*

Week Thirteen

Audacity Documentation

Topic: Using Audacity software
Recording sound files

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Assignment: Using a voice recorder, produce your final feature script as a Podcast. Review your Podcast and edit the production as needed for an appropriate and professional presentation. Submit the sound file to the instructor as an attachment via email. *Due November 24.*

Week Fourteen

Wilkinson • Chapter 12

Topics: The future in convergent journalism
Editorial writing

Exercise: Complete AP Style/Libel exercise online.

Final Editorial Assignment: Use your feature story or your midterm story as the basis for an editorial. This is your chance to write what you think, but you must base your opinion on the facts you learned from your sources in the previous stories. Submit your work in Word format to the instructor via email. *Due December 1.*

Week Fifteen

Final Presentations

Topics: Work with instructor in putting stories in shape for publication
Wrapping up the work on *diginetXpress*

Assignment: Edit final editorial as WWML copy in preparation for publication in *diginetXpress*. This is not an optional exercise. It will affect your final grade. Submit your work in WWML format to the instructor via email. *Due December 3.*

Finals Week

Final Examination

Topics: Edit editorial for publication

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)

The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) from the U.S. Department of Labor was asked to examine the demands of the workplace and whether young people are capable of meeting those demands. Specifically, the commission was directed to advise the Secretary of the level of skills required to enter employment. In carrying out this charge, the Commission was asked to do the following:

- Define the skills needed for employment
- Propose acceptable levels of proficiency
- Suggest effective ways to assess proficiency
- Develop a dissemination strategy for the nation's schools, businesses and homes.

SCANS research verifies that what we call workplace know-how defines effective job performances today. This know-how has two elements: competencies and a foundation. This report identifies five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities that lie at the heart of job performance. These eight requirements are essential preparation for all students, whether they go directly to work or plan further education. Thus, the competencies and the foundation should be taught and understood in an integrated fashion that reflects the workplace contexts in which they are applied.

The five SCANS workplace competencies identified by the Commission are the following:

Resources—An ability to identify, organize and allocate time, money, materials, space and people. Much of what you do in the classroom can help develop competency with resources. Planning skills in relation to preparing, working and completing assignments may be emphasized.

Interpersonal—Skills to participate as a member of a team, teach others, serve customers, exercise leadership, negotiate and work with others possessing diverse backgrounds. Cooperative/collaborative learning activities are effective in teaching interpersonal skills. In discussions after group activities, interpersonal lessons and challenges of the activities may be emphasized.

Information—An ability to acquire, organize, evaluate, interpret and communicate information along with using computers to process information. Competency with information is basic to any classroom. Efforts to master information skills prepare students for future employment may be emphasized.

Systems—An understanding of social, organization and technological systems; an ability to monitor and correct performance; a competence in the design and improvement of systems. Students may have opportunities to use critical thinking skills to identify and analyze systems in their school, community, nation and world.

Technology—The knowledge and skill to select equipment and tools, apply technology to specific tasks, and maintain and troubleshoot software and hardware. Although there are many forms of technology that can be used in class, computers create real interest and opportunities for students. Students are encouraged to make computers an important part of their education, whether the computers are used in self-paced learning or in group projects.

The three SCANS foundation skills identified by the Commission are the following:

Basic Skills—Reading, writing, mathematics, listening and speaking. Classroom activities can develop and reinforce all these basic skills. Learning these skills in the classroom can provide cross-curricular opportunities.

Thinking Skills—Creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, seeing things in the mind's eye, knowing how to learn and reasoning. During their careers, students will need this foundation to adapt to a rapidly changing society. Learning to think critically becomes very important so that students may adjust to change. Opportunities

for students to stretch their minds, find new answers, ask hard questions and lay foundations for lifelong learning will be sought.

Personal Qualities—Responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management and integrity. Throughout their lives, students will need to get along with others: with classmates, friends and family, customers, and coworkers. Chances to reinforce good personal qualities will be sought.

SCANS workplace competencies and foundation skills have been integrated into Writing for Multimedia Communication (IMED 1359). The following SCANS items are covered in this course:

- *Managing Resources*: Manage time; Manage materials
- *Working With Information*: Acquire/Evaluate data; Organize/maintain information; Interpret/communicate data; Process information with computers
- *Exhibiting Interpersonal Skills*: Work on teams; Negotiate with others
- *Applying System Knowledge*: N/A
- *Using Technology*: Apply technology to specific tasks
- *Demonstrating Basic Skills*: Reading; Writing; Speaking; Listening
- *Demonstrating Thinking Skills*: Creative thinking; Decision making; Problem solving; Thinking logically; Seeing with the mind's eye
- *Exhibiting Personal Qualities*: Individual responsibility; Self-esteem; Sociability; Self-management; Integrity

Acknowledgment of Syllabus

Please fill in the following information and return this page to the instructor before leaving class. Also, please read the consent paragraph and check the box if you agree to allow your work to be displayed. Not checking the box implies that you do not grant your consent to display your work.

Student Name: _____

Student ID Number: _____

Student Home Phone: _____

Student Work Phone: _____

I have read and understand the contents of the course syllabus for *IMED 1359 — Writing for Multimedia Communication*.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____