

JLMC 547 – Science Communication Graduate Student Syllabus Addendum – Spring 2010

MW 12:20 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. and M 3:10-4:00 p.m.

Instructor:

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Office Hours: MW 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. and by appointment

Graduate Level Objectives: As graduate students, you are expected to go beyond that which is expected of the undergraduate students. Because I want this class to be of use to your future plans, you have a choice of academic or professional emphasis for your additional 547 requirements.

Relevance of 347 syllabus: All requirements and procedures from the 347 syllabus remain valid for 547.

Grading: We will keep the same grade breakdown as 347, but your story 1, story 2 and final project assignments will depend on the emphasis you choose.

Final Grade Breakdown

Story 1	15%
Story 2	15%
Final Project	35%
Discussion Leader Performance	10%
Class Assignments	10%
Quizzes	10%
Participation and Discussion	5%

Academic Emphasis: The goal of the academic emphasis of 547 is to produce a research paper (or research proposal depending on methodology) investigating a current aspect of science communication with the eventual goal of acceptance in an academic conference or publication in an academic journal. Successful graduate students will leave this class with the ability to understand theories of science communication, identify relevant literature, clearly conceptualize and operationalize measures, and conduct original research.

- **Graduate Level Assignments:** Conducting original research requires a process of exploring existing research, formulating original ideas, designing and completing a clearly outlined study and producing a final paper. Graduate students will be expected to experience this process over the semester turning in assignments at intervals to ensure timely progress.

Our 547 meeting period will serve as a time to present your progress to your peers and discuss questions or concerns about your findings.

Professional Emphasis: The goal of the professional emphasis of 547 is to build a significantly strong and diverse portfolio of science writing with the eventual goal of publication in a media outlet of your choice. Successful graduate students will leave this class with the ability to understand theories of science communication, specialize in an area of science communication, generate meaningful topics of science, perform background research, interview appropriate sources and compose targeted articles for outlets of science media.

- **Graduate Level Assignments:** Building a portfolio requires writing a significant amount of science stories. Graduate students will therefore be expected to construct one original, multi-source science article per week. Throughout the class, we will discuss two major roles of science in science communication: science as topic and science within society. You must write at least one story of each type, although a more even distribution is recommended to provide a diverse set of stories in your portfolio.

Our 547 meeting period will serve as a time to present your stories to your peers and brainstorm about ideas and sources on the construction of the following week's story.

I want this class to provide you with a solid portfolio that can be of use if you decide to go into science communication. Here are a few hints:

- Specialize: Science is a large concept and specializing in an area will allow you to be more acquainted with the appropriate science and sources.
- Choose a target: Where do you want to be published? Don't write a collection of articles and hope they fit somewhere; choose a specific outlet for which you would like to write and target your writing appropriately. The required length and style of your article will depend on your target publication or organization.
- Keep up to date on what is happening in science: You need to know what is being written about in science to know what will be the next new angle on a topic. Some good sites include: sciencenews.org, sciencedaily.com, eurekaalert.org, nytimes.com/pages/science, etc.
- Awards and Publication: While it will not be required for your grade, I fully expect some of your writing be at a professional level. At the end of the semester, I encourage you to contact your targeted outlet or look at available awards to be recognized for your hard work. I will assist you in any way possible. Some good areas to look include: www.nasw.org (national association of science writers), casw.org (council for the advancement of science writing), www.amma.org (american medical writers association) and the journal science has a nice webpage on beginning a career in science writing (http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/previous_issues/articles/3570/starting_a_career_in_science_writing)

I am giving you a lot of latitude in your stories, which can be both a blessing and a curse. I am also pushing you to write a significant amount of stories this semester. Stick with it, ask for help when stressed, and I guarantee you will be proud of what you have accomplished at the end of the semester and have 13 solid articles in your professional portfolio.

547 Schedule:

Note: All assignments must be posted on WebCT 24 hours before their listed date so the class has time to read all posts before class. All students are expected to read each other's work and be ready to discuss when coming to class.

Week 1: 1/11	No meeting.
Week 2: 1/18	Introduction during latter part of class on Wednesday.
Week 3: 1/25	Academic: Research Proposal due (2-3 page abstract) Professional: Come to class with a chosen specialty and identify an outlet for your writing. Bring to class an example of this outlet and tell us the types of science writing published in this outlet, the style of writing and an approximate length. Your first two story ideas are due.
Week 4: 2/1	Academic: Abstracts of 15+ studies related to individual project (3-4 page) Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due.
Week 5: 2/8	Academic: Conceptual and operational definitions (2 pages) Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due.
Week 6: 2/15	Academic: Draft of data analysis report (3 pages) Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due.
Week 7: 2/22	Academic: Draft of completed introduction and literature review. Prepare to revise and turn in finished draft during next Monday's class for Story 1 grade. Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due. Prepare to turn in best story thus far during next Monday's class for Story 1 grade.
Week 8: 3/1	Academic: Progress Report Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due.
Week 9: 3/8	Academic: Progress Report Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due.
Week 10: 3/15	Spring break – no class

- Week 11: 3/22 **Academic:** Progress Report
Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due.
- Week 12: 3/29 **Academic:** Progress Report
Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due.
- Week 13: 4/5 **Academic:** Draft of complete paper. Prepare to revise and turn in finished draft during next Monday's class for Story 2 grade.
Professional: Original story due. Two story ideas due. Prepare to turn in best story thus far during next Monday's class for Story 2 grade.
- Week 14: 4/12 Final Project:
Academic: Continue working on data analysis and writing as necessary.
Professional: Join undergraduates in their final project.
- Week 15: 4/19 Final Project continues
Academic: Continue working on data analysis and writing as necessary.
Professional: Join undergraduates in their final project.
- Week 16: 4/26 Final Project continues
Academic: Continue working on data analysis and writing as necessary.
Professional: Some final project materials due.
- Week 17: 5/7 Final: Fri. 5/7, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m., on Hamilton 10A
Academic: Final draft due and class presentation.
Professional: All of final project due and class presentation.

