

COM4208: MAGAZINE WRITING AND PRODUCTION

Effective Term

Semester A 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Magazine Writing and Production

Subject Code

COM - Media and Communication

Course Number

4208

Academic Unit

Media and Communication (COM)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The course aims to expand and sharpen students' writing and production skills, with an emphasis on engaging prose and artful layout that capture readers' imagination and pull them into and through in-depth articles that entertain as they inform. On the business side, students will gain working knowledge of the editorial process of magazine publishing, from the perspective of both the freelance writer and staff editor.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify strong magazine story ideas	5		x	
2	Demonstrate interview for rich narratives	10		x	x
3	Apply writing skills for strong, feature-style leads	10		x	
4	Organize full-length features	30		x	x
5	Engage readers with artful language, narrative, and tone	20	x		
6	Produce good caption stories	5		x	
7	Design magazine layout that is up to professional standards	20		x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures and case studies	Students will engage in formal lectures and case studies of good and bad magazine story ideas	1	1 week
2	Discussion and exercises	Students will participate in group discussions and exercises on interviews for rich narratives	2	2 weeks
3	Exercises	Students will engage in exercises on writing magazine leads	3	2 weeks

4	Lectures and writing exercises	Students will engage in formal lectures and writing exercises on magazine stories	4, 5	5 weeks
5	Discussion and exercises	Students will participate in discussion and exercises on query letters	6	1 week
6	Lecture and case studies	Students will engage in formal lectures and case studies of magazine layout	7	2 weeks

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	Recognize strong magazine story ideas with creative input	2, 6	5	
2	Interview for rich narratives	1, 2, 3, 4	10	
3	Write strong, feature-style leads	1, 2, 6	10	
4	Write and organize full-length feature report	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	30	
5	Write good caption stories	1	5	
6	Engage readers with artful language, narrative, tone and visual images	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	20	
7	Design magazine layout that is up to professional standards	1, 6, 7	20	

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Topic Selection

Criterion

1. Easy to manage or not
2. Interesting or not

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Very good

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good

Fair (C+, C, C-)

ModerateGood

Marginal (D)

Fair

Failure (F)

Bad

Assessment Task

Write up essays

Criterion

1. Grasp the creative idea
2. Attractive

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Very good

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good

Fair (C+, C, C-)

ModerateGood

Marginal (D)

Fair

Failure (F)

Bad

Assessment Task

Visual and design layout

Criterion

1. Creative, visually impactful
2. Photo usage is good or not

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Very good

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good

Fair (C+, C, C-)

ModerateGood

Marginal (D)

Fair

Failure (F)

Bad

Additional Information for AR**Grading Criteria for Writing Assignments**

A - The story is well written and free of errors. The lead is clear, concise and interesting. The story is well organized and contains effective transitions, quotations, descriptions and anecdotes. It can be published by magazines.

B - The story contains only a few minor errors of style. The lead clearly summarizes the story, and the body presents all the information for a comprehensive news story. The story is written in a cohesive, well-organized manner. The story is not as detailed, descriptive or interesting as an “A” story. A magazine could publish the story after minimal editing.

C - The story is superficial. The lead is too wordy and fails to clearly emphasize the latest, most interesting or most important aspects of the story. The story tends to be disorganized and contains many minor errors. Some parts have to be rewritten because they are repetitious, awkward or confusing. It could be published only after extensive editing.

D - The story contains all the necessary facts, but those facts are presented so ineffectively that they would have to be rewritten before the story could be published. The story also may contain an unacceptable number of stylistic, spelling or grammatical errors.

F - The story could not be published by any publication and is so incomplete, confusing or erroneous that the facts in the story could not be rewritten and published.

Grading Criteria for the Use of Language (20% of each writing assignment)

Accuracy = 4 points

Conciseness = 4 points

Expression = 4 points

Grammar = 4 points

Style = 4 points

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

Magazine writing; Narrative structures of magazine articles; Feature stories; Human interest.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Jenny McKay (2000). The magazines handbook. London ; New York: Routledge.
2	John Morrish (2003). Magazine editing: how to develop and manage a successful publication. London: Routledge.
3	Time magazine

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil