

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
DIVISION OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

**REQUEST FOR INCLUSION OF A COURSE IN THE
GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:
EDUCATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY**

DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL: COMMUNICATION & THEATRE ARTS

COLLEGE: CAS

DEPARTMENT CONTACT: MARY ANN WATSON

CONTACT PHONE: 7-0064

CONTACT EMAIL: MWATSON@EMICH.EDU

1. SUBJECT CODE, NUMBER, AND TITLE: CTAT 344 CONTINUITY WRITING FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA
2. CREDIT HOURS: 3
3. Course Description

CTAT 344: Students will be introduced to the process of writing nonfiction material for electronic media, including commercials, public service announcements, and commentaries. Information-gathering techniques and standard script formats will be covered. Vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the importance of meeting deadlines are also key components in the course content. The overarching theme of CTAT 344 is that effective continuity writing is a blend of creativity and discipline.

4. This course is (check one):

- X an existing course with no revisions** (need not go through the input system)
- an existing course with revisions (attach this form to Request for Course Revision form)
- a new course (attach this form to Request for New Course form)

5. Check the General Education requirement this course is intended to meet. If the course is to be proposed for more than one requirement, submit a separate form for each one.

- Effective Communication**
- Quantitative Reasoning (*QR designation*)**

X Writing Intensive (*WI designation*)

Perspectives on a Diverse World

Global Awareness

U.S. Diversity

Knowledge of the Disciplines

Arts

Humanities

Science

Social Science

- Learning Beyond the Classroom (*LBC designation*)
- Self and Well Being
- Community Service, Citizenship, and Leadership
- Cultural and Academic Activities and Events
- Career and Professional Development
- International and Multicultural Experience
- Undergraduate Research

6. Rationale. Provide a concise, clear, jargon-free explanation of why this is a General Education course and how it fits into this specific area of the program. (The rationale should explain to students why they are taking the course. It should address both why it is part of the General Education program and why it fits into the particular category.) This rationale should appear on the general course syllabus provided here and should be included in specific course syllabi given to students.

CTAT 344 merits Writing Intensive designation because it simulates the process of creating nonfiction material for electronic media. Its purpose is to give students a foundation in continuity writing through the assignment of projects that require research, creative brainstorming, writing, and revising. Electronic Media and Film Studies majors and minors are required to complete a 300-level writing class. CTAT 344 is the most commonly chosen in our area.

7. Clearly and concisely explain how this course meets each of the General Education outcomes for the requirement checked in number five (all outcomes should be addressed). To do this, (a) list the General Education outcomes for the requirement and explain how the course meets each outcome; and (b) explain, in general terms, the method(s) of evaluation to be used in the course and how these methods assess the degree to which students have met the General Education outcomes for this requirement.

Develop and employ successful, flexible writing and reading strategies that support sustained inquiry in a discipline.

Students in CTAT 344 will understand and employ the process model of 1) Information gathering, 2) creative brainstorming, 3) scripting in format, 4) first draft, and 5) editing and revision. The first step—information gathering—requires the development of discriminating reading strategies. For instance, discerning the difference between advocacy or promotional materials and legitimate journalistic inquiries is critical to the process. The requirement of a non-graded first draft is essential to give students the flexibility to innovate.

Use writing strategies that achieve the purpose(s) for writing and address the expectations of audiences within a disciplinary context

The focus group interview is a standard tool in the field of electronic media to elicit information on how to engage audiences of particular demographic groups, sometimes called “Lifestyle Segments.” For instance, “Soccer Moms” is a well-know lifestyle segment that rose to prominence in the 1990s. The group demographic consists of middle-to upper-middle class working women with children who have not yet reached driving age and rely on maternal chauffeuring. In this class, students will learn—through case studies in the text and in the trade literature—the benefits and limits of this type of research in the creation of popular media messages.

Formulate research questions and employ strategies for researching and responding to those questions

In addition to focus group research, students in CTAT 344 will be introduced to traditional survey and opinion research and will recognize how it informs and influences the content of advertising, entertainment, and informative programming. This information will be conveyed through class discussion of text material and “current events” culled from the general and trade press.

Use discipline-specific genres to communicate information

The Continuity Writing course will train students in the mechanics of copywriting style for electronic media. Standard script formats—including the conventions for indicating sound effects, shot transitions, and the manner in which dialogue is delivered—will be taught.

Understand conventions for communicating, disseminating, and interpreting information within a discipline

Students in CTAT 344 will be familiar with the organizational structure of media institutions. For instance, the relationship between a broadcast network and its affiliate stations will be covered as will the structure of cable and satellite delivery systems. Students will understand the function of advertising agencies, public relations firms, and government regulatory bodies such as the FCC and the FTC. A basic knowledge of audience measurement techniques will also be introduced. As consumers of mass media and popular culture, will also draw from their own experiences on the effectiveness of media messages. CTAT 344 puts their own critiques in a professional framework.

Methods of Evaluation

There are six graded writing assignments in CTAT 344. An assignment sheet that explains expectations—which were also the subject of class discussion—is distributed to students. Points are awarded on the basis of how well these criteria are met. (An assignment example is attached to the syllabus.) The creative use of audio-visual elements and an innovative approach to the task are key factors to success in each assignment.

In addition, a final exam is given on material and concepts presented in class and in the text book readings—including vocabulary, punctuation, and grammar.

8. Attach a syllabus (1-inch margins and 10-12 pt. font). The syllabus must include the rationale from #6 above and clearly reflect the outcomes and methods of evaluation detailed in #7 above.

CTAT 344
Continuity Writing for Electronic Media

Instructor: Mary Ann Watson, 129 Quirk Building, 734/487-0064

Text: *Copywriting for the Electronic Media* (Fifth Edition)
by Milan D. Meeske (Thomson Wadsworth, 2006)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

CTAT 344 is a class about the process of writing continuity material for electronic media. Students will be introduced to the information-gathering techniques and the standard script formats used in the field. Vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the importance of meeting deadlines are key components in the course content. The overarching theme of CTAT 344 is that effective continuity writing is a blend of creativity and discipline.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

Students who successfully complete CTAT 344 will:

- 1) Understand and employ the process model of: a) information gathering, b) creative brainstorming, c) scripting in format, d) first draft and e) revision and editing
- 2) Formulate strategies to engage audiences of particular demographic groups
- 3) Recognize how research informs and influences the content of advertising, entertainment, and informative programming
- 4) Use standard scriptwriting formats and style conventions
- 5) Be familiar with the way media organizations evaluate and disseminate the work of continuity writers

The Ground Rules

All assignments, including in-class exercises and the final test must be submitted in order to pass this course. No faxed, e-mailed or hand-written submissions will be accepted.

Late assignments will be accepted for full credit only under extenuating circumstances such as a death in the family or serious illness.

Please make a copy, or make sure you have a computer backup before submitting an assignment. Please staple multiple-page assignments.

Students are allowed three absences during the term (although an absence does not exempt a student from an assignment deadline). Each absence beyond three will cause the participation grade to drop by two points. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions and critiques. Our classroom, however, is a profanity-free zone.

Notice: Academic dishonesty—plagiarism, cheating—will be penalized.

Final Grades in CTAT 344 are based on the following 100-point scale:

Advertising Position Paper (3-4 pages)	10 points
Final Draft 30-second TV Commercial.	15 points
Public Service Announcement Position Paper (3-4 pages)	10 points
Final Draft 30-second PSA	15 points
Final Draft “This I Believe”	20 points
Critique of “The Best of Broadcast Writing” (2-3 pages)	10 points
Final “Check Out” Test	10 points
Presentation Style/Attendance/Participation in Good Spirit.	10 points

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week One:

Housekeeping/Intro to Course—“The Commitment to Write”
The 5-Step Process Model

Reading: Chapter One—The Broadcast Copywriter
Chapter Two—Copywriting Style, Basic Mechanics

I. ADVERTISING

Week Two:

The “Unique Selling Proposition”—Knowing the Product
The Emotional Response—Knowing the Audience
Slogan Analysis: The Phrase That Stays

Reading: Chapter 4—Advertising Basics
Chapter 5—Motivation

Week Three:

Advertising Techniques
Script Formats
Advertising Position Paper DUE

Reading: Chapter Six—Organizing the Broadcast Commercial
Chapter 11—Types of Television Commercials

Week Four:

Discussion of Position Papers
Examples of Classic Ad Campaigns
First Draft of TV Commercial DUE

Reading: Chapter 10—The Television Commercial (Mechanics)

Week Five:

In-class Pitches
Final Draft TV Commercial DUE

Reading: Chapter 3—The Legal and Ethical Implications of Copywriting

II. PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week Six:

Techniques of Persuasion

Prompting Generosity

Changing Behavior

Reading: Chapter 13—Public Service, Issue, and Political Announcements

Week Seven:

View and Analyze Professional PSA Campaigns

PSA Position Paper DUE

Reading: Chapter 14—The Broadcast Campaign

Week Eight:

Discussion of Position Papers

Examples of Classic PSA Campaigns

First Draft PSA DUE

Reading: Chapter 12—Promotion

Week Nine:

PSA presentations

Final Draft PSA DUE

Chapter 16—Writing for the Internet

III. RADIO COMMENTARY: “THIS I BELIEVE”

Week Ten:

Examples of Radio Commentaries

Personal Stories

Social Issues

Reading: Chapter 9—Types of Radio Copy

Week Eleven:

NPR Guidelines for “This I Believe” Submission

Crafting the Message

First Draft of “This I Believe” DUE

Reading: Chapter 17—Corporate Programs

Week Twelve:

Improvisational Writing Exercise

Week Thirteen:

Final Draft “This I Believe” DUE

“This I Believe” presentations

IV. THE BEST OF BROADCAST WRITING

Week Fourteen:

Examples and Critique of Extraordinarily Wonderful Writing

Week Fifteen:

2-3page critique of “The Best of Broadcast Writing” examples DUE

Last Day—Course Wrap-up

Exam Period: Final “Check Out” Test

CTAT 344 PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

3 to 4-page Position Paper

- Select one client from the list of options below.
- Research the issue or cause your client wants to publicize. At least six sources should be consulted with at least three of those sources being publications of legitimate journalism such as major newspapers or newsmagazines.
- Prepare a summary on the background and status of the issue or cause. If there is opposition to your client’s position, it should be noted.
- Conduct a focus group with at least five people in the target audience regarding their thoughts, ideas, and feelings on the issue involved. Identify what “responsive chord” is likely to prompt generosity or to inspire an attempt to change behavior.
- Suggest a strategy to reach the target audience through a PSA campaign.

1. National Safety Transportation Board

Urge drivers not to use cell phones while behind the wheel

Target audience: Young drivers age 16-25

2. American Cancer Society

Persuade young people not to sunbathe or use tanning booths

Target audience: Teenagers through mid-20s

3. Chimp Haven

Generate contributions for retirement home for chimps used in medical research

Target audience: Families with children under the age of 10

4. International Association for Organ Donation

Encourage a commitment to organ donation and making that commitment known to family and friends

Target audience: Young adults ages 18-30

5. Girl Scouts of America

Solicit direct financial donations for the upkeep of Girl Scout camps

Target audience: Women ages 45-65+ who are former Scouts

6. American Academy of Pediatrics

Encourage lifestyle changes to prevent childhood obesity

Target audience: Parents of children ages of 6-14

CTAT 344

30-second Public Service Announcement

Evaluation

1. Format/Professional look of submission

1 1.5 2 2.5 3

2. Innovative approach and/or Effective visual metaphor

1 1.5 2 2.5 3

3. Specific appeal to target audience

1 1.5 2 2.5 3

4. Creative use of audio-visual elements

1 1.5 2 2.5 3

5. Memorable/clever slogan with layered meaning

1 1.5 2 2.5 3

Please submit all materials in electronic form.

Action of the Department/College

1. Department

Vote of department faculty: For _____ Against _____ Abstentions _____

Department Head

Date

2. College

College Dean

Date

Action of General Education Advisory Committee

Vote of General Education Committee: For _____ Against _____ Abstentions _____

Chairperson, General Education Advisory Committee

Date

Approval

Associate Vice-President for Undergraduate Studies and Curriculum

Date