

Writing for Visual Media
Fall 2023
Mon-Wed 3-4:50 pm, Clark C254

Instructor: Steve Weiss
Clark C-204
steven.weiss@colostate.edu
303-880-7221

Textbook: Writing for Visual Media, 5th Edition
By Anthony Friedmann
(available at the CSU bookstore and online)

Course Description: Audience and subject research; script structure and development; narrative techniques; visual story and role of visual media as change agents.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course, you should have:

- Writing skill: You must be able to write clearly and concisely, and you must have a good command of grammar.
- Analytical ability: You must be able to pinpoint the needs of your target audience and separate essential from unnecessary information.
- Interest in diverse topics: Good scripts require enthusiasm toward research.
- Organizational skill: You must be able to organize information into logical sequences.
- Empathy for your audience: You must be skilled to tune into their attitudes, motivations, learning styles, and interests.
- Ability to think visually: You must be able to present information and convey ideas with visuals, not just words.
- Continuity: Your scripts must be in sync with the visuals you are using, what the audience “hears or reads” should be compatible with the accompanying visuals.
- Creativity: Creative thinking is required for successful scripts.
- Presentation and selling skills: You must be able to present your ideas effectively to management and clients and sell them on your work.
- Ability to work on a team: You will interact with several people with different functions and individual goals.

Course Expectations

Always bring your required textbook to class. We will be doing a considerable amount of writing each class period. Make sure you have an efficient plan/method to save your finished scripts online and/or on a secure media drive.

Attendance is mandatory. Absences will only be excused if I am notified ahead of time. After three absences, your grade will be dropped one letter grade per subsequent

absence. You are responsible for making up the writing exercise done in class the day you are absent.

Assignments will be turned in on time. Late submissions will be penalized 20% per day.

All assignments must be typed and double-spaced.

You will be expected to have completed the assigned readings before class.

Computers will be turned off in class unless we are doing a writing assignment.

Course announcements will be sent to you via email, so check your email frequently.

Plagiarism, falsification of facts, cheating, or buying material from the internet is unacceptable in the journalism field, and is also unacceptable in class. Students caught engaging in such behaviors will be disciplined according to CSU guidelines, and a grade of "F" will be awarded for the assignment and possibly the entire course.

Grading

Accuracy in journalism is critical. You will be graded on the technical features, accuracy, clarity, balance, organization, creativity, and readability of your writing. Typos, misspells, factual errors, and grammatical errors are unacceptable; points will be deducted.

Grades will be assigned using the University-approved plus/minus system:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	70-76
D	60-69
F	below 59

Assignments and their points are as follows:


In-class Quizzes (based on textbook readings)	110
Attendance and participation	50
In-Class Writing Assignments	740
Final Project	100
TOTAL POINTS FOR THE SEMESTER	1000

This course meets the following professional values and competencies as outlined by The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications . This JMC course will help you:

- understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;^{[[L]], [SEP]}
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;^{[[L]], [SEP]}
- demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;^{[[L]], [SEP]}
- understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;^{[[L]], [SEP]}
- demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;^{[[L]], [SEP]}
- think critically, creatively and independently;^{[[L]], [SEP]}
- write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes you serve;^{[[L]], [SEP]}
- critically evaluate your own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;^{[[L]], [SEP]}
- apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which you work, and to understand the digital world.

Academic Integrity

CSU takes academic integrity seriously. At minimum, academic integrity means that no one will use another's work as his/her own. Plagiarism is the unauthorized or unacknowledged use of another person's academic or scholarly work. Done on purpose, it is cheating. Done accidentally, it is no less serious. Regardless of how it occurs, plagiarism is a theft of intellectual property and a violation of an ironclad rule demanding "credit be given where credit is due."

If you plagiarize in your work you can lose credit for the plagiarized work, fail the assignment, or fail the course. Plagiarism can result in expulsion from the university. Each instance of plagiarism, classroom cheating, and other types of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to the principles published in the CSU General Catalog: <http://www.catalog.colostate.edu/FrontPDF/1.6POLICIES1112f.pdf>. 

Academic integrity means more than just avoiding plagiarism. It also involves doing your own reading and studying. It includes regular class attendance, careful consideration of all class materials, and engagement with the class and your fellow students. Academic

integrity lies at the core of our common goal: to create an intellectually honest and rigorous community. Because academic integrity, and the personal and social integrity of which academic integrity is an integral part, is so central to our mission as students, teachers, scholars, and citizens, we will ask to you sign the CSU Honor Pledge as part of completing all of our major assignments. While you will not be required to sign the honor pledge, we will ask each of you to write and sign the following statement on your papers and exams:

"I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance."

Student safety & community practices

- CSU's Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation policy designates faculty and employees of the University as "Responsible Employees." This designation is consistent with federal law and guidance, and requires faculty to report information regarding students who may have experienced any form of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation. This includes information shared with faculty in person, electronic communications or in class assignments. As "Responsible Employees," faculty may refer students to campus resources (see below), together with informing the Office of Support and Safety Assessment to help ensure student safety and welfare. Information regarding sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking and retaliation is treated with the greatest degree of confidentiality possible while also ensuring student and campus safety.

Any student who may be the victim of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking or retaliation is encouraged to report to CSU through one or more of the following resources:

- o Emergency Response, call 911
- o Deputy Title IX Coordinator/Office of Support and Safety Assessment, call (970) 491-1350
- o Colorado State University Police Department (non-emergency), call (970) 491-6425

For counseling support and assistance, please see the CSU Health Network, which includes a variety of counseling services that can be accessed at: <http://www.health.colostate.edu/>.

And, the Sexual Assault Victim Assistance Team is a confidential student resource that does not have a reporting requirement and that can be of great help to students who have experienced sexual assault. The web address is <http://www.wgac.colostate.edu/need-help-support>.

Important information for students: All students are expected and required to report any COVID-19 symptoms to the university immediately, as well as exposures or positive tests from a non-CSU testing location.

If you suspect you have symptoms, or if you know you have been exposed to a positive person or have tested positive for COVID, you are required to fill out the COVID Reporter (<https://covid.colostate.edu/reporter/>). If you know or believe you have been exposed, including living with someone known to be COVID positive, or are symptomatic, it is important for the health of yourself and others that you complete the online COVID Reporter. Do not ask your instructor to report for you. If you do not have internet access to fill out the online COVID-19 Reporter, please call (970) 491-4600. You may also report concerns in your academic or living spaces regarding COVID exposures through the COVID Reporter. You will not be penalized in any way for reporting. When you complete the COVID Reporter for any reason, the CSU Public Health office is notified. Once notified, that office will contact you and, depending upon each situation, will conduct contact tracing, initiate any necessary public health requirements and notify you if you need to take any steps.

For the latest information about the University's COVID resources and information, please visit the CSU COVID-19 site: <https://covid.colostate.edu/>.
Course Outline and Schedule (subject to revision)

****CLASS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE****

- Week 1**
- Mon, Aug 21: Introduction to Course**
Discussion - Scriptwriting/Format/Jobs/Grading/Attendance/Expectations
Quiz #1 on course discussion topics from today
Reading assignment for next week: Chapter 1
- Wed, Aug 23: Describing One Medium through Another**
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 1, Quiz #2: Chapter 1
Writing assignment 1: High Noon Shot List, due on Monday
- Week 2**
- Mon, Aug 28: More discussion of Chapter 1**
Due: Writing assignment 1
Quiz #3: Chapter 1
Writing assignment 2, Adapt a book, due on Wednesday
Reading assignment for next class: Chapter 2
- Wed, Aug 30: A 7-Step Method for Developing a Creative Concept**
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 2
Due: Writing Assignment 2
Quiz #4: Chapter 2
Quiz #5: Chapter 2
Writing Assignment 3: Write a Creative Concept, due Wednesday after Labor Day
Writing assignment 4: True Grit Update, due Wednesday after Labor Day
Reading assignment for next class: Chapter 3
- Week 3**
- Mon, Sep 4: Labor Day Holiday**
No class today
- Wed, Sep 6: Describing Sight and Sound**
Writing assignments 3 and 4 due
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 3
Quiz #6: Chapter 3
Writing Assignment 5: Matrix Scene, due on Monday
- Week 4**
- Mon, Sep 11: more discussion of Chapter 3**
Quiz #7: Chapter 3
Writing assignment 5 is due
Reading assignment for next class: Chapter 4
- Wed, Sep 13: Stages of Script Development**
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 4
Quiz #8: Chapter 4
Writing assignment 6: TV Series Concept, due Monday

- Week 5**
- Mon, Sep 18:** More discussion of Chapter 4
Writing assignment 6 due
Present TV Series concept pitch
Writing assignment 7: the pilot for your pitch, due on Wednesday
Quiz 9: Chapter 4
Reading assignment for next class: Chapter 5
- Wed, Sep 20:** Ads and PSAs: Copywriting for Visual Media
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 5
Writing assignment 7 is due
Quiz 10: Chapter 5
Writing assignment 8: short script for ad or PSA, due Monday
- Week 6**
- Mon, Sep 25:** More discussion on VNRs and billboards
Writing assignment 8 is due
Quiz 11: Chapter 5
Writing assignment 9: Billboards, are due Wednesday
Reading assignment for next class: Chapter 6
- Wed, Sep 27:** Corp Comm: Selling, Telling, Training and Promoting
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 6
Quiz 12: Chapter 6
Writing assignment 9 is due, review billboards in class
Writing assignment 10: Corporate Treatment, due Monday
- Week 7**
- Mon, Oct 2:** More discussion on corporate visual writing
Writing assignment 10 is due.
Writing assignment 11: JMC Recruiting Video, due next Wednesday
Reading assignment for next class, Chapter 7
- Wed, Oct 4:** Documentary and Nonfiction Narrative
Writing assignment 11 is due.
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 7
Quiz 13: Chapter 7
Writing assignment 12: Ken Burns, due on Monday
- Week 8**
- Mon, Oct 9:** More on Documentary and Nonfiction Narrative
Writing assignment 12 is due by start of class.
Writing assignment 13, David Mamet, is due by the end of Monday's class.
- Wed, Oct 11:** Guest Speaker
Quiz 14 on Chapter 7
Writing assignment 13 is due
Reading assignment for next week, Chapter 8

- Week 9** **Mon, Oct 16:** Visual Storytelling: Dramatic Structure and Form
Lecture/discussion Chapter 8
Writing assignment 14, Lynch and Lee, due on Wednesday
- Wed, Oct 18:** More lecture/discussion Chapter 8
Writing assignment 14 is due
Reading assignment for next week is Chapter 9
- Week 10** **Mon, Oct 23:** Writing Techniques for Long-Form Scripts
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 9
Quiz 15: Chapter 9
Writing assignment 15: Jodie Foster Personal Experience, due Wednesday
- Wed, Oct 25:** More discussion on Chapter 9
Work on personal experience scripts
Reading assignment for next week is Chapter 10
- Week 11** **Mon, Oct 30:** Television Series, Sitcoms, and Soaps
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 10
Writing assignment 15 is due
Quiz 16 on Chapter 10
Writing assignment 16: The next scene of your TV series, due on Wednesday
- Wed, Nov 1:** More lecture discussion on Chapter 10
Writing assignment 16 is due
Writing assignment 17: How to Scare Me and Make Me Laugh, due on Monday
Reading assignment for next week is Chapter 11
- Week 12** **Mon, Nov 6:** Writing and Interactive Design
Lecture/discussion Chapter 11
Quiz 17 on Chapter 11
Writing assignment 17 is due
Writing assignment 18: Writing an Interactive Resume, due on Wednesday
Reading assignment for Wednesday is Chapter 12
- Wed, Nov 8:** Writing for Interactive Communications
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 12
Quiz 18 on Chapter 12
Writing assignment 18 is due
Writing assignment 19, A Web Writing Case Study, is due Monday
Reading assignment for next week is Chapter 13
- Week 13** **Mon, Nov 13:** Guest Speaker
Writing assignment 19 is due
Writing assignment 20: Review of guest speakers, due by Wednesday

Wed, Nov 15: Writing for Video Games
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 13
Writing assignment 20 is due.
Quiz 19: Chapter 13
Reading assignment for next week is Chapter 14

Week 14 *****Fall Break- No classes*****

Week 15 **Mon, Nov 27: Writing for Mobile Media Platforms**
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 14
Quiz 20: Chapter 14
Writing assignment 21: Social Media Post, due at end of class
Writing assignment 21 is due

Wed, Nov 29: More discussion on Chapter 14
Writing assignment 22: Writing News for Mobile Content, is due Monday
Reading assignment for next week is Chapter 15

Week 16 **Mon, Dec 4: You Can Get Paid to Do This**
Lecture/discussion on Chapter 15
Writing assignment 22 is due
Quiz 21: Chapter 15

Wed, Dec 6: Final wrap-up and work on final scripts

Exam Week **Mon, Dec 11, 7:30-9:30 AM (Final Exam session)**
****Final Projects are due****