CLASS OUTLINE

Purpose: The goal of the course is to develop an understanding of the role of the journalist in covering the courts and to enhance the ability to cover the judicial process--coverage of which makes up to one-half of local news coverage (print and broadcast)--in a responsible and professional manner.

Objectives and Values: Knowledge and understanding of news values and of the legal and ethical principles in journalistic work; ability to write well-organized copy that adheres to journalists principles and is clear and compelling; devotion to accuracy; imaginative and enterprising in securing and using live and documentary sources; work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy and fairness; think critically, creatively and independently.

Prerequisite: CMMN A101 with a minimum grade of C or permission


Grade: Coverage of Speakers: 20%

Outside Reporting Assignments (5): 60%

Final Project: 20%

Attendance: All assignments must be turned in on deadline on paper, no e-mail or fax accepted. No makeup work and no late work accepted.

Online Resources: Syllabus is posted on LORA. Blackboard access will be explained in class.

Integrity of Scholarship: Please note pp 50-51 LU Bulletin for policy regarding cheating and plagiarism.

Note: Students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations in this class should contact Disability Services at 865.2990 by January 11th.

Instructor: S.L. Alexander has worked as a reporter, editor and producer in print, radio and TV, and has been active in various professional organizations. She has spent the past three years as a faculty member of the National Center for Media and the Courts/Judicial College in Reno, participating in workshops for journalists and judges. In addition to the text, she is author of Media and American Courts (ABC-CLIO, 2005) and she is working on a book of tales of high-profile litigants in New Orleans courtrooms.

*TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (1/10)
Introduction

Week 2 (1/17) The Judicial System
Ch 1-2, Ch 3, Ch 5
IRE: The Judicial System, pp 249-267

Week 3 (1/24) The Trial
Ch 6 Criminal Cases: The Trial
IRE: 267-272
Guest Speaker

Week 4 (1/31)
NO Parish Criminal Court

Week 5 (2/7) (No class Thursday 2/7 Mardi Gras Holiday)

Week 6 (2/14) Civil Procedure
Outside Assignment #1 Pre-Trial Coverage due
Chapter 4 Civil Procedure
Chapter 8 Civil Cases
IRE: 294-297
Guest Speaker

Week 7 (2/21)
NO Parish Civil Court

Week 8 (2/28) Post-Trial
Outside Assignment #2 Civil Court Coverage due
Chapter 7 Criminal Cases; Post-Trial Activity
CC: 42-44
IRE: 290-294, 273-275, 282-292
IRE: 275-281
Guest Speaker

Week 9 (3/6)
NO Parish Criminal Court

Week 10 (3/13)
Outside Assignment #3 Trial Coverage due
LA 4th Cir Ct Appeal

Week 11 (3/20) (No class Thursday 3/20, Easter Holiday)

Week 12 (3/27)
Outside Assignment #4 Appeal Court Coverage due
Federal Courthouse

Week 13 (4/3)
Rough Draft of Final Project (Enterprise Story) due

Week 14 (4/10) Cameras in Courtrooms
Outside Assignment #5 Federal Court Coverage due
IRE: 297-308
Chapter 9 Cameras in Courtrooms
Guest Speaker

Week 15 (4/17) Covering the Courts
Final Projects (Enterprise Story) due
Chapter 10 Covering the Courts

Week 16 (4/24)
Return Projects