

MCOM 4183 – Mass Media Internship

Fall 2021 – 3 credits
Friday – 9-10:50 a.m.
Dr. Jim Sernoe

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Office Hours:

Monday – 9-10 a.m. (B128)
 10-11 a.m. (D204)
Tuesday – 11 a.m.-noon (D204)
Wednesday – 9-10 a.m. (B128)
 10-11 a.m. (D204)
Thursday – 11 a.m.-noon (D204)
Also by appointment

Prerequisites

- Completion of MCOM 1243 – Media Writing and Reporting
- Completion of MCOM 3133 – Electronic News Gathering
- Junior standing
- Consent of instructor

Course Objectives/Description

- Students will obtain practical experience in a professional setting.
- Students will understand expectations in a professional setting.
- Students will receive on-site feedback, critique and guidance from a qualified supervisor.
- Students will be able to apply skills learned in the classroom and through extracurricular activities at MSU.

Reading

I have decided not to use a formal textbook for this course this semester. However, required reading will consist of numerous handouts over the course of the semester and will be supplemented by considerable outside assignments/research.

Meetings and Deadlines

All summer internship students are required to attend an orientation meeting on **Monday, April 19, 2021, at 6 p.m.** Additional meetings will be scheduled to discuss portfolios and mock interviews, detailed below. Failure to attend these meetings will result in the cancelation of your internship.

All arrangements for a summer internship, including a signed internship contract, scheduling, duties and other considerations, must be in place by **Friday, June 25, 2021.** Failure to meet this deadline will result in the cancelation of your internship.

Students completing their internships during the Fall 2021 semester must have the signed contract to me by **Friday, Aug. 20, 2021,** and must attend the orientation meeting on **Friday, Aug. 27, 2021, at 9 a.m.** Failure to meet these requirements will result in the cancelation of your internship.

Grading

An internship is not like other courses in which there are set meeting times. The Mass Communication Department considers the internship a form of employment, and as such, students are expected to conduct themselves as employees with little faculty oversight. This means it is up to you to attend regularly, arrive on time, dress appropriately, conduct yourself professionally (this means, among other expectations, that you will not send and receive personal calls, text messages or e-mails while officially on duty), meet deadlines, and participate as a team member, among other responsibilities. As I will not be there day to day to make sure these responsibilities are met – as I would be in a traditional course – I rely on students to behave as adults. I also rely on reports from your supervisor. More information on professional expectations is included below.

You are expected to communicate with me and/or your supervisor about any problems that occur during the internship.

Your contract has further details about grades. As stated in the contract, internships must be served in a face-to-face environment (not through cyberspace) with a qualified supervisor who has experience in the area and gives substantive feedback. As stated in the contract, grades are based on timely submission of weekly logs, a final paper, a letter from your supervisor and a thank-you note to your supervisor.

Students completing the internship during the summer have a due date of Friday, Aug. 20, 2021, for completion of hours, final paper, your supervisor's letter and your thank-you note. Students completing the internship during the fall have a due date of Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2021, for completion of hours, final paper, your supervisor's letter and your thank-you note.

Logs – 30 percent: Logs are to be kept daily and submitted weekly. Grades will be based on timely submission as well as quality. Do not submit several weeks' worth of logs at the end of the internship. Logs must be written using standard grammar, spelling and punctuation (in other words, don't send logs written as if u r sending a txt-msg ☹). Handwritten logs will not be accepted. If your logs fail to follow these guidelines, you will be asked to revise and resubmit.

Example of Weekly Log

1 – Monday, January 20, 2021 4 hours

I arrived at 9 a.m. and met with Sally, the news director, to discuss assignments for the day. I attended the news budget meeting at 9:30 a.m. and observed how reporters pitch their story ideas. I left with Brandon at 10 a.m. to work on a story about the storms the night before. When we got back to the station at around 1 p.m., I helped write and edit the story. I was happy that Brandon listened to my suggestions. We then met with Susan, the assignments editor, for a first read-through. I don't think I'd like her job because she constantly has to tell reporters things they don't want to hear.

Total hours this week: 12

Hours to reach 120: 100

2 – Monday, January 20, 2021 4 hours

I arrived at 9 a.m. and met with Belinda to continue planning the fund-raiser. I called 12 potential sponsors, including, among others, the mayor, an officer at the Air Force base, two business executives and the owners of some local bars. I thought I would hate this task because I never thought of myself as being good at sales, but the mayor bought a table for 12 for \$2000. Even more shocking was when Tina Miller, the owner of Tina's

Workout Mill, bought a \$4000 sponsorship. Belinda now wants me to work on the signage for those two sponsors. Belinda also wants me to make more sponsorship pitches. We then met with the catering team, and I had no idea how expensive these things could be. Belinda tried to bargain with them about prices. Negotiating is something I'm not good at, but Belinda got a 20 percent discount.

Total hours this week: 12
Hours to reach 120: 100

Please note that you must write an entry for each day you work at your internship. If your internship extends past 120 hours, you need to document those hours and submit them, but you don't have to write a full narrative.

Examples of past students' logs will be available at the first meeting.

You may submit your logs via e-mail, fax (397-4909) or mail; or you may put them in my mailbox in the department office. I will verify that I have received your logs.

You are expected to accumulate 120 hours. This can be done in any combination as agreed to by you and the supervisor (e.g., 10 weeks for 12 hours per week; 6 weeks for 20 hours per week; etc.), as long as you reach 120 before the final due date. While I strongly believe interns should be paid for their efforts, the reality is that most are not. This aspect of the internship is strictly between the student and the employing organization.

Final Essay – 15 percent: The final essay should address the following topics:

- Duties
- What you learned
- What you enjoyed/did not enjoy
- Your strengths/weaknesses during the internship
- How your experiences in the Mass Communication did or did not prepare you for this internship
- How you will or will not conduct yourself any differently as you finish your college days at MSU
- How this experience will or will not have an impact on your career/career choices
- Whether you received proper guidance/critique from your supervisor, and how it did or did not affect you
- Whether you would recommend this organization/internship for a future student from MSU.

Final essays must be printed and submitted to the professor. E-mailed submissions will not be accepted. Note due dates listed above.

Supervisor's Letter – 20 percent: The supervisor's letter will address not only your achievements in terms of work quality, but also your ability to conduct yourself professionally (see below). It is your responsibility to make sure the letter from your supervisor arrives on time. A copy of this syllabus will be provided to your supervisor. Note due dates listed above.

Thank-You Letter – 10 percent: You are required to write a thank-you letter to your supervisor and/or the organization at the end of your internship. This letter must be submitted to the professor in an unsealed, addressed, stamped envelope. **Do not send this letter on your own.** I will check all letters for quality in the writing and professionalism before approving them. If you have errors, you will be asked to revise and resubmit.

Please note that there is no provision for late work, including logs, final essay, thank-you letter and letter from your supervisor. If you have a legitimate excuse for missing deadline, please contact me. I reserve the right to determine whether a late assignment or project will be accepted.

If you produce any materials for the organization (e.g., articles, media releases, videos, photos, web sites, social media posts), samples must be submitted before final deadline.

Around the time you achieve approximately 60 hours, I will contact your supervisor for a midterm report on your progress.

You are required to remember that you are representing the department and the university during your internship. As such, you are expected to conduct yourself in ways that will not bring embarrassment to the department or university. It is on you to meet responsibilities in such a way that a supervisor does not say, "We will never have an intern from MSU again."

If you cannot make it a priority to behave responsibly and professionally, please drop now. If you cannot make it a priority to represent the department and the university in ways that will keep our reputation intact, please drop now.

Portfolio – 25 percent: As part of MSU's reaccreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, all mass communication majors are required to submit a portfolio, including work samples and an up-to-date

resume, before completing this course. This requirement is non-negotiable. Students are required to demonstrate competence with the written word, the spoken word and visual communication, as well as critical thinking skills. For this course, the required portfolio will include two examples each of competency with the written word and visual communication. You will receive further information about each of these components as the semester progresses.

Please note that once final portfolios are submitted, they remain on file with the department and university for assessment and accreditation purposes. Students who want copies for themselves or for potential employers will need to make copies on their own before submitting the final version to the professor.

Here is the tentative schedule. Please note that it is subject to change. If changes are made, I will give you reasonable advance notice:

Monday, April 19, 6 p.m. – group meeting – for students completing internships during the summer

Topic: overview of internship requirements

Friday, June 25, 5 p.m. – contract deadline for students completing summer internships

Friday, Aug. 20, 5 p.m. – deadline for students who complete on-site work during the summer for completion of hours, final paper, your supervisor's letter and your thank-you note

Friday, Aug. 27, 9 a.m. – contract deadline for students completing fall internships

Friday, Aug. 27, 9 a.m. – group meeting – for students completing internships during the fall

Topic: overview of internship requirements

Friday, Sept. 3, 9 a.m. – group meeting

Topic: overview of portfolio requirements

Friday, Sept. 10, 9 a.m. – group meeting

Topics: resumes, cover letters

Friday, Sept. 17 – no meeting

Drafts of resumes and cover letters due at 9 a.m.

Friday, Sept. 24 – group meeting

Topics: job searches

resume/cover letter pick-up

Friday, Oct. 1 – no meeting
Final resumes and cover letters due at 9 a.m.

Friday, Oct. 8, 9 a.m. – group meeting
Topic: interviews, part I
Also: drafts of portfolios due

Friday, Oct. 15, 9 a.m. – group meeting
Topic: interviews, part II
Also: portfolio draft return

Friday, Oct. 22, 9 a.m. – group meeting
Final portfolios due
Course wrap-up

Wednesday, Dec. 1, 5 p.m. – deadline for students who complete on-site work during the fall for completion of hours, final paper, your supervisor's letter and your thank-you note

Monday, Dec. 6, 8-10 a.m. – final exam session

Missed Assignments Policy: If you miss **any** assignments or quizzes without being excused, you will fail the course. I reserve the right to determine whether an absence will be excused. In-class assignments may be excused at my discretion; however, all outside assignments must be completed within a reasonable time frame after your absence — no exceptions. In addition, I reserve the right to determine what, exactly, is a "reasonable time frame." In sum: This is a zero-tolerance policy. I have no time or patience for those who are not going to take this class seriously; thus, "three strikes and you're out" does not apply. "ONE strike and you're out" is more applicable. Some past students have flunked the course for this reason. In any case, I tend to be cynical about making up missed assignments, but if you have a legitimate problem, alternate arrangements can be made at my discretion.

If you cannot make it a priority to complete every assignment, on time, please drop now so another student, who is more serious, can have your spot.

By accepting this syllabus and remaining enrolled in this course, you are indicating that you understand the Missed Assignments Policy.

Grade Calculations: Almost all assignments will be graded on a 0-100 scale unless otherwise announced. Final grades will be determined on the

traditional 90/80/70/60 scale.

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, the instructor will, if necessary, provide a Midterm Progress Report through each student's WebWorld account. Any student who is in danger of earning a D or F in this course will receive notification. Midterm grades will not be reported on the student's transcript, nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. They do, however, give students an idea of where they stand at the midpoint of the semester. Students earning below a C at the midway point should contact me as soon as possible to discuss future actions.

Related: If you are unsure of where you stand in this course, you are welcome to – encouraged to – contact me. I am more than willing to go over your grades with you.

Also related: MSU faculty also have the option of filing an Academic Referral and/or a Conduct Referral with appropriate offices, both of which will follow-up with students. I reserve the right to file such referrals when needed. I will always try to contact the student first to request a meeting, but if the student does not respond appropriately, I will file the relevant referral(s).

Two final notes on grading: Critics from both within and outside of higher education have accused faculty of engaging in "grade inflation," the idea that grades don't truly reflect quality and instead have been devalued to the point that an A means very good, a B means average, and anything less than a B is failing. I'm not sure whether those people would include me in their criticisms, but I do know I try my best to adhere to the system as I understand it: an A means outstanding, a B means above average, and a C means average. Please remember these interpretations as the semester progresses.

Please remember also that attending every class and completing every assignment do not constitute outstanding quality or guarantee an A for the course. Attending every class and completing every assignment are only prerequisites for achieving a desired grade in the class. Too many students have argued that these are the reasons they deserved an A in the class, and I do not buy into this way of thinking.

By accepting this syllabus and remaining enrolled in this course, you are indicating that you understand my expectations regarding

attitude and professionalism, as well as the grading policies. If you have questions, you should see me as soon as possible.

Classroom Expectations

Attendance: Attendance does not constitute a specific part of your grade, but perfect attendance is required. In the absence of a required textbook, attendance is critical, and I will go to great lengths to attain full attendance. In light of the fact that you will hand in work at almost every class session, being here to do the work is equally critical (see also the Missed Assignments Policy).

If you have to miss a class or a deadline for any reason, please contact me in advance to let me know. Contacting me in advance does not automatically excuse an absence, but it is a lot better than calling after the fact. If you fail to contact me before the next class period to explain an absence, it will be very difficult for me to excuse the absence. Please note that work, non-emergency medical and dental appointments, hangovers, intramural games, visitors from out of town, fixing your roommate's computer, fraternity/sorority events, arguments with boyfriends/girlfriends and studying for other classes do NOT constitute excused absences. See also the Missed Assignments Policy.

If you need to miss class due to a religious holiday, please see me as far in advance as possible.

If you need to miss class due to university-sponsored events such as field trips and sports, please see me as far in advance as possible. You will be required to complete the assigned work on or before the due date, and you will be required to submit an official form from the university before your absence.

As one of my former colleagues says, in the "real world," you can not do your job if you are not present to do it. Employers do not generally tolerate such behavior, and employees who offer weak, irritating excuses frequently find themselves unemployed and unemployable. The same rules apply in this course. I don't judge anyone who chooses to make attending classes a secondary (or lower) priority. However, this choice is not without consequences.

If you cannot make it a priority to attend every class session, please drop now so another student, who is more serious, can have your spot.

It is your responsibility to see me if you miss class. I will not chase students around the city.

A related note: You are required to be on time and I have little tolerance for those who are continually late. Constant tardiness will be noted and could lower your final grade. I am not above embarrassing students who walk in late.

Attitude: Because this is an upper-level course, corresponding attitudes and work ethics are required. This is not the type of course in which you can read a chapter, attend few class sessions, take a test . . . and end up with an **A** for the semester despite very little effort. Although there is no set percentage for this component, it will play a big role if you are on the "borderline" at the end of the semester.

If you cannot make it a priority to have a good attitude, please drop now so another student, who is more serious, can have your spot.

A related note: Cellular phones, pagers and other similar devices will not be tolerated. In my mind, they are a sign of a bad attitude. I will not tolerate annoying jingles and beeps. If you own such a device, turn it off (not on vibrate) or somehow make sure it doesn't make any noise while I am trying to conduct class – better yet, leave it at home or in your car. If your other commitments are so pressing that they can not wait until the end of the class session, it may be in your best interests to reconsider the priority you place on being here.

Sending and receiving text messages during class will not be tolerated.

Unfortunately, laptop computers, iPhones, tablets and other similar equipment will not be allowed in class for note-taking. Although I realize this is a convenient way to take notes, past students have abused the privilege by using the equipment to surf the Internet, send e-mail, and troll Facebook. I will not tolerate this kind of distraction. I will, however, allow the use of technology for legitimate class reasons only with my express permission.

These policies apply to all devices, including smartwatches.

Related: Recording any part of the class is prohibited, unless it is part of a reasonable accommodation under ADA, or by obtaining written consent by the instructor.

Why am I so adamant about technology? As a colleague once said, "Learning requires attention and focus." Despite the current generation's approaches to multi-tasking, my experience has been that the brain cannot perform two high-level functions at once, and multi-tasking is a myth. We can't learn, pay attention to class material, and monitor our text-messages all at once. In addition, a student using/misusing a device can distract other students and even the entire the class. While some students are willing to sacrifice their own opportunities to learn, and they often argue that their actions affect no one else, this simply is not true. You do not have the right to distract the class.

I reserve the right to ask you to leave immediately or to embarrass you mercilessly if your beepers/phones/pagers/etc. make noise during class or if I see you using a device when it has nothing to do with the in-class topic at hand. If cell. phones become more than a one-time problem, I reserve the right to lower your final semester grade and/or take further disciplinary actions.

Appropriate conduct – in the classroom, with the instructor and in any other class-related situations – is required at all times. The instructor has the right to remove disruptive, disrespectful students (or students creating any other kinds of problems) from the classroom and take other disciplinary actions as necessary.

Proper Communication with Me: Unlike some faculty, I do not generally give my cell. phone number to students. However, I am in my office far more than just during office hours, and I have an open-door policy (if I am in the office, the door is almost always open, unless I am discussing something of a private nature). If someone is already in my office when you arrive, please wait in the hall or work-café (i.e., don't hover in the doorway and don't interrupt unless it is truly an emergency). I try to return phone calls and respond to e-mails quickly. Please observe proper grammar and other rules of etiquette in your e-mails (e.g., "Hello Dr. Sernoe" is a far more professional greeting than "Hey!" or, worse, no greeting at all). Please remember this not a DM 2 ur friends 😊 – you are sending a professor an e-mail. There's a difference. Please note also that I am not attached to devices 24/7. I generally do not look at e-mail after 6 p.m. or before 7 a.m. If you e-mail me at 1 a.m. or on the weekend with a question, do not expect an immediate answer.

No food and beverages are allowed beyond water, or if allowed in the specific classroom, other non-alcoholic drinks. Past students have brought fast food, breakfast and salads to class, and this is not appropriate.

I reserve the right to drop any student with an F if he/she has excessive absences or missed assignments, engages in disruptive behavior, has a poor attitude, or in any other way is clearly not taking the class seriously.

By accepting this syllabus and remaining enrolled in this course, you are indicating that you understand my expectations for students concerning attendance, attitude and work ethic.

Class Participation: This component is included not because I am a fanatic about class participation, but because being quiet when one has the chance to talk or ask questions is not an asset in any area of mass communication. And once again, there is no set percentage for this component, but it will play a big role if you are on the "borderline" at the end of the semester.

Statements Related to the Current COVID-19 Situation

- Given the state of the world, everything in this course could change with very little notice. That means deadlines, projects, even weighted percentages for each component of the course could change. Please note that I will consult with the class and use students' input to the extent practicable in making decisions about how to proceed. Students should not hesitate to contact me with questions, concerns and, even better, great suggestions. Most students know I will go out of my way to be fair to all.
- Safety and health of all are our top considerations. You are required to follow all best practices as they are developed during this crisis. If you feel sick, do not come to class. If you need to miss class, contact me as outlined under class procedures, and I will work with you.
- Masks cannot be mandated in classrooms, per the governor's misguided order. However, science has informed the world that it is a best practice. As a result, I am highly suggesting that you wear a mask. University administration has also made the wearing of a mask a strong suggestion, especially for those who are not vaccinated. I will wear a mask as I exit and enter the classroom, as well as when I am within 6 feet of another person. As the instructor's podium is at least 10 feet from the closest student, I will usually take my mask off when I speak. However, if any student is uncomfortable with this decision, they are urged to contact me to discuss privately. Please see the university's official policy at the web site listed below.
- Similarly, vaccines cannot be mandated, per the governor's misguided order. However, science has informed the world – and continuous data

collection shows – that it is a best practice. As a result, I am highly suggesting that you obtain a vaccination. I have done so, not only to protect myself but also to help contain the disease. University administration has also made obtaining a vaccination a strong suggestion. Please see the university’s official policy at the web site listed below.

- Similarly, social distancing cannot be mandated. Again, however, I strongly suggest seating yourselves accordingly to the extent possible. Please see the university’s official policy at the web site listed below.
- The Mass Comm. Dept. and the College of Fine Arts have adopted specific cleaning protocols, and all students are required to abide by these rules. Students who are unwilling to do their share to ensure everyone’s health will be contacted by the professor. In short, you will be required to clean your area before and after class, the first as a safety precaution for yourself, the second as a courtesy toward others. We realize this means some areas may be cleaned twice within a brief time period, but this is better than not at all. This rule holds for traditional classrooms, labs, editing equipment, the newsroom and public areas such as the work-café.
- All handouts and other information will be available through the university’s D2L system, and D2L’s Gradebook function will be enabled (I will, nonetheless, keep my own spreadsheet with grades, and students are welcome to contact me for grade updates). Students are expected to understand how to navigate D2L, even if we continue with in-person classes.
 - If you do experience problems with D2L, please let me know as soon as possible. In addition, the D2L page has a “Report A Problem” function on the top navigation bar as well as a FAQ function in the middle of the page on the right.
- If we are forced to switch to online-only instruction, all students will be required to:
 - Attend class at the assigned time. I will offer to record the sessions but these recordings are supplemental and not replacements for attending at the assigned times. Excuses such as work will not be accepted, and students will be expected to make arrangements to attend every session. Students are also required to attend for the full class session.
 - The same provisions regarding attendance for in-person classes will be in effect if we move to a virtual classroom.
 - Have a computer with a webcam that can accommodate Zoom or other video software.
 - Have reliable WiFi.

- As to the three requirements above, I know not all students have access to a reliable computer and reliable WiFi. However, you are expected to make arrangements in advance and have a plan. Do not assume you will be able to complete the course using only your phone and/or without attending actual classes during class time. If these requirements present problems for you, please contact me as early in the semester as possible. I will work with students in the hope that they do not have to drop the class as a result of these requirements.
- Observe proper video meeting etiquette:
 - Arrive on time.
 - Leave your camera on. I realize not all students are comfortable with having their cameras on, but it will be a requirement. Not having the ability to look at you in-person to make sure you are paying attention and understanding what is being discussed, I will need to see you on camera (see next bullet point as well).
 - Pay attention. Devices such as phones will be prohibited, as they are in face-to-face classes. Students who are e-mailing or attending to other tasks while on screen will be reminded of this policy. Continued violations could result in a student facing disciplinary sanctions up to being dropped from the course with an F.
 - Set the mute function as the default. As stated above, discussion is encouraged, both in-person and in video meetings, but we do not need to hear barking dogs, ringing phones, roommates, etc.
 - Use the raise-your-hand function.
 - Wear proper clothing. I have heard stories of students sitting in on video meetings with no shirt and in bikinis. This is not appropriate and will not be tolerated.
 - Avoid eating while on camera. As in a face-to-face classroom, you are expected to eat your meals while not in class.
 - Have a proper background.
 - Stay seated. Do not wander around. It will distract the rest of us and make us dizzy.
 - Do not plan to connect to Zoom while you are driving. This is obviously unsafe, as well as a poor atmosphere for learning.
- Use D2L effectively. As stated above, all syllabi, instructions for assignments/projects and other materials will be posted on the class D2L page. If we are forced to go to an online-only set-up,

discussion posts may be required and assignments may have to be submitted through D2L.

- Communicate with me. It is well-known among faculty and students that I do not share my cell. phone number publicly, as some other faculty do. As a result, I do quite a bit of communicating through e-mail, especially if I won't be in my office. My office phone will be forwarded to my cell. phone, but students will still be expected to check their e-mail regularly. I will also make every effort to meet with individual students by Zoom or other video platforms.
 - Related: if adjustments to the normal office hours routine are necessary, I will communicate them to you.
- If we are forced to switch to online-only instruction, deadlines, assignments and other course elements may change (see also info. above). I will provide clear revisions, in writing, and will address any questions/concerns by phone, e-mail or in a video platform.
- Please note that the federal government, state government, various local government units (city, county, health district, etc.) and the university administration have the power to issue declarations that can directly affect how we navigate. Please be flexible and we will get through these extraordinary times as a team.
- Related: these governmental bodies have varying powers and can change the guidelines and mandates with very little notice. Please be flexible.
- Students are encouraged to visit the web page developed by the university in response to this crisis:
 - [MSU Coronavirus Update Page](#)
- I reserve the right to drop any student with an F if he/she violates any of these policies. At the same time, I will work with all students to my fullest ability to ensure a worthwhile educational experience.

Ethics

Don't cheat.

"Not everyone cheats. Not everyone cuts corners. There isn't a diploma in the world that's more valuable than your integrity. And you can't buy your integrity back." – Jason Gay, commenting in [The Wall Street Journal](#) on the recent admissions scandals involving celebrities and the wealthy, March 14, 2019, p. A16.

The MSU Student Honor Creed, written and adopted by the 2002-2003 MSU Student Senate, covers expectations related to cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty. The main statement from this document is:

“As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else to do so.”

All students in my courses are expected to abide by this student-produced document, as well as all other related university policies. I will provide copies of the MSU Student Honor Creed to any student who requests one. It is also available online at [MSU Honor Creed](#).

In addition, students are required to be familiar with the MSU Code of Student Conduct as outlined in the MSU Student Handbook.

The university also requires faculty to provide this statement to all students:

By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student’s work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and educational purposes.

By accepting this syllabus and remaining enrolled in this course, you are indicating that you understand the statement provided above and agree to comply with it.

I require complete honesty in producing your work. Working professionals are often encouraged to confer with their colleagues on strategies and wordings, but there is a difference between advice and blatant plagiarism.

I also realize it will be very easy to confer with colleagues on take-home assignments, but you should realize that instructors can usually identify when students have worked together. I also realize the Internet provides a convenient source of information, but students need to be aware that proper citation will be required.

Past students will tell you I take this issue very seriously and have not hesitated to confront them. A slightly higher grade on an assignment is not worth the extremely unpleasant experience of taking an accusation of academic dishonesty through the university hierarchy. Please don’t force me to do it.

I reserve the right to drop any student with an F if he/she engages in any form of academic dishonesty. I further reserve the right to recommend other sanctions as may be appropriate. Students are also encouraged to consult the following sources for additional discussion of students' rights and responsibilities regarding cheating, attendance and general conduct:

- The MSU Student Honor Creed, available online at [MSU Honor Creed](#).
- The 2021-2022 MSU Undergraduate Catalog, available online at [MSU Undergraduate Catalog](#).
- The 2020-2021 MSU Student Handbook (the handbook is also available online at [MSU Student Handbook](#)) (the 2021-22 Handbook was not available as this syllabus was being finalized).

By accepting this syllabus and remaining enrolled in this course, you are indicating that you understand the seriousness of academic dishonesty and realize I will impose the harshest sanctions possible if I can prove you have engaged in academic dishonesty. You are also indicating that you understand what constitutes academic dishonesty; I will not tolerate the excuse that the student did not know he/she was engaging in academic dishonesty. You are also indicating that you have read and understand the MSU Student Honor Creed and the MSU Code of Student Conduct, and that you agree to abide by both.

Privacy

Federal privacy law prohibits me from releasing information about students to certain parties outside of the university without the signed consent of the student. Thus, in almost all cases I will not discuss your academic progress or other matters with your parents. Please do not have them call me. Regardless of these important legal considerations, it is my general policy to communicate with the students, not their parents. College students are adults and are expected to behave accordingly.

Related: Due to security and confidentiality concerns, I generally do not discuss grades and other sensitive information over e-mail.

Campus Carry

Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective Aug. 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. For more information regarding campus carry, please refer to the University's webpage at [MSU Campus Carry Policies](#).

Please be advised that any violations of the law will be reported immediately.

Special Accommodations/Emergencies/Outside Difficulties

Students with disabilities or who are in need of special arrangements should see me as early as possible in the semester. I cannot help you if you come to me at the last minute. I will do what I can within reason to accommodate your needs, but federal law requires me to remain fair to all students. Please note that in order to qualify for consideration of special accommodations, you must be registered with the MSU Office of Disability Support Services, and I must have a memo on file from that office, along with the Special Accommodations Request form.

If you have specific medical information that needs sharing or you need specific accommodations in case of emergencies or emergency evacuations, please see me as soon as possible.

If you have outside circumstances that may affect your performance in this class – including but not limited to food insecurity, inadequate housing, family issues – please contact me if you are comfortable in doing so. I may be able to refer you to on-campus resources that will help you address the situation.

Please note that all information provided to me remains confidential.

Further Information Regarding The Senior Portfolio Requirement

Please note that all mass communication majors are required to submit a portfolio during their Internship course (please note that Internship is a prerequisite to Senior Production). This requirement is a part of MSU's reaccreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and is non-negotiable. Students are required to demonstrate communication competence through the written word and visual communication; two examples of each competency are required for the portfolio.

As you go through this and other classes, you are responsible for saving course work that could be included in your portfolio.

Please see me, your adviser or any mass communication faculty member for handouts with more information.