

## **Syllabus**

### **Text Writing in English**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A course for the undergraduate students of educational program “Journalism”

**Course type:** elective

**Pre-requisites:**

The basic requirement for course is a working level of English language (especially ability to read specific scientific literature, to write and present in English). Additionally some basic knowledge in world politics, economy and political system will contribute to better understanding success of practical exercises.

Large part of course includes independent practice and search of the information. Generally the course is constructed around lectures and seminars (which represent collective presentations prepared by students and discussions around them). Attendance is required.

**Abstract:**

The objective of this course is to give students an opportunity to get acquainted with the foundations of writing multimedia texts in English. Special attention will be paid to various types of texts — lead-in, captions, titles, briefs, short TV items (voiceovers), reports, teases for TV and Internet, etc.

The students of the course will also have a chance to get acquainted with the way the texts are manifested in various multimedia outlets all over the world.

During the course the students will also meet journalists who use English in their everyday work. That will enlarge their scope of knowledge about the profession of the journalist.

At the end of the course the students will present final work in the form of a website page or a television report.

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Formation of multimedia writing skills in English
- Learning the writing and editorial values for international media outlets
- Building multimedia skills of textual and visual storytelling
- Practicing the elements of a visual storytelling and adjusting them to the new media strategies

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Ability to understand and analyse journalistic text in English;
- Ability to produce the journalistic texts in English;
- Ability to follow the editorial guidelines;
- Ability to adapt text for the platforms and means of media communication (texts for TV and radio)

## **COURSE PLAN**

### **Introduction:**

Multimedia as a conversational phenomenon. Elements of multimedia Conversational media and their role. Principles of conversation. Principles of multimedia perception. Manifestation of various conversational principles in the form of a website. Text, voice, natural sound, eye-witnesses, author as a visual narrator. Visual principles of multimedia. Media convergence as multinational phenomenon.

### **Standards of English language writing at the various international media outlets:**

Television and online 24/7 media outlets. Their role in the development of multimedia strategies. Editorial standards. Ethic elements that influence the structure of the message (impartiality, reference to sources, precision, scope of knowledge, Linguistic and editorial values and their transformation in various cultures. Role of the media in the coverage of important events. Media texts and their transformations in the breaking news coverage. Ethical principles of the texts in multimedia.

### **Writing short news items for web and television:**

Presenting topline and 5 Ws for the message. The importance of the topline. Structure of the short news item. Layout of 5Ws across the message. Facts, figures and proper names in the short news item. Writing for the eyes and writing for the ears — key differences and peculiarities. Specials of the business and sports writing.

### **Writing intros and headlines for the television:**

Associations, quotes and realities. Technology of creation. Standards for intros and teases at various multimedia platforms. Associations and quotations as a tool for the intro writing. Cliches in the editorial writing and how to avoid them. Varieties of the headlines based on the editorial values.

### **Writing packages for television and multimedia:**

Role of the packages in multimedia. Strategies for the development of the package.  
Topline of the package. Focus of the package. Elements of the package. Topic angle, facts and figures. Technique for package visualization. Role of elements blending in the package.  
Production and post-production of the package. Checking facts and figures.  
Reviewing the packages.

## READING LIST

Required:

- Boyer D., *The Life Informatic: Newsmaking in the Digital Era* / D. Boyer. — Cornell University Press, 2013. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3138468>. (ProQuest Ebook Central)
- Cook V.J., *The English Writing System: English Writing System* / V.J. Cook. — Routledge, 2004. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=564792>. (ProQuest Ebook Central)
- Boczkowski P.J., *News at Work: Imitation in an Age of Information Abundance* / P.J. Boczkowski. — University of Chicago Press, 2010. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=584932>. (ProQuest Ebook Central)
- *The Handbook of Global Online Journalism* / edited by E. Siapera and A. Veglis. — John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2012. — URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=861695>. (ProQuest Ebook Central)

Optional:

- Бондарева Н.В., Экономическая лексика в медиажанрах "новости" и "реклама" (на материале английского и русского медиадискурса) / Н.В. Бондарева // Вестник Центра международного образования Московского государственного университета. Филология. Культурология. Педагогика. Методика. — 2015. — № 4. — С. 69-75. — URL: <https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=25352735>
- Иванченко Н.Я., Языковая история Би-Би-Си / Н.Я. Иванченко // В сборнике: Англистика XXI века Сборник статей по материалам VIII научно-методической конференции, посвященной памяти профессора

С.В.Воронина. — 2016. — С. 359-363. — URL:

<https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=28950061>

- Сергеева Т.С., Аббревиатуры в современных англоязычных текстах массовой информации / Т.С. Сергеева // Вестник Вятского государственного гуманитарного университета. — 2015. — № 5. — С. 67-75. — URL: <https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=23923586>

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

Grading is based on three elements:

1. Individual work (works presented during seminars);
2. Work during seminars;
3. Presentation of personal portfolios and projects.

Each grade is attributed according to 10-point scale and then is weighted according to followed table:

- Individual works presented during 1, 4-7 seminars- 30%
- Work during other seminars — 20%
- Final written exam — 50%

The final grade is rounded up by arithmetic rules.

## **GUIDELINES FOR KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT**

The student is assessed based on three parameters: 1) the ability to follow deadlines; 2) clarity of the text (the main idea is seen and the target audience of the text is mentioned); 3) lexical variety and style of English language.

Practice activities (sample)

Analyse multimedia strategies of the following websites:

- [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)
- [www.rt.com](http://www.rt.com)
- [www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com)
- [www.ria.ru](http://www.ria.ru)
- [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)
- [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)

Single out the elements of multimedia in the multimedia articles and television reports

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8dCoGwEnY0>

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/31/world/asia/rape-incites-women-to-fight-culture-in-india.html?hp&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/31/world/asia/rape-incites-women-to-fight-culture-in-india.html?hp&_r=0)

Practice activities (sample)

Explain the difference in the headlines of the following media platforms

- [www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com)
- [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com)
- [english.aljazeera.net](http://english.aljazeera.net)

What editorial values does this article manifestation

example

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/politics/4719208/150m-in-child-benefit-for-families-of-5-kids-ormore.html>

<http://rt.com/politics/georgia-overruns-saakashvilis-amnesty-053/>

Practice activities (sample)

Write short items on the following topics:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/31/world/asia/rape-incites-women-to-fight-culture-in-india.html?hp&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/31/world/asia/rape-incites-women-to-fight-culture-in-india.html?hp&_r=0)

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/30/us-syria-crisis-brahimi-idUSBRE8BT03320121230>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/31/us-markets-global-idUSBRE88901C20121231>

Practice activities (sample)

Think of at least 3 angles to the following topic:

Amid the shocking sight of an ablaze plane wreckage, Evgeniy Zambitsky was one of only few people who reached the TU-204 jet within minutes of Saturday's crash. He's spoken to RT about what he saw as he bravely searched the area for survivors.

In the first thirty minutes after the plane crashed, only eyewitnesses were there to help the victims of the tragedy. As parts of the jet had hit the road, ambulance and rescue teams had to break through terrible traffic jams. With no help in sight, a small group of men went into the burning plane and tried to save an injured flight attendant.

RT: In the midst of this tragedy you were trying to help one of the injured. Tell us what were you trying to do?

Evgeniy Zambitsky: Well, we found her [the flight attendant], she was in the back of the plane, in the main, in the fuselage part of it. And so we took her — there were four of us. It was slippery and we tried to take her to the road, to the highway. Her legs were broken, and there was blood all over her face, there was blood dripping from her mouth and her eyes- our eyes were

itching because of the jet fuel. She was in bad condition but she was conscious, so she spoke to us.

RT: And how shocked were you by what was going on?

EZ: All of us, all of the eyewitnesses [had] a rush of adrenaline, our hands were shaky, we were in a state of shock like anyone would be.

RT: We can see the shocking pictures that you managed to take of this girl. How badly hurt was she, do you think, did she say anything at all?

EZ: Yes, she talked to us, she said that her eyes hurt, she told us to put her down, she said my legs hurt. But both of her legs were broken, and I think she could not feel her legs and her words were not articulated.

RT: And what were you trying to do, where were you trying to take her?

EZ: We tried to take her onto the highway, we thought that there were some ambulances on the sides. We wanted to hand her over to the paramedics, but there were none of them, no ambulance crews. That's why we were holding her in our arms. There was a police car there, but we couldn't fit her inside.

Write your own package on the basis of the rules suggested by the teacher.

Practice activities (sample)

Write at least 5 headlines to the following text

In her new year message, she also cautioned that the eurozone debt crisis was far from over. However, she did say that reforms designed to address the roots of the problem were beginning to bear fruit. Her comments appeared to contradict German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble who said last week that the worst of the crisis was over. In a taped interview to be broadcast later on Monday, Mrs Merkel urged Germans to be more patient.

"I know that many people are naturally concerned going into the new year," she said "The economic environment will not in fact be easier but rather more difficult next year. But we shouldn't let that get us down; rather it should spur us on." She linked future German prosperity to a prosperous European Union." For our prosperity and our solidarity, we need to strike the right balance," she said.

"The European sovereign debt crisis shows how important this balance is. "The reforms that we've introduced are beginning to have an impact. Nevertheless we need to have further continued patience. The crisis is far from over. "In an interview with the German newspaper Bild last week, Mr Schaeuble cited positive developments in Greece and France, saying: "I think the worst is behind us."

Germany — Europe's largest economy — has been the paymaster in the eurozone crisis, a move unpopular with many German voters and some conservative MPs in Mrs Merkel's

coalition. Analysts say most Germans remain wary of eurozone bailouts but generally approve of Mrs Merkel's handling of the crisis. In October, the German government slashed its forecast for economic output in 2013 to 1.0%, compared to 1.6% previously anticipated. The country's central bank has said Germany may even come close to recession early in the new year. Nevertheless, Mrs Merkel underlined that Germany in 2012 had the lowest unemployment since reunification in 1990.

### **METHODS OF INSTRUCTION**

The principal methodology of course is “learning-by-doing” method which is based on tactical approach and the case studies of various multimedia outlets — both television and the new media structures. The students will master basic skills of writing “for the ear” that is widely used in the industry.

The course is structured and a unique combination of introductory lectures and wide range of seminars which will highlight various types of writing aspects. BY the end of the course each student will have a portfolio of written materials and visual reports.

### **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE SUPPORT**

A personal computer with the internet access, the Office suite, a sound system and a monitor for demonstration purposes.