

# thecollegian

**STAFF HANDBOOK  
FALL 2017**

**SECTIONS: MCOM 11 92899, MCOM 12A 63333,  
MCOM 12B 55807, MCOM 12C 36086, MCOM 12D 48957**

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## THE BASICS

This handbook serves as a syllabus/course guide for Newswriting (MCOM 11), Newspaper Production I (MCOM 12A), Newspaper Production II (MCOM 12B), Newspaper Production III (MCOM 12C) and Newspaper Production IV (MCOM 12D). The courses are co-taught 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Tuesday/Thursday in Shima 203/204.

**Instructor:** Tara Cuslidge-Staiano

**Phone:** (209) 401-6158 (cell), (209) 954-5286 (office)

**Email:** [tara.cuslidge.staiano@gmail.com](mailto:tara.cuslidge.staiano@gmail.com),  
[tcuslidge-staiano@deltacollege.edu](mailto:tcuslidge-staiano@deltacollege.edu)

**Office:** Shima 204B

**Instructor office hours:** 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Monday/Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday/Thursday, or by appointment

**Lab hours:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday

**Withdrawal from the course: STUDENTS BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY OF WITHDRAWING FROM THE CLASS IF THEY CHOOSE TO STOP ATTENDING.** Students who fail to drop the class and stop attending will receive an “FW” for the final course grade. Sept. 1, 2017 is the last date to request refund of fees for full term class. Sept. 10, 2017 is the last date to drop a full-term class without a “W” notation on the academic transcript. Oct. 17, 2017 is the last date to drop a full term class with a “W” notation on the academic transcript.

# COURSE DESCRIPTION - MCOM 11

**MCOM11:** This course is designed to offer an introduction to gathering, synthesizing, organizing and writing news in fundamental journalistic style across all media platforms. Emphasis is placed on the personal interview as a vital process in structuring an objective presentation of news and feature stories. Accompanying the various areas of writing instruction is an introduction to the basics of being a multimedia reporter, developing photo, video and audio capturing skills. It includes the role of the journalist and related legal and ethical issues. Students will report and write based on their original interviews and research to produce news content. Experiences may include covering speeches, meetings and other events, writing under deadline, and using AP Style. (CSU, C-ID JOUR 110)

**Prerequisite:** None

**More about the course and Student Learning Outcomes in Delta College's 2017-18 Catalog:** <http://bit.ly/1M8k25k>

**Required texts:** *AP Stylebook 2017*, *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook* 7th Edition by Tim Harrower, *Inside Reporting* 3rd Edition by Tim Harrower, various handouts and online works

# COURSE DESCRIPTION - MCOM 12 SERIES

**MCOM12A:** This course is designed to offer students lab experiences in all aspects of newspaper production, including regularly producing news or feature non-fiction stories with journalistic emphasis for publication in the student newspaper and on the student news website. Weekly news assignments cover the writing of news, feature, sports and opinion stories. Peer editing, page design, digital photography and production are also covered. Students may produce across digital platforms for experience in design/layout, online and multimedia journalism, and emerging technologies. The newspaper is student produced with student leadership. (CSU, C-ID JOUR 130)

**MCOM12B:** This course is designed to offer students lab intermediate skills in all aspects of newspaper production, including producing news or feature non-fiction stories with journalistic emphasis for publication in the student newspaper and on the student news website. Students will take on leadership and management roles, serving as a copy or section editor for the college newspaper. Weekly news assignments cover the writing of news, feature, sports and opinion stories. Peer editing, page design, digital photography and production are also covered. Students may produce across digital platforms for experience in design/layout, online and multimedia journalism and emerging technologies. The newspaper is student produced with student leadership (CSU, C-ID JOUR 131).

**MCOM12C:** This course is designed to offer the student instruction in production of the student newspaper, including editing, page design and digital photography, while introducing the newspaper website and content management systems. The student will serve as copy editor, section editor, social media editor or online editor in addition to balancing management skills with newspaper duties. (CSU)

**MCOM12D:** This course is designed to offer the student instruction in content production as it pertains to the student newspaper and news website. Specific focus will be placed on advanced digital photography, sound editing and video development. The student will serve as a copy editor, section editor, social media editor, online editor or video editor in addition to balancing management skills with newspaper duties. (CSU)

**Prerequisites:** MCOM 11 for MCOM 12A, MCOM 12A with a C or better for MCOM 12B, MCOM 12B with a C or better for MCOM 12C, MCOM 12C with a C or better for MCOM 12D

# GRADING

Students will be graded on in-class participation during lecture and follow-through on assignments and work for possible publication in *The Collegian*.

A virtual *wordpress.com* resume, showcasing work completed in your enrolled course, will be due at the end of the term. Finals will not be accepted late. If you don't turn in a final, you will be given a zero on the assignment.

**MCOM 11:** Unless prior approval is given, students are expected to complete five stories during the semester. Three stories must be news format, with multiple sources and quotes. Students are responsible for pitching news stories, i.e. if you end up with too many opinion/entertainment stories at the end of the semester, you are responsible for your lower grade. Publication isn't your end goal, but stories deemed publishable by editors may be slotted for run.

**MCOM 12:** Students are expected to complete six stories across the various newspaper format for the semester in addition to page design work and social media participation.

**Seventy percent** of a student's grade will be course work directly related to newspaper production, including: story pitching, reporting, lab hours, as well as posting story and related content (photos and video) to the newspaper website. **Fifteen percent** of the grade will be participation, including social media posts. The final **fifteen percent** will be the virtual resume. Because of the nature of the news industry, a student's story may be held at the editor in chief's digression for a subsequent issue.

**MCOM 11/12 are a plus/minus graded courses.**

**You may earn the following grades: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, F or FW. An FW will be issued if you stop attending but don't drop the course. A range is 100-93 percent, A- range is 92.99 to 90 percent, B+ range is 89.99-86 percent, B range is 85.99-83 percent, B- range is 82.99-80 percent, C+ range is 79.99-76 percent; C range is 75.99-70 percent, D range is 69.99-60 percent, F range is 59.99 or below percent.**

**All students are also required to participate in newspaper distribution at least once during the semester.**

# CLASS SCHEDULE

**Aug. 22:** Introduction to course, syllabus, expectations and responsibilities

**Aug. 24:** Story pitching for MCOM 12 (MCOM 11 will observe)

**Aug. 29 :** Reporting

- **Reading:** Part of newswriting chapter, *Inside Reporting*, 36-51
- **Reading:** Quotations, *Inside Reporting*, 82-83

**Aug. 31:** Newswriting

- **In class:** News briefs
- **In class:** Press pass photos

**Sept. 4:** 5 p.m. deadline for Issue #1 story from MCOM 12

**Sept. 5:** Production for *The Collegian*

- **MCOM 11:** AP Style basics lecture, Guess who?
- **MCOM 12:** News lab from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Sept. 7:** Page editing for *The Collegian*

## ISSUE 1, Sept. 8

**Sept. 12:** Story pitching for MCOM 11 & MCOM 12

**Sept. 14:** Social media primer/photography

- **In class:** Social media demo
- **In class:** Assignment of social media posting days

**Sept. 18:** 5 p.m. deadline for Issue #2 stories

**Sept. 19:** Lab for *The Collegian* 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- **In class:** MCOM 11 to review stories with editors, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Sept. 21:** Page editing for *The Collegian*

## ISSUE 2, Sept. 22

**Sept. 26:** Story pitching for MCOM 11 & MCOM 12

**Sept. 28:** Introduction to *deltacollegian.net*

- **In class:** Guided tutorial, logins assigned

**Oct. 2:** 5 p.m. deadline for Issue #3 stories

**Oct. 3:** Lab for *The Collegian* 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- **In class:** MCOM 11 to review stories with editors, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Oct. 5:** Page editing for *The Collegian*

### **ISSUE 3, Oct. 6**

**Oct. 10:** Story pitching for MCOM 11 & MCOM 12

**Oct. 12:** Ethics

- **Reading:** Law and Ethics, *Inside Reporting*, Ch. 7

- **In class:** Ethical issues and responses

**Oct. 16:** 5 p.m. deadline for Issue #4 stories

**Oct. 17:** Lab for *The Collegian* 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- **In class:** MCOM 11 to review stories with editors, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Oct. 19:** Page editing for *The Collegian*

### **ISSUE 4, Oct. 20**

**Oct. 24:** Story pitching for MCOM 11 & MCOM 12, **ONLINE ONLY**

**Oct. 26:** Introduction of *wordpress.com* final portfolio

- **In class:** Guided tutorial in for *wordpress.com*

**Oct. 31:** Story review for online only stories (rolling posts)

**Nov. 2:** Story review for online only stories (rolling posts)

**Nov. 7:** Story pitching for MCOM 11 & MCOM 12

**Nov. 9:** Designing pages

- **Reading:** The Four Basic Elements, *Newspaper Designer's Handbook*, 26

- **Reading:** Cutlines, *Newspaper Designer's Handbook*, 34-37
- **Reading:** Drawing a dummy, *Newspaper Designer's Handbook*, 38-39
- **Reading:** Modular page design, *Newspaper Designer's Handbook*, 86-87
- **Reading:** Front-page design, *Newspaper Designer's Handbook*, 88-90

**Nov. 13:** 5 p.m. deadline for Issue #5 stories

**Nov. 14:** Lab for *The Collegian* 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- **In class:** MCOM 11 to review stories with editors, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Nov. 16:** Page editing for *The Collegian*

**ISSUE 5, Nov. 17**

**Nov. 21:** Story pitching for MCOM 11 & MCOM 12

**Nov. 23: NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

**Nov. 27:** 5 p.m. deadline for Issue #6 stories

**Nov. 28:** Lab for *The Collegian* 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

- **In class:** MCOM 11 to review stories with editors, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Nov. 30:** Page editing for *The Collegian*

**ISSUE 6, Dec. 1**

**Dec. 5:** Shield Laws

- **Reading:** Josh Wolf, Wikipedia, <http://bit.ly/1AV7QNj>
- **Reading:** "The Cuiious Case of Josh Wolf," <http://nyti.ms/1xtHo8v>
- **Reading:** California Shield Law, <http://bit.ly/1zjfQth>

**Dec. 7:** Final semester critique of *The Collegian*, virtual resume lab

**Dec. 12:** Virtual resume open lab, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Dec. 14:** Virtual resume due

- URL to be sent to [tara.cuslidge.staiano@gmail.com](mailto:tara.cuslidge.staiano@gmail.com) by 10 a.m.
- *Wordpress.com* site to include resume, about section, links to all content produced during semester and contact information

# COLLEGIAN GUIDE: STAFF HANDBOOK

This handbook serves as a easily accessible tool for important dates, assignments and information about the class.

As of Fall 2016, the Collegian Guide staff manual has moved permanently online. This semester it will be considered a “work in progress” with tutorials and lessons moving onto the site as needed. Please note that some content will not be available immediately at the beginning of the semester, as much of the content is being updated.

The guide can be found at *[guide.deltacollegian.net](http://guide.deltacollegian.net)*.

## CLASS CONDUCT

This is a learning environment. In this classroom, you should feel comfortable expressing opinions on mass communication topics without reprisal from classmates. You are expected show respect to the instructor by paying attention and not talking during lectures. Students who are rude to other classmates or the instructor will be warned once about behavior. Continued disruptions will result in a lower grade and removal from the course. Campus police will be called if necessary.

You will be expected to do the following:

- Respect the instructor by coming to class on time.
- Turn off or put your cell phone on vibrate while in class. If you have to take an emergency call, please walk out of the classroom quietly.
- Not wear flat-billed hats or sunglasses in the classroom.
- Show up on time.
- Not engage in side conversations, unless instructed to do so as a part of a group assignment.
- Not pass notes.
- Come to class prepared.
- Be responsible for your educational experience: Your lack of planning doesn't constitute an emergency on your peers' or instructor's part.
- Turn in assignments on time.

# ETHICS

The nature of journalism and these courses requires students abide by basic journalistic ethics, including, but not limited to, reporting without bias, not accepting free or complimentary passes for any event outside of the reporting scope (as in, not accepting tickets after reporting on an assignment for your whole family) and not accepting “gifts” that could influence reporting.

## Conflict of interest

Journalists, students and professional, are prohibited from covering events in which they are involved in or have inside knowledge about for the newspaper. While it is understandable that student journalists may not be able to separate themselves from a story entirely, *The Collegian* makes every effort to avoid the notion and reality of conflict of interest. You may pitch a story about a topic you are interested in, but you may not cover it. It is a violation of journalistic efforts to suggest changes, unless for accuracy, to a story to make someone or something more or less flattering.

## Plagiarism

San Joaquin Delta College considers plagiarism a major offense, resulting in a failing grade for the specific assignment and any participation points associated with it, for the semester and/or suspension from the college. There is a zero-tolerance policy on this in the mass communication program.

# ATTENDANCE

Consistent class attendance is important to the production of the newspaper. This class will adhere to the San Joaquin Delta College Absence from Class Policy 5150.

Staff members of *The Collegian* must also realize and recognize that the nature of the class will require work outside of instructional hours, particularly when reporting a story of during newspaper assembly.

Three or more unexcused absences will result in lowering of the final grade.

**ATTENDANCE IS CRITICAL IN THIS CLASS. STORIES WILL NOT BE ASSIGNED VIA EMAIL.**

# STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

San Joaquin Delta College students should familiarize themselves with their rights and responsibilities, which are available in the Student Handbook or by visiting the following site: <http://bit.ly/1r7jNxZ>

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

**Academic accommodations statement:** Students have the right to request reasonable modifications to college requirements, services, facilities or programs if their documented disability imposes an educational limitation or impedes access to such requirements, services, facilities or programs. A student with a disability who requests a modification, accommodation, or adjustment is responsible for identifying himself/herself to the instructor and, if desired, to the Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) office. Students who consult or request assistance from DSPS regarding specific modifications, accommodations, adjustments or use of auxiliary aids will be required to meet timelines and procedural requirements established by the DSPS office.

*Students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations should use the following procedure:* Contact the DSPS office, submit documentation of your disability to the DSPS office, and communicate with a DSPS specialist regarding options for services and accommodations, and reach written accommodation agreement not only with the DSPS specialist but also with your instructor. Delta College requests you complete this process at least ten working days before your accommodation is needed, in order to allow DSPS staff and Delta instructor's time to provide your accommodation. DSPS can be reached at **(209) 954-5151, ext. 6272**.

**Alternative media statement:** Students with a print disability – a visual limitation or reading difficulty that limits access to traditional print materials – may request printed materials in alternative media. Examples of alternate media formats include electronic format (e.g., text on CD), Braille, tactile graphics, audio, and large print. Students can make alternate media requests through the Office of Disabled Student Programs and Services.

*Descriptions from Disabled Students Programs and Services*

**FINAL NOTE:** The instructor reserves the right to change and/or adjust this syllabus at any time.

# PITCHING RULES

## Pitch session

- Stories pitched should fit into one or more of the standard newsworthy traits – **timeliness, proximity, consequence, novelty, conflict, human interest** and/or **prominence**
- Story pitches should be relevant to the time period of the specific newspaper, i.e. don't offer up a story that's best suited for around Thanksgiving in September, wait until a November paper
- **Pitching order:** news, opinion, feature, entertainment and sports
- Stories are pitched first come, first serve – a student can't lay claim to a story that someone pitched unless the original pitcher defers
- Stories will be assigned the last 15 minutes of the class, after all the pitches have been completed – unless prior arrangement is made with the instructor

## Assignments

- Every reporter must take a story each issue – it doesn't necessarily mean you'll have stories published each issue
- MCOM 11 students should focus on news and feature stories
- Editors must take a story, but not necessarily one on their own page
- Not being assigned a "good" story is on you – if you don't like what makes it to the board and is leftover after you pitch, pitch better next time
- A story is given a two-week, standard turnaround unless approved by the editor in chiefs and adviser, students are still responsible for pitching, taking and reporting a story during the following pitch session
- You should always aim to interview at least three people

## Personal responsibilities

- Students are expected to come prepared to pitch stories
- You may be asked further questions about your pitch, please have as much information as possible ready – you don't need to start reporting your story prematurely, but at least have a grasp on what you want to write about
- Students should have more than one story idea to serve up to the group
- You may criticize, but do so respectfully
- No personal attacks
- Don't confuse constructive criticism with being "attacked," no one is out to get you, in fact the editors have a vested interest in **YOU WRITING WELL**
- There are no "stupid ideas," rather story ideas that need more fleshing out – if your idea doesn't make the board for one reason or another and it's still relevant to the next issue, go back to it, get more information and pitch again