Credits: 3 hours (3 contact lecture hours /week)

Texts or Major Resources:

- AP Style Guide; Spelling word lists; Web sites: TBA

Course Description: (long version)
An introduction to agricultural communications as applied to the ag sector. Course provides an overview of news writing using AP style and common communication methods. Students will learn about careers in and the role of public relations, marketing campaigns, and modern media technologies play in agriculture and related fields. Students will be exposed to professional development through application of writing and communication principles in professional, real-world settings. Open to students interested in careers using communication skills.

Course objectives: At the end of the semester students will have increased,

- Awareness: heightened awareness of students to careers and skills required in professional communication fields linked to the agriculture sector
- Skills: equip students with experiences which develop skills in writing in AP style, data mining, searching and converting technical science-based literature into public audience specific formats
- Knowledge: inform students of practices, approaches and opportunities for agricultural news writing, public relations and broadcast media.

Learning outcomes:

- Demonstrate effective presentation, speaking skills
- Demonstrate effective proofreading skills
- Familiar with design concepts applied to various publications
- Ability to apply design concepts for photojournalism
- Possess a working familiarity with AP Style
- Advanced their ability to conduct interviews and research for stories
- Be able to write effective press releases
- Apply principles of effective Public Relations in a context of a crisis
- Have generated artifacts for their Ag Communication Portfolio

Course Format:

Each student will play a pivotal role in professionally researching facts about writing and evaluating literature and preparing this information for others in the class. Students are to consider themselves members of this learning community thus taking ownership and then choose to energetically and actively, bring learning opportunities
to other members of the learning community. Unless otherwise stated, the chapter assignments are in the Communicators Handbook.

**Course Content & Schedule: (facilitator, topic, activity and assignment)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (1/8)</td>
<td>Course overview – Syllabus &amp; Frameworks for evaluation; Pre-test assessment survey; AP Style concepts; confused words lists; think of story for the semester (DRM)</td>
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<td>Week 2 (1/13)</td>
<td>The art of effective writing; AP Style continued; Types of writing; What is news? (DAS)</td>
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<td>Assignment: Report on a Topic - analysis of a news story (due 8/23)</td>
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<td>Chapter 2: The art of good writing</td>
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<td>Week 2 (1/15)</td>
<td>Writing with voice; Writing applications</td>
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<td>Guest Lecture: Katie Jackson</td>
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<td>Assignment: polishing (correcting sentences)</td>
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<td>Chapter 3 Writing for Newspapers and Magazines; Chapter 4 Writing Skills Short Course for News and Feature Stories</td>
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<td>Week 3 (1/20)</td>
<td>Elements for a Press release (KJ)</td>
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<td>Chapter 5: Publications; Chapter 6 Newsletters</td>
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<td>Week 3 (1/22)</td>
<td>Interviewing techniques (DAS &amp; DRM)</td>
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<td>Exercise: who are you?</td>
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<td>Assignment: draft a press release (person); satisfactory performances will be posted on web site</td>
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<td>Week 4 (1/27)</td>
<td>Providing critical review / feedback of work / Intro to AP editing (KJ)</td>
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<td>Week 4 (1/29)</td>
<td>Editing continued (KJ, DAS)</td>
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<td>Exercise: editing of an article</td>
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<td>Assignment: find 2 articles and provide edited comments</td>
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<td>Week 5 (2/3)</td>
<td>Resourcing - Where's the stuff? Becoming a highly proficient researcher! (librarian consultation and beyond); Legal: Copyright, plagiarism, infringements (Mrs. C. Jenda)</td>
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<td>Week 5 (2/5)</td>
<td>Identifying and writing for your audience; Generational differences (DAS)</td>
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<td>Invited presenter – Tentative Dr. Isabelle Thompson</td>
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<td>Exercises and Assignment: transform technical topic (given to students) into written form – submit as transformed product</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6 (2/10)</td>
<td>Introduction to photo journalism concepts (SW)</td>
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</table>
Exercise: writing captions

Assignment Due: Second press release (technical item)

Chapter 7: Photography

Week 6 (2/12)  
**What do I need to look for in design?** (SW)

Guest presenter: Stacy Wood

Assignment: Produce a Dummy Sketch (i.e., brochure for a club or organization).

Chapter 9: Exhibit Design and Production

Week 7 (2/17)  
**Difficult spelling; rules; exercises; Can it be fun?** (DAS, DRM)

Week 7 (2/19)  
Spelling test & topics continued

Week 8 (2/24)  
**Public relations principles and concepts of crises and politics, oh my!**

Exercise: case analysis

Guest presenter: Dr. Virginia Morgan

Week 8 (2/26)  
Public relations and marketing (DAS & DRM)

Guest speaker on Public Relation Association: ______

Assignment: summarize best practices list for PR and Marketing

Chapter 27: Managing Risk in Communication

Week 9 (3/3)  
Marketing Campaigns (DAS and C&M group)

Assignment Due: Article on a crises (event)

Chapter 16: Campaign Communications
Chapter 25: Organizational and Product Marketing

Guest presenter: Mr. Jeff Helms

Week 9 (3/5)  
**Media Skills training and working with people** (DRM)

Assignment: highlight a few issues

Chapter 15: Media Relations
Chapter 17: The ABC’s of working with volunteers

Week 10 (3/10)  
**Media Skills training** continued

Exercises mock session
Guest lecture – Debbie Vandiver

Week 10 (3/12)  
Special event week – assignments, time for projects

Montgomery trip - ALFA
Week11 (3/24) continued; Using how people learn to design content & delivery? (DRM)
Chapter 22: Instructional Design for Education

Week11 (3/26) Crises in Action Simulation (DRM)
Chapter 24: Effective Communication in Crisis
Guest presenter: Dr. Virginia Morgan

Week12 (3/31) Preparing and Presenting professionally (DRM)
Assignment: observe a professional presentation and provide a critique
Chapter 14: Public speaking

Week12 (4/2) Constructing visuals and multimedia for message effectiveness(DRM); hardware and software options in communication; broadcast media concepts(DAS)
Assignment: prepare a set of slides on a paper for discussion
Chapter 12: Designing visuals

Week13 (4/7) Writing for the web; design concepts (MB)
Exercises: Performing a web site review
Assignment: Evaluate and critique an ag sector website
Guest presenter: Mr. Mark Bransby

Week13 (4/9) continued (MB)
Chapter 18: Radio; Chapter 19: Television; Chapter 20: Video Productions; Chapter 21: Interactive Multimedia Technologies

Week14 (4/14) Field trip to Atlanta – CNN, AGCO, AgNet
Week14 (4/16) Presentation of their multimedia marketing campaigns to a mock board (class)

Week15 (4/21) continued presentations by teams

Week15 (4/23) Guest presenter (video conference activity)
Assignment: Students initiate, organize, plan and execute

Week16 (4/28) Debrief of course experience and learning community & Post Test continued presentations by teams as needed

Final Examination date – Wednesday, May 6 (tentative)

Learning Benchmarks (course requirements/evaluation):
Grades will be assigned on the basis of a 10 pt scale. 100-90%=A, 89-80%=B, 79-70%=C, 69-60% D and below 59%=F.

**Benchmarks and Expectations Elaborated:**

**Expectations:** Students will be good stewards and citizens of the community and accept challenges for learning with zeal.

**Team Project.** Students will commit to effective team work involving the analysis and planning of a public relation and marketing campaign for an ag organization. Expectation includes: advance distribution of an approved plan, appropriate technique of engaging classmates in an exercise of dissecting the strengths and flaws of the campaign. The assessment rubric will consist of: appropriateness of campaign selected, knowledge and understanding of the campaign, preparation for the session (having supporting information from references or books), use of visuals, degree of engaging others, ability to motivate classmates and summarize key points all with consciousness of time.

**Participation in Class.** Each member of the class will be expected to have read the assignments sufficiently well to contribute to the intellectual discussion. The assessment rubric will consist of: evidences of participation in the form of comments, questions, discussion and display of insights into the session topic.

**Quizzes.** Learning assessments will be prepared to enable students to demonstrate knowledge and application of concepts and principles from the book, the supplemental materials discussed, guest lecturers, and supplemental readings/web sites. Formats will be objective, short answer essays or analysis.

**Adjusters.** As the semester progresses, additional opportunities will be provided to students to add points to their grade. These could be exercises in writing about additional events relevant to agriculture and the college.

**Methods of Instruction:** The following pedagogies may be utilized
a. handouts of selected materials
b. lectures to frame a topic
c. individual led & group discussions, presentations, and writing exercises applying the "See, Do, Get" model.
d. readings to be discovered
e. guest speakers \ seminars
f. "real life" simulated assignments
Course Policy:

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday mornings by arrangement.

Meeting times: 9:30 PM – 10:45 AM Tuesday and Thursday; Locations: Comer 109

*Changes. Instructors reserve the right to modify planned activities in order to facilitate effective learning.

Attendance Policy: It is important that students make every attempt to attend all sessions. A student with two unexcused absences will have his/her grade for the course lowered by one (1) letter grade.

Unannounced quizzes and in-class assignments: Instructors will offer several unannounced quizzes and in-class team assignments.

Plagiarism. All work submitted electronically may be submitted to Turnitin.com to flag for evidence of non-original work. Violations will be reported according to the Tiger Cub as appropriate.

Disabilities: Any student that needs special accommodations should notify the instructor and/or contact the Program for Students with Disabilities in 1244 Haley Center as soon as possible (Dr. Kelly Haynes, 844-2096)

Academic Honesty: Most online sources of copied material can be found easily using standard web search engines. The College of Agriculture also subscribes to a detection service for more recondite sources. See “Easy Guide to Reporting Honesty Cases by Faculty Members” in the Tiger Cub (.pdf), which also contains, in the section “Cheating,” A Definition of Plagiarism (.pdf). Please note all written assignments are subject to submission to “Turnitin” software to detect plagiarism and assist you in your capacity for ethical writing.

Departmental Honesty Statement:

By affixing my signature below, I acknowledge I am aware of the Auburn University policy concerning academic honesty, plagiarism, and cheating. This policy is defined in the current Tiger Cub Student Handbook, Code of Laws, Title XII, Student Academic Honesty Code, Chapters 1200-1203. I further attest that the work I am submitting with this exam is solely my own and was developed during the exam. I have used no notes, materials, or other aids except those permitted by the instructor

__________________________________ Date: _____

After signing, cut section off and submit to the instructor.