

# Writing for the Web

## Fall 2017 CM230/EN230

Dr. Gina Marcello  
Office- Jeffries 204A  
Office Hours - Tuesday/Thursday 11:00-12:30 or by appointment

### Required Texts:

- 1) *On Writing Well: The classic guide to Writing Non-Fiction.* by William Zinsser
- 2) *Writing for the Web: creating compelling web content using words, pictures, and sound.* by Lynda Felder.

Writing for the Web explores a range of interactive writing skills and content creation for web pages, blogs, and social media sites. This course provides readings and activities for creating compelling web content using words, pictures and sounds.

The secret to writing well is to write, write, write some more, and rewrite. The secret for creating engaging content is to create, create, and create some more. Over the next 15 weeks we will identify how to best use words, images, pictures and sound to create engaging digital content.

Writing for the Web will require you to participate in **two field trips**. **The field trips are mandatory** so please plan accordingly. Our first field trip will be to **Ocean Grove**, a small seaside community next to Asbury Park and Bradley Beach. Here we will work on our first photojournalism travel assignment. For our first field trip we will “go into the field” to shoot a series of photographs on location. Remember good visual content will typically require research including a visit to the location. Consider yourself the eyes and ears of your audience. Stock photography is a costly option for most writing and organizations.

**Our second trip to Asbury Park** is where we will interview business owners, locals and visitors for your first 700-1200 word travel article. This trip is offered to help you understand the process of interviewing, shooting & writing a high impact travel article. If you can not make this trip, please let me know as soon as possible. Please note all of the activities required can be completed with a smart phone and apps you can download for free or for a nominal fee on your phone. You are expected to select a target publication for your article. We will discuss this over the next few weeks.

Your final project will center around a location of your choice. You are responsible for shooting a series of 5 photographs, writing and editing an article, and editing a short video highlighting the location. You will share your multimedia article with your social network (including your class mates). Again, you will tailor your final article to a specific publication. During the course of the semester we will learn about writers guidelines and how each publication requires you to use them before you submit your article.

Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to post each week. These weekly participation posts relate to the reading(s) and/or videos required for that week.

## GRADING

### 40% **Weekly Participation Writing Assignments**

These assignments are worth 3-5 points each (total of 40 points). They will not be graded if submitted after the deadline. The weekly deadline is Sunday by midnight. You will not earn any points for the week if the assignment is late, no exceptions.

5% **Wordpress Blog Creation:** please note this platform will be used for a handful of the weekly participation assignments. You are free to alter your blog pages and the content over the course of the semester. This is to help you get started.

15% Ocean Grove **Photojournalism Assignment** with field trip

10% **Vlog Story Board**, Script (5%)

**Vlog recording** to be used on your personal blog (5%)

15% **Travel Article**, Asbury Park (10%)

**Storyboard** for video short (5%)

Edited 1 minute video (extra credit)

15% **Final Article** - Local destination of choice

### **Week 1 (August 28th): Welcome!**

**BBPost:** Welcome Blackboard Post - tell us who you are and why you have taken this class. What would you like to learn?

#### **Readings:**

Chapter 1: All Your Really Need to Know (Felder, pgs. 1-12)

Chapter 1-4 The Transaction, Simplicity, Clutter & Style (Zinsser, pg 1-23)

### **Week 2 (September 4): Creating & Developing Your Blog**

**BBPost:** This week you will create your [www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com) blog.

On blackboard you will share your blog address. My blog is [www.ginamarcello.com](http://www.ginamarcello.com)

Tell us why you choose the style you did, navigation (your menus) and include a brief introduction to the focus of your blog. Consider your interests, likes, dislikes, to help you decide your focus. Chapter 12 will provide ideas. You might also consider looking at other blogs you like reading.

#### **Readings:**

Chapter 12: Writing Blogs (Felder, pg. )

Chapter 5: The Audience (Zinsser, pg. )

#### **Wordpress Assignment Due:**

Please design, write and share your wordpress blog on Blackboard. Minimally, your blog should include: a web address, bio (with a picture about you), an about section (what is your blog about), and guidelines for readers comments. There are many, many ways

you can organize this content. For this assignment please follow these guidelines. Please note: you can add additional pages to your blog, if you determine it helpful to the focus of your blog.

### **Week 3 (September 11): Develop Your Writing, Focus & Control**

Chapter 9: Telling a Good Story (Felder, pg 109-116)

Chapter 6: Writing non-linear, Interactive Stories (Felder, pg 73-82)

Chapter 6: Words (Zinsser, pg 32-36)

Chapter 7: Usage (Zinsser, pg 37-45)

Chapter 8: Unity (Zinsser, pg 49-53)

**BBPost:** For your writing assignment this week you are going to research the shore community of Ocean Grove. Remember to control your content. There are many things you can potentially write about and capture (you will take pictures of these items next week during our field trip). You decide how to best focus your content. We typically deliver our best work when organized. Have a theme. Post two clearly written sentences for each item.

- 1) One fun thing to do (not the beach);
- 2) One fun thing to see (not the beach);
- 3) One thing you can eat (is the town 'known' for anything?);
- 4) Where to stay (select based on your lodging choices and your target audience - hotel, motel, Bed & Breakfast, weekly home rental or an Air B&B room. Each will have its own target, likes and dislikes.
- 5) What to buy (souvenir)
- 6) Unique fact, idea, place, person...what did we miss in the first 5?

**Free write on your blog:** Self-reflection. Write a brief summary that describes where you are in your writing today. What are your main strengths as a writer or artist? Where do you think you need to improve? What is your experience with writing for the web? Post a link to your blog on BlackBoard.

### **Week 4 (September 18): Working with Images - FIELD TRIP (Friday 22nd) 12:00-2:00**

This week we focus our efforts on using still images with a heaving emphasis on photography.

Chapter 13: Writing About Places (Zinsser, pg. 116-131)

Chapter 3: Working with Images (Felder, pg. 31-44)

Chapter 7: Writing Succinctly (Felder, pgs 83 - 91)

**Photojournalism Assignment Due:** Capture the town in five images. Use the concepts from last week, capture each with your camera. Edit the images using Lightroom. This is an app you can purchase and use on your phone. We will discuss Lightroom on the field trip.

**BlackBoard Post:** Upload your five images to the BlackBoard message board. Tell us why you chose each image in two sentences or less. Remember writing succinctly is more challenging than using a lot of words.

**Blog Post:** Upload Images to your blog. Free-write about the Field Trip experience. What did you learn about Photojournalism? What did you learn about your photography skills? Where would you like to improve?

## **Week 5 (September 25) : Moving Images & Sound**

Chapter 4: Adding Motion (Felder)  
Chapter 9: Telling a Good Story (Felder)  
YouTube Creator Academy - Create Great Content

Please watch the following three videos about creating content for youtube.

<https://creatoracademy.youtube.com/page/course/great-content?ytref=all&hl=en>

How to Vlog <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGQ0I3I7Cel>

**Blog Post:** Describe Vlogging to someone who know nothing about it? What are the benefits of vlogging? What is your favorite Blog? Why? What limitations do you have for vlogging, if any? Do you find this form of content informative? Enjoyable? How might you use it to promote a local business or yourself? Post your comments on BlackBoard with a link to your blog.

## **Week 6 (October 2): Writing Instructions**

Chapter 11: Writing Instructions (Felder)

**Blackboard Post:** Using stick figures, create the storyboard for instructions on how to tie a tie or a silk scarf. Make sure you include:

- An introduction
- A description of the target audience
- A description of the media you will use
- Wide shots, mid-range shots, and close-ups

Decide whether you will use animation or video to produce the instructions. When you are finished search the Web to find examples of instructions. How would your production be better than what you found? [www.tie-a-tie.net](http://www.tie-a-tie.net)

## **Week 7 (October 9): The Human Voice and the Power of Storytelling, Interviews & Podcasts**

Chapter 5: Adding Sound (Felder, 57-71)  
Chapter 14: Writing About Yourself (Zinsser, pgs. 132-146)  
Chapter 20: The Sound of Your Voice (Zinsser, pg 232-240)

**Blackboard & Blog Post:** Go to [www.storycorps.org](http://www.storycorps.org) and [www.themoth.org](http://www.themoth.org) and listen to several stories that appeal to you. Observe how simple the recordings are presented,

with a single still image and a sentence or two of introduction. What works and doesn't work for you? Write a few sentences explaining your preferences. Tell us what you listened to and why you did or did not like it. Include links in your blog post. Post the link to your blog on BlackBoard so we can read what you've written.

### **Week 8 (1 October 16): Principles of Good Web Content**

**Chapter 10:** Refresher on the Rhetorical Modes (Felder, pg 117- 126)

**Chapter 9:** The Lead & the Ending (Zinsser, pg 54-66)

**Chapter 10:** Bits & Pieces (Zinsser 67-91)

**BlackBoard Post:** "Write I have three passions" List what they are and add a few details about each. Describe in one sentence, why you feel passionate about each. What would you say to some else to persuade that person to share your passion. Include one image for each.

### **Week 9 (October 23): Writing, Editing & Rewriting**

**Chapter 8:** Writing with Style & Good Grammar

**Chapter 13:** Re-vision

**Watch Find Your Passion: Niche Videos** <http://bit.ly/2xzQY1L>

**Watch Set a Creative Strategy:** <http://bit.ly/2ve9nVj>

**Assignment Vlog (video due next week, storyboard due this week):** This week you are going to revise your original biography. As part of this revision you are going to add a Vlog a short biography about yourself. Use any one of these ideas to help you create your two-three minute Vlog: What was your happiest or saddest memory? What is your biggest accomplishment? What would you like to do when you graduate? What motivates you? What are you most passionate about? The recorded Vlog is due next week. This week you will post a Vlog **storyboard** on BlackBoard (pg. 50).

On BlackBoard include: a written introduction, a description of your target audience, a description of the media you will use, wide, mid-range & close-up shots and the theme for your Vlog. Also include any graphics you might want to use.

### **Week 10 (October 30):**

**Vlog Due:** Please post this link to Blackboard for feedback. Your Vlog should appear on your wordpress blog under the biography section.

### **Week 11 (November 6):.....FIELD TRIP (FRIDAY 10th, 11:30-1:30)**

Field Trip to Asbury Park. We will interview local business owners, residents and visitors. You are required to post your research about the city and popular locations. Consider

your particular angle or focus prior to our field trip. What are you interested in doing? Who would you like to read your article? Dog lovers? Foodies? Think about your target audience as you are writing. Research related social media groups who would be interested in your angle. Consider the time of year! Who might want to go to Asbury “off season”?

### **Week 12 (November 13):**

**Travel article Asbury Park Beach Due (700 words).**

### **Week 13 (November 20):**

Research the location you selected for your final project and post to blackboard your preliminary research. You need to know before you go.

**BlackBoard Post:** Final project. You will write about a location of your choice. Tell me why chose this location. Tell me where would like to publish your article. The publication reminds you to keep your target audience in mind, always. It also sets guidelines for your writing. Are you writing in first or third person? Who is the demographic for the publication. You can find this information if you google **the writer’s guidelines for the publication**. For example, see links below. It must relate to the format of the publication you would like to pitch the article.

Writers Guideline for Good Old Boat [http://www.goodoldboat.com/writers\\_guidelines/](http://www.goodoldboat.com/writers_guidelines/)  
Writers Guidelines for Coastal Living: [http://www.coastalliving.com/microsites/share/2016\\_writers\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.coastalliving.com/microsites/share/2016_writers_guidelines.pdf)

Field Work for for Final Project: Local Destination of Choice

### **Week 14 (November 27):** Field Research

### **Week 15 (December 4th)**

**Final Project Due: Local Travel Destination of Choice**

One Well Written Article (750-1200 words)

Identify the angle of the article

Three images (you decide what type of images are most important for the article)

Five Photojournalistic Photos with Captions (these are separate from the article but can be used in the article, if appropriate) or one video short about the location - A 60 second well-edited video

Submitted Separately: Tell me where you would publish this article and why (think about appropriate travel magazines or sites, area publications, etc.)

**Nondiscrimination:**

It is policy of Georgian Court University to maintain an academic environment free of discrimination, including harassment, regardless of gender, race, creed, color, religion, age, national and ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status. The University is committed to creating an environment which is free from intolerance directed toward individuals or groups. For details, see the current GCU undergraduate catalog. All inquiries shall be addressed in the Office of Human Resources.

**Disabilities Services:**

Georgian Court University is committed to ensuring that all students receive equal access to all services, programs, and activities. We support students with documented physical, sensory, learning, or psychological disabilities by providing reasonable and appropriate accommodations in accordance with applicable laws, such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. To request accommodations and/or academic adjustments, please contact the Academic Development and Support Center on the lower level of the Sister Mary Joseph Cunningham Library. Call 732-987-2363 or send an email to [lfarh@georgian.edu](mailto:lfarh@georgian.edu). For more information, see <http://georgian.edu/academics/adsc/#disabilities-services>.

**Academic Integrity**

Georgian Court strives to be a moral community with ethical convictions. Academic integrity is essential to collegial pursuit of truth and knowledge, and academic dishonesty is a serious offense which may result in failure for the course and even dismissal from Georgian Court. Anyone who willfully assists another in the breach of integrity is held equally responsible and subject to the same penalty. According to GCU policy, academic dishonesty is any act of cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, abuse of resources, forgery of academic documents, dissimulation, or sabotage, and any act of aiding and abetting academic dishonesty. One aspect of academic honesty that often surprises students is the expectation that you hand in original work *that was not already handed in for a different course*. Unless you have specifically obtained your instructor's permission to hand in previously-completed work, this is a breach of academic honesty. See the catalog or student handbook for additional information. Check with your instructor BEFORE an assignment's due date if you have questions about this policy.

**Early Warning System – Intervention Tool**

Georgian Court University has an electronic intervention tool called the **Early Warning System**. This tool will be invoked when a student is doing poorly in a course by demonstration of sub-par academic performance, attendance, or disposition. Once an alert is activated in the Early Warning System, you will be notified and a Georgian Court University professional will reach out to you to discuss ways to help you succeed in this course. This process is only meant to help you.

**Withdrawal from this Course**

GCU policy permits undergraduate students to withdraw up to the 10<sup>th</sup> week (or equivalent for courses of shorter duration) and receive a "W" grade. This requires a "Request for Grade of W" form and a fee. You cannot withdraw from this course by not attending or by telling your instructor of your desire to withdraw. It is your responsibility to complete the official forms and procedures. An academic advisor must sign the form. A student who has not officially withdrawn will receive a grade based on all work, whether completed or not, including work assigned after the student stopped attending. The registrar publishes a list of deadlines to request a grade of "W" at <http://georgian.edu/academics/registrar/important-dates/>.

**WITHDRAWING FROM A COURSE CAN NEGATIVELY AFFECT YOUR FINANCIAL AID AND ACADEMIC STANDING – be sure to check with the Financial Aid Office and your advisor before dropping any course.**

The Office of the Registrar in the Mercy Center can answer questions, too. Telephone 732-987-2228; email [registrar@georgian.edu](mailto:registrar@georgian.edu); web site: <http://georgian.edu/academics/registrar>.