

**SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION**

**DEPARTMENT OF FILM AND MEDIA STUDIES**

**COM 668X: Writing for Media**

**January 2019 Final Project**

 Instructions:

1. This is a two weeks project that must be done in groups of at most three students.
2. The final project must be handed over in hard copy that has all the article posted on the blog
3. On the document handed in the students must indicate the URL of all the blog post. That is, at least seven URL’s for the three features, the three opinion editorials and the critical film review. All these must also be handed in in soft copy as word document files.
4. The handing in must be done on the date and venue as indicated in the exams timetable

BLOG PROJECT

In groups of three, you are to come up with an exciting a BLOG using BLOGER or any other free blog service provider of your choice and devote the blog to something that is of interest to you and a well-defined target audience. Try as much as possible to focus on your area of research interest as a masters student and a communication scholar who is looking at changing the society by disseminating expert information in a journalistic manner that would make the society a better place.

This project gives you the opportunity to self-publish your features and opeds. Your articles should be well-crafted blog posts, and the expectation is that you will receive feedback and comments from classmates and other target audience members whose comments must be screen printed and submitted in a document that also contains the URL of all the articles on your blog page.

With this project the aim is to create a blogging and learning community where we can share knowledge on what is of public interest from our own expert opinion and research as scholars. Each time you write a blog post, you will also respond to at least one of your classmates’ posts. In this way, we’ll ensure that you have an audience for your writing, and we’ll create a community of readers and thinkers focused around the issues of public and scholarly interest. Your writing must be journalistic.

THE CONTENT

You have some degree of latitude with this project. As a group, your blog must have:

1. At least three feature stories and the writing should be guided by the attached guidelines.
2. At least three opinion editorials on an issue that is of public interest looked at from a communication/media/research perspective
3. A critical review of a film that is of public and popular interest – focus on the crafting of the script

Length for each Blog Post: Aim for at least 500 words and a maximum of 800 word.

**Guidelines**

**Feature story assignment (30 Marks)**

This is your opportunity to put together all your journalism skills into an expanded story of special interest to you and target a tech savvy audience on the digital platform. Target a specific audience and use your imagination and creativity to make the story interesting! Story ideas surround us each day, but you need to give your ideas some thought, and find an appropriate theme and angle to use in developing your story.

You will need to interview at least three sources for your story. The sources must be relevant to the theme of your story and help advance the editorial slant of your feature. Pick any of the two options below and write a feature that meets the above specifications:

1. Trend Stories:
* Examines people, things or organizations that are having an impact on society, the latest fad in life or behavior among people that you believe would be of interest to your target audience.
	+ Examples:
		- The latest trend in partying in Kenya
		- Student election voting trends
		- The emergence of malls everywhere etc
		- Sponsors and cross generational sex
		- Higher education issues
		- Political issues like devolution, corruption, coverage of the referendum debate etc
1. Reaction/in-depth stories:
* Detailed account beyond a basic news story
* You may also focus on your area of research interest and use it as a basis to react on what is happening

**Opinion editorial (30 Marks)**

Pick a topical issue that is of interests and write an oped that is incisive, precise and informative. The issue must be big in the public domain, either because it is affecting so many people or has the potential of having a serious impact or simply because it is dominant in the public sphere and warrants a broader situation and understanding.

**A film treatment project (20 Marks)**

As a group watch one film and write at least one critical review of the film’s screenplay script based on the three-act structure by Aristotle. Your focus should be on the 4Ps of dramatic production and how they have been crafted along the seven steps of the three-act structure.

Include the following elements in your movie review:

1. In the opening paragraph state the title, and BRIEFLY summarize the plot of the movie. Describe how you truly feel about the film. What is your honest reaction to the film? Did you like/dislike it? Was it confusing? Exciting? Suspenseful? Boring?
2. In the next set of paragraphs analyze the development of the plot, the creation of the protagonist/antagonist, the problems confronting the protagonist and the sequencing of these problems in the protagonist arc. Lastly analyze how the protagonist confrontation of the central issues (major problems) underscore the premise. Ultimately, we need to know whether the movie’s storyline is well crafted or not and what makes it so along the principles of Aristotle’s Three-Act structure.

NOTE

Make sure your choice of a movie is a recent movie that has attracted an uproar or critical acclaim in Kenya or globally so much so that when you post on your blog you will attract conversations from your target audience.

Rubric

Writing Rubric for Feature/oped Article Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | Point Score (5,4,3,2,1) |
| **The Text is informative*** Information is new or presented in a fresh way.
* There is an appropriate amount of information.
* Information comes from a variety of sources appropriate to topic with a relevant title.
* Feature must have at least three relevant sources cited
 |  |
| **The text is well organized*** Information is organized around a “big Idea”
* Organizing structure is appropriate to topic
* Subtitles, topic sentences, evidence and so on are effectively used.
 |  |
| **The text is engaging*** Stories, examples, and quotations are interesting to the reader.
* Language is carefully crafted to pull reader into text.
* Use of the transition/quote formula
 |  |
| **The features*** Support the information and the “big idea”
* Engage reader’s attention and pull reader into text.
* Angle is appropriate
 |  |
| **The overall work is*** Neat: text is legible; layout is clear, organization supports text.
* Mechanically correct: all or nearly all spelling and grammar are correct.
 |  |
| **The traction on your blogsite*** **Layout and design**
* **Comments from your target audience (at least seven from non-class members)**
* **Number of readers recorded**
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