COURSE OUTLINE

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<th>Course Number</th>
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<td>CMN 260</td>
<td>Convergence Newsroom</td>
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**Hours:**
- Lecture/Lab/Other: 2/2

**Pre-requisite:** CMN 131, Co-requisite CMN 231

**Implementation:**
- Semester/Year: Spring 2012

**Catalog description (2006-2009 Catalog):**

A multimedia capstone course in convergence media. Students complete all elements of online and print news including writing a variety of journalistic articles, taking photographs, making and editing video footage, designing info graphics, learning the fundamentals of marketing and preparing all content for both online and print formats.

**Is course New, Revised, or Modified?** [Modified courses are those which have a new prefix or course number] New course.

**Required texts/other materials:**

Free Online Video Tutorials from Various Sources / An external storage device such as hard drive or USB stick (minimum 8GB)

**Revision date:** Fall 2012  
**Course coordinator:**  
Holly-Katharine Johnson, ext. 3594, johnsonh@mccc.edu

**Information resources:**

1. *Convergent Journalism an Introduction: Writing and Producing Across Media* by Stephen Quinn and Vincent Filak

**Other learning resources:**

This course relies upon access to Macintosh Computer labs with Adobe CS4 and CS5 Suites, iMovie, Final Cut Pro and word processing software. Photographic and video recorders are also necessary.
**Course Competencies/Goals**

The student will be able to:

1. Write articulate and well researched articles in a variety of journalistic styles including hard news, feature, in-depth, opinion, sports and review.
2. Take clear and appropriate photographs that add value to the written articles by providing additional information and insight without editorializing.
3. Construct, shoot and edit short video clips germane to the written articles and prepare them for online deployment.
4. Design info graphic material relevant to written articles.
5. Layout print news articles with appropriate info graphic and photographic materials using InDesign software.
6. Make connections with area businesses and offer them online and print advertising, and, when appropriate, place ads, and provide tear sheets and invoices in a timely manner.

**Course-specific General Education Knowledge Goals and Core Skills.**

**General Education Knowledge Goals**

**Goal 1. Communication.** Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

**Goal 4. Technology.** Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

**Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action.** Students will understand ethical issues and situations.

**MCCC Core Skills**

**Goal A. Written and Oral Communication in English.** Students will communicate effectively in speech and writing, and demonstrate proficiency in reading.

**Goal B. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving.** Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.

**Goal C. Ethical Decision-Making.** Students will recognize, analyze and assess ethical issues and situations.

**Goal D. Information Literacy.** Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

**Goal E. Computer Literacy.** Students will use computers to access, analyze or present information, solve problems, and communicate with others.

**Goal F. Collaboration and Cooperation.** Students will develop the interpersonal skills required for effective performance in group situations.

**Units of study in detail.**

**Unit I Convergence Overview**

**Learning Objectives**

The student will be able to...

- Describe the fundamental concepts of Convergence Media (**Course Competency 1; Core Skills A, D & F; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4**)
- Devise a thoughtful topic for a major Convergence project (**Course Competency 1; Core Skills A, B, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4**)
- Gather information for the Convergence project through online research and personal interviews (**Course Competency 1; Core Skills A & D; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4**)
- Write a well informed and newsworthy journalistic article with convergence elements planned before writing commences (**Course Competency 1; Core Skills A, B, D & E; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4**)
- Fact check writing and edit articles for style, substance, clarity and readability (Course Competency 1; Core Skills A, C, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1, 4 & 9)
- Explain who the target audience for the Convergence project is, and what their needs will be as media consumers based on their demographic characteristics (Course Competency 1; Core Skills A, B & F; Gen Ed Goal 1)

**Unit II**  Combining Photography and Video with Writing  
*Learning Objectives*  
The student will be able to…
- Photograph subjects relevant to the articles created in Unit I (Course Competency 2; Core Skills D, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1, 4 & 9)
- Take and edit audio and video footage to accompany articles created in Unit I (Course Competency 3; Core Skills D, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1, 4 & 9)
- Explain the basic principles of documentary journalism with attention to ethical considerations (Core Skills A, B & C; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 9)
- Understand use of photo, audio and video editing software and apply it to complete the primary audio-visual component of the convergence project (Course Competency 3; Core Skills D, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1, 4 & 9)

**Unit III**  Info graphics  
*Learning Objectives*  
The student will be able to…
- Use online databases to uncover additional data relevant to the Convergence project he or she is working on (Course Competency 4; Core Skills A, B, D & E; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4)
- Describe and analyze the components that make one info graphic more successful than another (Course Competency 4; Core Skills A, B & E; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4)
- Create an info graphic that successfully converts data into an easily understood visual element to accompany the print portion of the Convergence project (Course Competency 4; Core Skills A, B, D, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4)

**Unit IV**  Layout and Design Basics for Print and Online Formats  
*Learning Objectives*  
The student will be able to…
- Use a “dummy” to plan multiple print news pages (Course Competency 5; Core Skills B, D, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4)
- Understand and describe the basic principles of page layout and design (Course Competency 5; Core Skills A & B; Gen Ed Goal 1)
- Explain what makes one page design stronger or weaker than another (Course Competency 5; Core Skills A & B; Gen Ed Goal 1)
- Successfully design and layout multiple print news pages including text, photographs and info graphics in well organized and logical spreads (Course Competency 5; Core Skills A, B, D, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4)
- Prepare all text and multimedia content for a convergence package and upload it correctly for online consumption (Course Competency 5; Core Skills A, B, D, E & F; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4)

**Unit V**  Marketing and Advertising – a hands-on approach  
*Learning Objectives*  
The student will be able to…
- Read and comprehend a basic ad rate card (Course Competency 6; Core Skills A, B & D; Gen Ed Goal 1)
- Explain print and online ad rates to potential customers (Course Competency 6; Core Skills A, B, C & F; Gen Ed Goal 1)
- Fill out an advertising insertion order correctly (Course Competency 6; Core Skill A; Gen Ed Goal 1)
- Calculate basic ad costs and submit invoices and tear sheets to clients (Course Competency 6; Core Skills A, C & F; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 9)
- Place advertisements in print and online without pixilation or degradation (Course Competency 6; Core Skills B, D & E; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 4)

**Evaluation of student learning**

The grade for the course is determined based on the following criteria:

- 3 Convergence Projects (submitting and editing rough drafts is 30% of grade) = 60%
- Active in-class participation (including advertising work) = 10%
- Demonstration of Newsroom Skills = 10%
- Final exam = 20%

*In order to enroll in this class students must be taking or have completed CMN 131 and 231*

**Academic Integrity Statement:**

**Academic Integrity – Honesty In Your Work**

Cheating in any form is simply not tolerated. Familiarize yourself with the school’s academic integrity policy, at www.mccc.edu/admissions_policies_integrity.shtml. We will cover proper citation procedure, but it is each student’s responsibility to abide by the rules described in the policy, in this and every course he or she takes in college. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action and failure on the assignment and/or the course itself.

**Ethics in Journalism – BEYOND basic integrity**

In addition to the college’s academic integrity policy, students in this class are also bound by the code of journalistic ethics of The College VOICE newspaper (available at http://www.keepithaka.com/policy_manual.html). In particular students must fact check all submissions, not report on topics in which they have a personal interest (i.e. conflict of interest), and not accept any “freebies” or benefits from those they are covering.

**Special Needs Accommodations:**

Any student in this class who has special needs because of a disability is entitled to receive accommodations. Eligible students at Mercer County Community College are assured services under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 on the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you believe you are eligible for services, please contact Arlene Stinson, the Director of Academic Support Services. She can be reached at (609) 570-3525.