

## CM 203: Introduction to Communication

### Following the Story (15%)

The objective of this assignment is to carefully follow a breaking or recent science news story in an in-depth fashion. You will be asked to follow a major science news story of your choosing (e.g., can relate to public health, the environment, new technology, etc.; recent examples have included the Ebola outbreak, vaccine controversy, climate change and snow in Boston, GMO foods, nanotechnology, cancer treatments, etc.) across a wide array of mediums (television news, newspaper, online sources, political comedy, Internet, social media, radio, etc.) for a one-week period (7 days). You should keep a running log or notes page of the materials you review with corresponding links. If you watch something on TV or listen via radio, note down the dates and times, etc. You should be able to locate a corresponding link for most material as well. After following the story for a week, you'll need to write a 3-4 page (1,000 words max) reflection paper about the experience. In the paper you will briefly summarize the science news event and the amount/type of content you reviewed (25%). In the remainder of the paper, you should talk about the differences in coverage of the science story you see across the mediums (75%) and which items you reviewed helped to best tell the story and why. Be sure to cite any news content you directly refer to both in the text of the essay and on a separate reference page at the end of the paper (in other words you need in-text citations and a bibliography). Be sure to also type up your running log or note page and include at the end of your assignment on a separate page(s). Your analysis of the science news coverage should address the following questions:

- Which medium offers the most in-depth coverage?
- Which medium is easier to follow?
- Which medium do you prefer and why?
- Are different elements of the story covered across different mediums?
- What kind of political perspective (or lack thereof) do you notice in the coverage?
- How much of the content you reviewed was discovered via social media?
- Which pieces of your story did you or would you want to share via social media?
- Are certain news outlets more likely to feature science stories?
- Do certain outlets offer better science coverage than others?

Students will meet in small groups to share their reflections. Your reflection paper will be due on Moodle on **Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am**. Please bring a paper copy of your reflection paper to class.

**Grading Rubric**

Overall (25%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The paper has a clear intro, body, and conclusion</li> <li>The first part of the paper offers a summary of the news story</li> <li>The second part of the paper presents a thoughtful self-reflection, answering key questions about the exercise</li> <li>Assignment instructions were followed carefully</li> <li>The paper has a clear thesis/main argument</li> </ul>	5 4 3 2 1 0
News Activity (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A log or notes page with news activity is included with the assignment</li> <li>The story was fully explored using a variety of sources</li> <li>The log/notes page shows ample activity during the week-long posting period</li> </ul>	5 4 3 2 1 0
The Story (15%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate space/time is given to completing the first part of the written assignment</li> <li>Clear discussion of examples as part of the documentation</li> </ul>	5 4 3 2 1 0
Self Reflection (30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The self-reflection is thorough and thoughtful, addressing key questions</li> <li>Ample space/time is given to completing the second part of the assignment</li> <li>Supporting material is appropriately cited and referenced if applicable</li> <li>Key themes from course content are apparent and clear (e.g., science)</li> </ul>	5 4 3 2 1 0
Structure & Organization (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The paper address both parts of the assignment (25% vs. 75%)</li> <li>The paper has a clear flow and order</li> <li>Clear paragraphs present</li> <li>The thesis carries through the paper</li> <li>The reader is able to follow the writer through the parts of the assignment</li> </ul>	5 4 3 2 1 0
Grammar/ Style (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writing is professional and clear</li> <li>The paper has been well-proofread/is free of major grammatical errors</li> <li>Citations are used where appropriate (and correctly) in text</li> <li>The reference list is properly formatted in APA style and included with the assignment</li> <li>Everything is double-spaced, 12 pt. font, page#, etc.</li> </ul>	5 4 3 2 1 0
Additional Comments/ Thoughts		<b>Grade:</b>

(5 = Excellent, 4 = Very Good, 3 = Good, 2 = Poor, 1 = Satisfactory, 0 = Incomplete/Not Satisfactory)