



Journalism & Mass Communication

Student Review

Spring 2015

Inside This Issue

Letter from the Chair
..... 1

Grammarly
..... 2

Ashford Writing Center
..... 2

Career Services
..... 3

Dream Jobs
..... 3

Get Published
..... 3

SPJ Report
..... 4

Etcetera
..... 5

JMC Student Review: Year Two and Counting!

Welcome to the *JMC Student Review*, a quarterly publication that was first launched in March 2014 to highlight the happenings and achievement of our students. In this issue, we communicate program developments and recognize the achievements of our students that are laying the groundwork for a very productive year. The Ashford chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, the first online program in the country to be so recognized, continues to grow. SPJ-Ashford also launched *Trade Secrets: Tips and Tidbit*, an occasional news flyer, and is hosting a series of Webinar Shorts open to all students and offering useful reviews and expertise on areas such as freelancing, social media, and negotiating job boards.



Dr. Teresa Taylor Moore

We are also very excited to be working on a process in education called Program Review. This gives us an opportunity to look deeply into every course to make sure our curriculum is designed to provide students with skills that are desired by employers which will enhance their marketability. This year, we are partnering with other programs such as Sociology to give students more opportunities to build their portfolio by writing and editing content. As part of this strategy, the *JMC Student Review* will be written and edited by our students.



Dr. Anna Copeland Wheatley

As Ashford works to grow the program, we added a new member to our team, Dr. Anna Copeland Wheatley. She has more than 10 years experience teaching online and has been an assistant professor with Ashford for two years in English, Communication Studies, and now the JMC program. She has a Ph.D. in English and was a senior editor for *OMNI Magazine*, the Editor-in-Chief and co-founder of *AlleyCat News*, a leading publication covering the science, technology, and entrepreneurship in the New York area. She has worked for a wide-range of clients as an editor and writer including the Stern School of Business at NYU, the Institute for Life Sciences at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the New York Academy of Science, the NYC Center for Advanced Technology, among others.

“One of my passions,” says Wheatley, “is to create educational opportunities that are grounded in the real world. I am very excited to be working with Dr. Taylor Moore and the Ashford leadership in the College of Liberal Arts to build a 21st century program from the ground up.”

So stay tuned. We have some great initiatives that promise to make 2015 a fantastic year!



Go Grammarly: Get the Green Light for Writing Correctly!

As aspiring journalists, we tend to always have ideas racing around in our heads about the next thing to write about. However, sometimes we will find that getting that message across to our readers could be marred by mistakes that interferes with the interpretation of the message and can also alienate our readers. To make sure that your grammar is sound, there is a tool inside of each of our courses called Grammarly that can be used to help you recognize common mistakes in general writing. Grammarly is not a substitute for understanding and using Associate Press Style in your news articles in courses. It is also not a substitute for Turnitin which helps you to recognize problems with citations of sources. Grammarly is a great tool but some of the rules will be different for journalistic writing so you will still need to use your style manual. Always remember to run all of your work through Turnitin so that you avoid the pitfalls of accidental plagiarism. For the steps of how to setup Grammarly and begin using it, visit the Writing Center link in any of your courses and click on the Grammar Help tab.



ASHFORD UNIVERSITY™
Writing Center

Beyond Grammarly: The Ashford Writing Center

If you have used Grammarly and found that you are seeing far too many errors in your work, it is time to visit The Ashford Writing Center. The AWC is full of resources and a helpful staff that can assist you with basic writing skills that are crucial for those in the field of journalism and media. The tools in the AWC will help you formulate your ideas, find common mistakes, and provide strategies for how to become a better writer overall. Links to the AWC are available in every course that you take at Ashford. The AWC is a valuable resource that will help you enhance your writing across the curriculum. To access the AWC, click on Writing Center from any of your courses.

Try out this Grammar Usage Practice Quiz that is in the AWC:

<https://awc.ashford.edu/grammar-usage-practice.html>



Finding Your Way: Career Services at Ashford

No matter where you are in the program of study, it is never too early to prepare yourself for job seeking. The Career Services Center at Ashford University offers several services that will help make your job search experience a little easier. You can access Career Services through the Student Portal. Here is just a sampling of what you can find:

- ⇒ Job postings
- ⇒ Job search assistance
- ⇒ Coaching to improve networking skills
- ⇒ Resume and cover letter writing guidance
- ⇒ Interview preparation and practice
- ⇒ Individualized career coaching
- ⇒ Skills and personality assessments
- ⇒ Career guidance
- ⇒ Professional development webinars

Dream Jobs: What's On Your List

Have you decided what you want to do with your degree in Journalism and Mass Communication? We are asking all students in the program to indicate what they would like to do upon completion of their degree. What's your dream job? The results will be revealed in our upcoming quarterly newsletter!

Survey

Get Published!

We are excited to announce that all upcoming student newsletters in the Journalism and Mass Communication Program and the Sociology Program will feature stories by YOU! That's right, you will be able to submit your story for consideration that will be blind reviewed by a panel of judges for consideration for publication in our quarterly newsletters. At least four weeks prior to the publication of the newsletter, we will send out a Call for Submissions with topics that you will be asked to write about. Your identifying information will be removed prior to being sent to the reviewers. Each student will be able to have a chance to submit their work to be published on a rotating basis. Even if your story is not chosen for publication, you will receive valuable feedback from the reviewers about your submission so that you can improve your writing for the next round. So be on the lookout for the call for submissions!





SPJ-Ashford Is Off and Running!

In 2014, the Ashford Chapter of the Society for Professional Journalists (SPJ) made history as the first online-only program to be recognized by this industry stalwart. During our first year, we have accomplished quite a bit. Highlights include:

The SPJ-Ashford.org Website

With funding from Ashford's the Presidents Meeting for Ashford Students Online, SPJ-Ashford was able to launch an initial website and secure the domain name www.spj-ashford.org. This year, we will be moving to a new platform to make viewing and participating much easier. The site is for SPJ members but we encourage every one to visit and learn more about the advantages of joining the organization.

Trade Secrets: Tips and Tidbits

We all know how busy everyone is with classes, jobs, and family. SPJ-Ashford wants to provide news and tips that will be beneficial as you seek to enhance or begin your career in media. We are also hosting a new series of events we call

Webinar Shorts

Another exciting new series Webinar Shorts—20 minute presentations designed to give a quick overview of important topics. SPJ-Ashford outgoing-president Michael Featherston kicked off with a talk in January on using social media, followed by Rachel Gribble's March presentation on negotiating work as a freelancer. In April, we will be reviewing the job boards that are designed just for media professionals. These webinars are open to all students and we encourage you to attend. We will also be building out a video library of the presentations for future reference.

SPJ-Ashford as Trailblazer

There are many challenges in online education, but one that is often overlooked is the real value of having organization run by students for other students. Not only do these organizations inspire achievement in their fields, they are also provide great opportunities to demonstrate leadership. SPJ-Ashford is only one of five student online organizations eligible for funding by the Presidents Meeting for Ashford Students Online. The other organizations are the Ashford University Psychology Club, Sigma Epsilon Kappa, the Ashford History Association and the Student Veterans Organization. These five organizations may apply for up to \$500 in total funding on a quarterly bases. The projects are voted on by one representative from each organization.

Membership is Growing!

From a handful of intrepid students who helped start SPJ-Ashford in June 2014, we have seen a steady growth in membership. Our goal is to have 20 members by the end of our first year, and we are not too far off. We want to encourage everyone to join. In addition to excellent resources for jobs, interviewing, freelancing, and networking, SPJ members also benefit from the prestige of an organization that has been providing leadership since more than 100 years. Student memberships are \$37.50 a year and you can register online at <http://www.spj.org/join.asp>. Once you become a member, you will be eligible to vote and serve in the three executive positions stipulated by our Constitution including the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Headlines and the Finer Print

...ETCETERA

by Anna Copeland Wheatley



After 20 years of living in New York City, I thought I was immune to headlines. They are everywhere because all the delis and smoke shops (where they still mostly sell cigarettes, cokes, and beer) have rows of newspapers out front. Like many a transplant, I was told by my media pals that the greatest or most memorable headline was from the The New York Post, April 15, 1983. It read: “Headless Body in Topless Bar” and detailed a bizarre murder during which one Charles Dingle shot and killed the owner of the bar and then forced a woman to decapitate the corpse. Sensational headlines have been a defining characteristic of newsprint since its

inception. Headlines work because they physically call attention to themselves with big, bold type and language designed not to inform but entice. All headlines shout the same message: Buy Me Now! Herein lies the rub. Why does a media that defines itself as seekers of the truth and defenders of the freedom of information need to rely on the marketing prowess of headline news? The short answer is easy. Journalism and news are big business and the bottom line matters. But as we wade deeper into a world defined by massive, instant connectivity, it is worth investigating the impact of these headlines. A new study from neuroscientists at MIT may offer a promising start. The human brain can process entire images that the eye sees for as little as 13 milliseconds. According to Mary Potter, one of the senior authors, eyes not only rely information into the brain, “they allow the brain to think about it rapidly enough to know what you should look at next.” So maybe the overload of headlines in print, online, and via television and radio are not really shrinking our critical facilities after all. Instead, our eyes are giving our brains a vigorous workout all day, every day—if only we could see it.

Journalism and Mass Communication Student Review
JMCTestudentReview@ashford.edu

Dr. Teresa Taylor Moore, Program Chair
Associate Professor
teresa.taylormoore@faculty.ashford.edu

Dr. Anna Copeland Wheatley
Assistant Professor
anna.wheatley@faculty.ashford.edu



We encourage you to contact us with any questions, concerns, or feedback about your journey at Ashford University.

The Journalism and Mass Communication Student Review exists to provide you with information about the program and place to showcase your work. We publish every quarter, and the next publication will be in June. In May, we will send out a call for stories for specific sections of the newsletter including news, features, profiles, and the Etcetera column. This is an opportunity for you to develop your research and writing skills, offer stories that are important to you and your peers, and add to your portfolio!