

**Journalism 635
Statehouse Reporting
Spring 2020**

Professor:

Patricia E. Gaston

Lacy C. Haynes Professor

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Office Hours: 3-5 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday; 1-5 p.m. Wednesday; other times by appointment

Please call me Professor Gaston...

Official course description: The purpose of this class is to provide students with an immersive public affair reporting experience at the State Capital in Topeka while covering the important statewide issues of the day. Students will be assigned to cover the statehouse for specific media outlets and assist those media in fulfilling their public-service missions to their communities.

Unofficial course description: As Professor Scott Reinardy puts it: this is not a class; it's an adventure into the murky waters of Kansas politics. It's a front-row seat to a voter-approved freak show that allows you to build your portfolio, network for internships and jobs, and be completely entertained along the way.

Course Objectives

- Ø To produce professional-level content for the KU Statehouse Wire Service
- Ø To work independent in developing story ideas and producing stories
- Ø To work with professional reporters and editors to develop stories
- Ø To produce stories that build student portfolios for jobs and internships
- Ø For students to produce stories they want to produce
- Ø For students to edit stories, learn how to be an assignment editor
- Ø For students to learn how to use video, graphics, other multi-platforms
- Ø To assist students in earning internships and jobs

Expectations

- Ø To produce three (3) stories from the Statehouse every two weeks (18 stories)
- Ø To develop two (2) enterprise stories during the semester (April)
- Ø To produce the best journalism possible
- Ø To work well with your reporters and editors
- Ø to challenge yourself and challenge your colleagues
- Ø To enhance your journalism skills (reporting, writing, editing, networking, critical thinking, etc.) as you move toward graduation
- Ø To professionally and ethically represent the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications

Grading

The grade is not important. At this stage of your college careers, grades are rudimentary measurements for work you produce.

Nonetheless, I am obligated to issues grades. You will be graded on your ability to report, write, develop sources, meet deadlines and establish a working relationship with reporters and editors at your media outlet, who will provide input into your grade.

At the end of the semester, you will provide an online portfolio featuring your best work. Here is the standard grade scale:

Grading Scale

A-A- = 90% and above

B+-B- = 80% to 89%

C+-C- = 70% to 79%

D+- D- = 60% to 69%

F = Less than 60%

Failure to do the work, plagiarize or fabricate will result in an automatic “F” for the class and possible expulsion from the KU School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

Three Stories Every Two Weeks

1. Attend a committee meeting
 - a. Interview sources from the meeting
 - b. Ask for contact information
 - c. Tell them you might be following up on a second story
2. Write an “evergreen” story about the issue
 - a. Conduct additional research
 - b. Contact previous sources about the issue
 - c. Contact additional sources about the issue

You will then produce one “event” story and one “evergreen” story. One will be done while at the Statehouse. The other will be completed without going to Topeka. That would leave one more story to develop during a two-week period.

Editing Team

1. As assignment editors, will work with reporters, provide guidance
2. Edit, upload stories daily to KU Statehouse Wire Service

3. Be a gatekeeper between reporters, audience.

Professionalism

Any work you do must be original and reflect your own ideas, thoughts, and research. In a work setting, if you choose to violate professional standards, you will be fired. In this class, if you choose to violate the standards for academic integrity, you will fail the course, and you might be expelled from or denied admission to the School of Journalism. **Treat this class like a job.**

Travel

Because you are required to travel to the Statehouse for this experience, you will be reimbursed for gas mileage and tolls. I strongly encourage carpooling. NOTE: Funds will not be distributed until the final drop day, which is Feb. 17.

Your instructor: Patricia Gaston

Patricia E. (Weems) Gaston (j'81) comes to KU from The Washington Post, where she was an editor who has worked on several desks including National, Foreign and Editorial. Before coming to the Post in 1997, Gaston worked at the Dallas Morning News, where she was an assistant foreign editor and was co-editor of the 1994 Pulitzer Prize-winning series on violence against women.

She grew up in Kansas City, Kansas, and graduated from the University of Kansas in 1981. She has a master's degree in sports management from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

In 2013, she was a Leadership Institute Fellow with the Center for American Progress, a progressive public policy program. In her spare time, Gaston has worked as a kitchen, case management and advocacy volunteer at Miriam's Kitchen and served on the agency's Volunteer Advocacy Advisory Committee.

Since returning to KU to teach, she advises the staff of the University Daily Kansan, led the school's search for the Knight Chair in Audience and Community Engagement for News, serves as a mentor in the Rising Scholars Program, is a member of the University's Committee on Faculty Rights, Privileges & Responsibilities, the school's Curriculum and Grievance committees and the William Allen White National Citation Nomination Working Group.

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Journalism School Policy on Classroom Attendance

No student may add a journalism class after the 20th day of a semester.

Students must attend their classes and laboratory periods. Instructors may take attendance into account in assessing a student's performance and may require a certain level of attendance for passing a course. Instructors may choose to drop students from a course, based on attendance, without consent. The School of Journalism reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of students who fail to attend the first class or laboratory meeting.

Financial Aid Policy

The KU Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to determine whether students who receive aid are attending each class in which they are enrolled. Instructors are required to report to that office absences of students who have stopped attending and names of those who have enrolled but never have attended. Students who do not attend classes may be required to repay federal and/or state financial aid."

Students who receive any form of financial aid should learn all requirements including minimum hours of enrollment and grades to qualify for and retain that aid.

Misconduct

You are bound by the university rules on academic misconduct. If you have any questions about what constitutes cheating, please ask BEFORE your endeavor.

Policy on Plagiarism and Fabrication/Falsification

The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications does not tolerate plagiarism, fabrication of evidence and falsification of evidence. Penalties for plagiarism, fabrication or falsification can include a failing grade for the course and expulsion from the School of Journalism and Mass Communications. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, please consult the professor of the course. *The following definitions are from Article II, Section 6, of the University Senate Rules and Regulations, revised FY98.*

Plagiarism: Knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgement of the source). The sole exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the information or ideas are common knowledge.

Fabrication and Falsification: Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Students with Special Needs

The Office of Disability Resources (DR), 22 Strong Hall, 785-864-2620 (V/TTY), coordinates accommodations and services for KU students with disabilities. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in KU classes and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Please also contact me privately in regard to this course.

Copying or Recording

Course materials prepared by the instructor, as well as content of all lectures presented by the instructor, are the instructor's property. Video and audio recording of lectures without instructor consent is prohibited. On request, the instructor usually will permit students to record lectures, on the condition that these recordings are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless the instructor gives explicit permission, recordings of lectures may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

Gun policy

Individuals who choose to carry concealed handguns are solely responsible to do so in a safe and secure manner in strict conformity with state and federal laws and KU weapons policy. Safety measures outlined in the KU weapons policy specify that a concealed handgun:

- Must be under the constant control of the carrier; *page 11/12*
- Must be out of view, concealed either on the body of the carrier, or backpack, purse, or bag that remains under the carrier's custody and control;
- Must be in a holster that covers the trigger area and secures any external hammer in an un-cocked position;
- Must have the safety on, and have no round in the chamber.

Tests and guns

Instructors are allowed by Kansas Board of Regents policy, to require backpacks, purses and other bags be placed in an area not directly next to students during exams, and as such those items will not be under the constant control of the individual. Students who choose to carry a concealed handgun in a purse, backpack, or bag must review and plan each day accordingly, and are responsible for making alternate arrangements as necessary. The university does not provide appropriate secured storage for concealed handguns.

Individuals who violate the KU weapons policy may be asked to leave campus with the weapon and may face disciplinary action under the appropriate university code of conduct.

Emergencies

The Office of the Vice Provost for Student Success coordinates the University response to campus and individual student emergencies. The Office of the Vice Provost is also the contact when students are involved in a serious incident away from the Lawrence campus. The Office will offer information, counseling, and support to students, their families and others affected by the incident. To report an extended illness or accident that keeps a student away from class, contact the **Academic Achievement and Access Center** at (785) 864-4064, www.achievement.ku.edu

Content “recycling”

The expectation in this class is that you’ve come to learn, to be creative, to stretch your imagination and expand your skills. Therefore, all the work you do in this class must be original. That means no “recycling” of your previous interviews, assignments, stories or work from other classes. The Journalism School regards any efforts to recycle material as academic dishonesty.

Some other information to know

Watkins Health Center. KU wants to be healthy while you’re here. You can visit Watkins for confidential preventive care or treatment—everything from prescription medicines, to flu shots, to broken bones. Here’s the website: <http://studenthealth.ku.edu/> Here’s the phone number: 785-864-9500. Here’s the email: health@ku.edu

KU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). CAPS provides confidential counseling services to help you stay mentally health here at school. Here’s the website: <https://caps.ku.edu/> Here’s the phone number: 785-864-2277.

KU Financial Aid and Scholarships. Here’s the website: <http://affordability.ku.edu/> Here’s the phone: 785-864-4700. Here’s the email: financialaid@ku.edu

Food banks. The Campus Cupboard, operated by the Center for Community Outreach, can help if you need food. You can find the organization on Facebook. Here’s the website: <http://www.cco.ku.edu/campus-cupboard-2/> Here’s the email: cco@ku.edu. Here’s the phone: (785) 864-4073.

Phones, laptops, tablets

There is no objection to electronic study aids, and some students are better typists than hand-writers. But doing puzzles, messing around on Facebook, texting or reading the newspaper in class is unprofessional. So is sleeping, particularly if you snore. Anybody doing any of the above in class will be given one warning and then asked to leave class for the day. If you feel you really cannot get off Instagram or stop texting or shopping for the entire class period, please consider another class.