

Common Course Outline
MCOM 113
Information Gathering for Mass Communication
3 Semester Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

Information Gathering for Mass Communication

Focuses on the source selection and information gathering processes used in two of the most rapidly changing information dissemination environments: marketing/promotion and news reporting; emphasizes critical assessment of the relevance, credibility, and perspective of each source used.

Overall Course Objectives

Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Evaluate and select supporting articles from scholarly and popular periodicals.
2. Assess the relevance and credibility of a written, recorded, or live source to be used in a promotional or news project.
3. Identify the perspectives of written or spoken evidence to provide balanced news reporting.
4. Analyze the impact of technological developments and industry trends on information gathering processes.
5. Analyze strengths and weaknesses in various mass media information gathering processes.
6. Conduct basic interviews with institutional representatives to provide expert testimony as supporting evidence in news and marketing/promotion projects.

Major Topics

- I. Determining Relevance, Credibility, and Perspective in the Information Gathering Process
- II. Selecting Sources Appropriate to Specific Media
- III. Strengths and Weaknesses of Electronic Information Gathering and Face-to-Face Interviewing Methods
- IV. Techniques for Interviewing Experts
- V. Checking Current Sources for Accuracy

VI. Incorporating Evidence into News Stories, Marketing/Promotion Copy, and Oral Presentations

Course Requirements

Grading/exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member, but will include the following:

Comprehensive final exam covering journalistic research principles.

Semester project: annotated bibliography containing at least 30 sources related to a topic selected by the student.

At least one interviewing assignment leading to an oral report about the process and experience of setting up and conducting the interview(s).

At least four research assignments to find and analyze background information to support news reports or marketing/promotion messages.

Other Course Information

This course is an elective designed especially for students who are considering careers in journalism, public relations, or advertising.

The course may include guest lecturer visits from media professionals.