UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
Main Examinations: June, 2016

School of Arts
Pietermaritzburg Campus

COURSE: Writing and the Media
Code: MECS 101P1

DURATION : 3 Hours
TOTAL MARKS: 100

Internal Examiner(s): Dr C Scott & Dr S Pitcher
External Examiner(s): Ms F Jackson (UKZN)

INSTRUCTIONS.

1. This question paper consists of FOUR pages; please ensure that you have them all.
2. There are FOUR sections in this exam; you must answer all of them.
3. You are advised, in your own interests, to write legibly and to follow carefully the instructions you are given.
Section A - Bibliography (15 marks)

Using the sources below, construct a properly formatted bibliography. To indicate words that should be written in italics, please underline them.

In 2012, Nelson Mandela wrote his autobiography Conversations With Myself. It was published in New Zealand by PQ Blackwell.

In 1993, Z Pan and GM Kosicki wrote a journal article called Framing analysis: an approach to news discourse in the 1st issue of the 20th volume of the Journal of Political Communication. It was printed on pages 55-75.

Nic Dawes wrote a newspaper article on page 17 of the Mail and Guardian on 28 June 2013 called Mandela: the long goodbye.


No Trespassing: Authorship, Intellectual Property Rights, and the Boundaries of Globalization is a book written by EH Wirtén in Toronto in 2004. It was published by the University of Toronto Press.

Section B – Summarising and Paraphrasing (20 marks)

Read the extract below from Kovarik’s Revolutions in Communication and, using your own wording, write a 50-100 word summary of his argument.

Twitter’s culture of generosity

If the “Wikipedia effect” seems mysterious, consider the “culture of generosity” found within the Twitter universe. Twitter was originally a way for programmers to catch up with each other in the mad hacking environment of Silicon Valley, where it was typical to work non-stop for days on end, followed by a few days off.

In this environment, employees at Odeo, a start-up search engine for audio and video, were finding it difficult to plan meetings in 2006. They could text each other by phone, but that became confusing when more than a few people were involved. So they created a mini-blog where someone could post a short text message and anyone in the group “following” that person could read it, either on the website or on a cell phone. By early 2010, over 50 million Twitter messages (tweets) were being posted daily. Once again, an accidental discovery paved the way for a communications innovation.

Twitter took off in 2007 when it proved useful at several conferences, notably the South by Southwest conference held every year in Austin, Texas. People in crowds found it easy to assemble in small groups and compare notes with Twitter, and since the application was free, and easily used on any cell phone or digital assistant, its use quickly expanded at
Twitter was originally named twttr, and was a takeoff on Flickr, the name of a photo-sharing website. An interesting feature of Twitter, according to writer Shel Israel, is the “culture of generosity” among its users. Twitter has been useful in situations ranging from life-threatening emergencies to simply chatting about the best restaurants in town, but in many cases, the willingness to share and experience community seemed to be a hallmark of Twitter users, Israel said in his book *Twitterville*.

Section C – News Writing (35 marks)

Read these extracts from various news sources and answer the questions that follow:

1. “At least a dozen men ambushed Sri Lanka’s cricket team with rifles, grenades and rocket launchers on Tuesday 15 April 2016. The attackers struck as a convoy carrying the squad and match officials reached a traffic circle 300 yards (meters) from the main sports stadium in the eastern city of Lahore,” police said.

2. “By attacking South Asia’s most popular sport, the gunmen guaranteed themselves tremendous international attention while demonstrating Pakistan’s struggle to provide its 170 million people with basic security as it battles a raging Islamist militancy. We are looking at the possibility the gunmen wanted to hijack the bus and take it to a nearby building and create a drama,” Pakistani Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani said.

3. “None of the attackers have been killed or captured as yet. They abandoned machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and plastic explosives, as well as backpacks stuffed with dried fruit, mineral water and walkie-talkies,” Punjab police chief Khwaja Khalid Farooq said.

4. “The plan was apparently to kill the Sri Lankan team but the police came in the way and forced the attackers to run away. 12 gunmen ambushed the team's convoy close to the Gaddafi stadium with rockets, hand grenades and automatic weapons, unleashing a fierce gunbattle with security forces. The gunmen fled in stolen vehicles,” said Lahore’s city police chief Habib-ur Rehman.

5. “The gunmen targeted the wheels of the bus first, and then the bus. We all dived to the floor to take cover. Most of the team’s injuries appeared to be minor but we owe our lives to the bus driver for his courage,” said Sri Lanka's captain Mahela Jayawardene.

6. “Two civilians, including the bus driver, and six policemen were killed in the attack. A local Pakistani umpire and 10 policemen were wounded and seven team players and a coach were also hurt,” said a police official.
a) Write the headline for a news story using the information provided above. (2)

b) Write a 100 word news story using the information provided above, be sure to include a lead. (20)

Based on the choices you made in completing the question above, answer the following questions:

a) What is the purpose of the headline? (2)

b) Explain two ways in which you achieved this purpose in your own headline. (2)

c) What is the purpose of the lead? (2)

d) What have you done to ensure that your lead fulfils that purpose? (2)

e) Explain and discuss the term “newsworthiness”. (3)

f) Identify, and give reasons for, the news values that are evident in your lead. (2)

Section D – Short Paragraph Questions (30 marks)

Answer THREE of the questions below. Each answer should be about ½ - 1 page in length. Clearly indicate which questions you are answering.

a) Identify five elements that form part of the communication process, and explain how they interact with each other. (10)

b) What were the social and technological factors that lead to the development of Gutenberg’s printing press in the 15th century? (10)

c) List and briefly describe each of the 5 underlying influences of the Internet and World Wide Web. (10)

d) Explain how social media has changed both the consumption and production of news. (10)