

Sara K. Blankenship

Education

M.A. – Journalism **University of North Texas, Denton** **August 2011 – December 2014**

Graduated with a final GPA of 4.0 with 36+ hours of coursework in graduate studies with the Frank W. and Sue Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism. Master's thesis: "Still on the sidelines: The female experience in sports media." A qualitative study analyzing the lived reality of women working in 21st century sports media. Available in the UNT library system.

B.A. – English, Creative Writing **University of North Texas, Denton** **August 2004 – May 2008**

Completed University core and elective requirements for completion of undergraduate studies.

Academic Experience

Adjunct Instructor **University of North Texas, Denton** **Spring 2015 - present**

- Instructor of record for Mass Communication and Society (JOUR 1210), Principles of News (JOUR 2300), Introduction to Media Writing (JOUR 2310), and Race and Gender in the Media (JOUR 4250) across multiple regular semester and summer sessions.
- Primary responsibilities include delivering face-to-face lectures for 80 to 110-minute class periods to classes of 20-450+ students. In addition to grade book management and attendance records, I maintain an open-door policy for students seeking help with both class-related and university-related matters.
- Course content includes teaching practical skills such as writing for the media market across all platforms and AP style, to lectures on theory and concepts about the mass media appropriate for lower classmen as well as graduate students.

Adjunct Instructor **Dallas County Community College District** **Spring 2015 - present**

- Instructor of record for Intro to Electronic Media (COMM 1335), Intro to Public Relations (COMM 2330), and Media Literacy (COMM 2300).
- Course content includes instruction on the history of electronic media such as radio, broadcast, commercial, and non-commercial media services. I also incorporate lesson plans and discussions on media literacy, media law and ethics, and the journalism industry.
- Primary responsibility is online instruction for online courses of 10-20 students. I deliver digital lectures, create and grade online assignments including semester projects, moderate and grade online discussion boards, create quizzes, and deliver exams. A significant part of online class management is keeping up with classroom technology like Blackboard Learn. I accomplish this by taking part in online curriculum design tutorials.

Graduate Teaching/Research Asst. University of North Texas, Denton July 2012 – December 2014

- Assisted multiple Mayborn School of Journalism professors with undergraduate courses and class management duties. Primary responsibilities included attendance tabulation, grading of weekly assignments, quizzes, and exams, and maintaining daily communication with students regarding their academic performance.

Teaching Fellow University of North Texas, Denton Summer 2013 & Summer 2014

- Sole instructor of record for Journalism 1210 – Mass Communication and Society for the summer 5W1 session.
- Responsibilities include writing and delivering daily multimedia lectures for a class of 30 undergraduate students, creating and grading multiple weekly group assignments and writing and grading all exams.
- Maintained attendance and grade records in accordance with the university registrar’s policies. Submitted class audits and all final student records within university mandated deadlines.

Professional Experience

Freelance Writer Dallas Observer/Voice Media January 2012 – December 2014

- Contributed multiple weekly short-form stories to the City of Ate food blog. These stories focused on restaurant and food news relating to the urban core of Dallas, as well as any stories of note involving hyperlocal areas of interest like Oak Cliff and Denton.
- In addition to being responsible for researching, verifying, and writing each story, I was responsible for loading each story into Moveable Type, the Observer’s digital publishing system. I entered and edited copy, loaded images and logged image tags, and ensured each story was visually engaging and compatible with the publishing system.

Digital Content Contributor Speakeasy Digital Content Marketing October 2013 – present

- Speakeasy’s digital content directors assigns me weekly blog posts for a number of clients. I mainly work with a Dallas-based home goods chain of retail stores, writing blog posts for their brand. These posts range from advice and home and garden tips to recipes, DFW-based stories, and seasonal events.
- I am responsible for meeting hard deadlines with each blog post and writing, editing, and submitting my content through Kapost, a B2B marketing operating system. This platform allows me to communicate directly with my fulfillment directors as well track social media reach/digital impressions.

Awards, Memberships, and Extracurricular Activities

Member, Phi Kappa Phi National Honor Society for graduating with a 3.5 GPA or above

Member, Alpha Chi Honor Society for graduating with a 3.5 GPA or above

Member – Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Commission on the Status of Women

Nominated - 2014 University of North Texas' Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award Spring

Award – 2013 Top Poster of AEJMC Critical and Cultural Studies division at the national AEJMC conference in Washington, D.C. for a paper titled “**The 2012 ‘Women's Olympics’: Striving toward equity in major news and sports magazine coverage**”

Award – 2013 Frank W. and Sue Mayborn School of Journalism Outstanding Graduate Student

Recipient of multiple “Thank a Teacher” notes from the UNT Thank a Teacher program

2012 – 2013 Mayborn Scholar, recipient of \$10,000 Mayborn Scholarship

2012 – 2013 Les Dames D’Escoffier scholarship recipient for excellence in food writing for continued coverage of the DFW restaurant scene for *The Dallas Observer*

2015 – Selected to present original research paper at the national AEJMC conference in San Francisco, CA as part of the Commission on the Status of Women for a paper titled “Gold is the new pink: A qualitative analysis of GoldiBlox retail ratings and feedback.”

Skills

My passion for higher education contributes to my continued and progressively keen interest in a research-based education. My background in research methods and understanding of media theory plays a key role in my course design, and I routinely use academic articles and research papers as supplemental readings in my courses. I take pride in helping my students and relish in the satisfaction of watching them excel in their studies. I am steadfastly committed to my students as well as my research interests and look forward to a lifetime of serving higher education and helping those who seek its limitless benefits.

University Service

2017 – Working with the director of university core curriculum, I developed a new course for the university’s core – JOUR 2250 Media Literacy. This course will help address timely and vital narratives and practices in today’s information-saturated digital landscape.

2017 – At the request of Dean Dorothy Bland and Dr. Finley Graves, I reformatted JOUR 1210 – Mass Communication and Society, a to an online format to better meet the needs of current and prospective UNT students.

2016 – News Engagement Day “News Hounds” point person. Mobilized 50+ students on campus to conduct short interviews and post findings on Instagram using multiple hashtags. Our activities were picked up by the national feed and we received hundreds of organic views and were featured dozens of times on the News Engagement national page.

2016 – Invited legendary NHL broadcaster Ralph Strangis to campus for a discussion with my students about media professions, the future of sports media, and personal accountability. Over 60 students were in attendance and we were featured in Ralph’s regular column in *The Dallas Morning News*.