

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for MSCM 3
MAGAZINE & FEATURE WRITING
Effective: Spring 2018

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

MSCM 3 — MAGAZINE & FEATURE WRITING — 3.00 units

Feature writing, freelance journalism, and how to get published in newspapers and magazines.

3.00 Units Lecture

Strongly Recommended

- Eligibility for ENG 1A -

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering this course, it is strongly recommended that the student should be able to:

- A. -Eligibility for ENG 1A
 - 1. Use concepts of paragraph and essay structure and development to analyze his/her own and others' essays
 - 2. Write effective summaries of texts that avoid wording and sentence structure of the original
 - 3. Respond to texts drawing on personal experience and other texts
 - 4. Organize coherent essays around a central idea or a position
 - 5. Apply structural elements in writing that are appropriate to the audience and purpose
 - 6. Provide appropriate and accurate evidence to support positions and conclusions
 - 7. Produce written work that reflects academic integrity and responsibility, particularly when integrating the exact language and ideas of an outside text into one's own writing
 - 8. Utilize effective grammar recall to check sentences for correct grammar and mechanics
 - 9. Proofread his/her own and others' prose

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. write high-quality features for newspaper and magazines;
- B. demonstrate mastery of journalistic researching and writing skills necessary for publication;
- C. recognize story ideas and opportunities for selected writing markets;
- D. write professional and appropriate query letters to sell pieces to magazines and newspapers.
- E. demonstrate understanding of basic U.S. libel and privacy laws and journalistic ethics
- F. use Associated Press style in writing a feature story.

V. CONTENT:

- A. The feature story
 - 1. The newspaper feature story
 - a. News
 - b. Other (Specialized, Timeless, Critical Review)
 - c. Finding stories
 - d. Researching stories
 - e. Interviews
 - f. Writing the story and revising the story
 - 2. The magazine article
 - a. Contrast with the newspaper feature story
 - b. Finding stories
 - c. Researching stories
 - d. Interviews
 - e. Writing the story and revising the story

- f. Marketing the story
- B. Develop research and interviewing skills
- C. Develop a feature story
 1. Write standard feature articles totaling 6,000 words, including profiles, service features, news features, lifestyle features, timeless features, and critical reviews
 2. Revise and edit a major feature article to make it suitable for publication
- D. Write an accompanying query letter for marketing
- E. Review of basic U.S. libel and privacy laws and journalistic ethics
- F. Use Associated Press style in writing and editing feature articles

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Guest Lecturers** -
- B. **Field Trips** - to different media companies
- C. **Written exercises and case studies** - including summaries, papers, and exams
- D. **Audio-visual Activity** - Films, video tapes, and recordings
- E. **Discussion** - Small group and whole class discussion
- F. **Simulations** - Reporting simulations
- G. **Lecture** -
- H. **Simulations** - Deadline writing situations
- I. **Discussion** - Evaluation of student work and professional pieces by peer discussion
- J. **Individualized Instruction** - Instructor conferences
- K. **Critique** - Individual/group evaluation of student and professional prose
- L. **Written exercises and case studies** - Development of writing skills with diagnostic testing and appropriate practice in word use, grammar, and journalistic standards.

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading and Writing:
 1. Read Chapter 8 in *Feature Writing for Newspapers and Magazines: The Pursuit of Excellence*, "Marketing and Writing the Magazine Article" and prepare a draft query letter.
- B. Writing:
 1. Complete a 1,200-word feature piece on a campus-based issue under deadline and finalize query letter for marketing the article.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

1. Exams/Tests
2. Quizzes
3. Research Projects
4. Portfolios
5. Papers
6. Oral Presentation
7. Projects
8. Field Trips
9. Simulation
10. Group Projects
11. Class Participation
12. Class Work
13. Home Work
14. Lab Activities

B. **Frequency**

1. Exams/Tests: At the instructor's discretion
2. Quizzes: At the instructor's discretion
3. Research Projects: At least one per semester
4. Portfolios: Semester-long preparation of portfolio
5. Papers: At the instructor's discretion
6. Oral Presentation: At least one per semester
7. Projects: Weekly
8. Field Trips: At the instructor's discretion
9. Simulation: At the instructor's discretion
10. Group Projects: At least one per semester
11. Class Participation: Weekly
12. Class Work: Weekly
13. Home Work: Weekly
14. Lab Activities: Weekly

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Brooks, Brian , James Pinson, and Jean Wilson. *Working with Words: A Handbook for Media Writers and Editors*. 9th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016.
2. Friedlander, Edward. *Feature Writing: The Pursuit of Excellence*. 7th ed., Pearson, 2010.
3. American Society of Magazine Editors. *The Best American Magazine Writing 2016*. 2016 ed., Columbia University Press, 2016.
4. Scott, Kuehn, and Andrew Lingwall. *The Basics of Media Writing: A Strategic Approach*. 1 ed., Sage, 2017.
5. , The Associated Press. *Associated Press Stylebook*. 2016 ed., Basic Books, 2016.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. A recording or cell phone with a recorder