

COM 325 Feature Writing

Credit Hours: 3

In-Class Instructional Hours: 3

Labs: 0

Field Work: 0

Catalog Description:

Prerequisite. COM 210, COM 302

Theory and advanced practice in writing magazine articles, newspaper features and similar stories for online publications; writing for specialized audiences; introduction to freelance procedures.

Reasons for Revision:

(2007) This course, formerly called Feature and Magazine Article Writing, was last revised in 1989. This revision is part of a general program review, through which Communication seeks to update its courses in light of departmental experience with the previous program version, evolving departmental needs, and expanding scholarship in the field. Additionally, the department is undertaking this revision to position itself for accreditation by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

Student Learning Outcomes:	Course Content References:	Assessment:
On completion of this course, students will be able to:		
1. Articulate an understanding of the role of feature writing in journalism and the various types of feature stories	I, V	1. Exams, applied projects, presentations
2. Articulate the relationship between feature writing and news reporting	I	2. Exams, applied projects, presentations
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the freelance process, including familiarity with the freelance market	VI	3. Exams, applied projects, presentations
4. Critically analyze and evaluate the structure and style of feature stories	II, III	4. Exams, applied projects, presentations
5. Use appropriate interview, research, writing and editing techniques to prepare effective feature stories in various genres	I	5. Exams, applied projects, presentations
6. Generate ideas for marketable feature articles	IV, V	6. Exams, applied projects, presentations
7. Recognize work by award-winning feature writers and demonstrate an understanding of the techniques of literary non-fiction that contribute to their success	II, III	7. Exams, applied projects, presentations

Course Content:

- I. Feature-Based Journalism
 - A. Relationship with news writing
 - B. Venues for feature writing
 - C. Interviewing and research for feature writing
- II. Feature Writing
 - A. Attribution
 - B. Dialogue
 - C. Vignettes
 - D. Rewriting
- III. Feature Structure
 - A. Headlines, titles and leads
 - B. Story structure and organization
 - C. Conclusion and wrap-up
- IV. Feature Topics
 - A. News peg
 - B. Current events and trends
 - C. Contemporary issues
 - D. Celebrities and newsmakers
 - E. Average persons
- V. Feature Formats
 - A. Personality profile, portrait and sketch
 - B. Trend story
 - C. Human interest
 - D. In-depth
 - E. News feature and backgrounder
 - F. Travel articles
 - G. Service or “how to” articles
- VI. Freelance Process
 - A. Market analysis
 - B. Audience research
 - C. Query letters
 - D. Procedures and etiquette for submission
- VII. Ethical and Legal Issue
 - A. Copyright
 - B. Plagiarism
 - C. Attribution
 - D. Truth

Resources:

Classic Scholarship in the Field.

Strunk, Jr., W., White, E.B., & Angell, R. (2000). *The elements of style* (4th Ed). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Franklin, J. (1994). *Writing for story*. New York: Plume.

Current Scholarship in the Field.

Aamidor, A. (2006). *Real feature writing* (2nd Ed.). Mahwah NJ: Erlbaum.

American Society of Magazine Editors (2006). *The best American magazine writing 2006*. New York: Columbia University.

Friedlander, E.J. (Lee, J. (2005). *Feature writing for newspapers and magazines: The pursuit of excellence* (5th Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Garlock, D. (Ed.), (2003). *Pulitzer Prize feature stories: America's best writing, 1979-2003* (2nd Ed.). Ames IA: Iowa State.

Garrison, B. (2005). *Professional feature writing*. Mahwah NJ: Erlbaum.

Goldstein, N. (2006). *The Associated Press stylebook and briefing on media law*. Boulder CO: Perseus.

Hamilton, N.M. (2004). *Uncovering the secrets of magazine writing: A step-by-step guide to writing creative nonfiction for print and internet publication*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Hennessy, B. (2005). *Writing feature articles* (4th Ed.). London UK: Focal.

Patterson, H.M., & Hyde, G.M. (2005). *Writing and selling special feature articles*. Kila: MT: Kessinger.

Ricketson, M. (2004). *Writing feature stories: How to research and write newspaper and magazine articles*. St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin.

Ruberg, M., & Yagoda, B. (Eds.) (2005). *Writer's Digest handbook of magazine article writing*. New York: Writer's Digest.

Siegal, A.M. & Connolly, W.G. (2002). *The New York Times manual of style and usage: The official style guide used by writers and editors of the world's most authoritative newspaper*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Sioms, P. (2002). *Literary nonfiction: learning by example*. New York: Oxford.

Sova, D.B. (2002). *How to write articles for newspapers and magazines: Step by step* (2nd Ed.). Bibra Lake WA: Arco.

Sumner, D.E., & Miller, H.G. (2005). *Feature and magazine writing: Action, angle, and anecdotes*. Malden MA: Blackwell.

Wray, C.S. (2004). *Writing for magazines: A beginner's guide* (2nd Ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Periodicals:

Columbia Journalism Review

Editor & Publisher

Journalism Quarterly

Washington Journalism Review