

Syllabus (Journalism 540) - Spring 2012

Magazine Article and Feature Writing, TU.-Th. 12:30-1:45 p.m., Coliseum ?
Instructor: Robert Lamb (boblamb@sc.edu) Ph. 783-9697

In this course, we study the work of notable magazine and newspaper writers, and write our own articles and features, the idea being, first, to gauge the quality required for published work and, second, to try to equal or surpass the perceived standard.

Students are expected to be familiar with journalistic writing, i.e., gathering information from primary and secondary sources and presenting it accurately, clearly, concisely, and on time. We will write in various journalistic forms (story, article, editorial, column, essay), read the work aloud in class, discuss its efficacy, appropriateness, and impact, and, when necessary, rewrite it. Requirements, as well as advantages and disadvantages, of the various writing forms will be discussed as we undertake to write them ourselves. In short, we will learn by doing.

Magazine Article Writing Assignments (each should be limited to 750 words.)

Articles not turned in by 3:30 p.m. on the due date will not be read. No exceptions.

- 1) An introductory article. *Due Jan. 12.* Thereafter, following articles are due in succession each **Thursday** that we meet.
- 2) A memory essay (*drawn from a memorable event in your life*) **Due Jan. 19 (and so on)**
- 3) A personality profile. (3rd POV) **1/25th**
- 3) A book review. (1st or 3rd POV) **2/2**
- 4) A public issue feature. This should be an issue of interest to the general public. Choose from the following categories: Work / School/Crime / Science / Health. Your story must include two live sources and secondary data that provide context for the issue. Supply names and contact information for at least two people you quote. (3rd POV). **2/9.**
- 5) A trends feature. Using recently published data, write a story that develops one or two angles of the trend. Choose from the following categories: Recreation/Arts and Entertainment; Religion and Spirituality; Lifestyles/Media. Your story must include two live sources and secondary data that provide context for the issue. Include contact numbers for all live sources. Include secondary data source in the body of the article. (3rd POV) **2/16**
- 6) A how-to piece. About a special skill of yours or of someone you interview. **2/23**
- 7) A consumer piece. You may team with another member of the class to explore the quality or popularity of a consumer item or items. Use comparisons, prices. (3rd POV) **3/1**

March 3 - 11 - Spring Break

- 8) An opinion piece about a current event or events. **3/15**
- 9) An editorial on an issue in the news. **3/22**
- 10) Public Relations copy. Your choice of subjects **3/29.**
- 11) A humorous piece. **4/4**
- 12) A fashion piece. **4/12**
- 13) **A critique of the class.** **4/19**

April 23 - Last Day of Class (Finals 4/25 – 5/2)

NOTE: Short (one-paragraph) response papers on selected stories will be assigned as deemed appropriate. All work will be evaluated on its content, construction, and polish. Grades will be based on student effort, improvement, adherence to high standards of journalism and writing in general, class participation, and attendance.