Instructor: Ricardo Chavira

Course Description and Objectives:

This course will provide you the skills needed to research quickly and comprehensively. Equally important, you will learn to write succinctly, clearly and quickly in any academic or professional environment.

We will study news reporting and news writing basics—the essentials of successful writing for media. You will learn how to gather and organize information, ask effective questions, develop story ideas, research facts and write stories on deadline. Lectures will cover in detail the writing for media process.

The writing lab portion of this course is as important as our lectures. Good writing for most of us is a skilled acquired by directed practice.

Because this is a distance learning class, it is crucial that you focus on and meet assigned deadlines. These are posted week-to-week on the class site.

Through a variety of assignments, you will sharpen your writing skills and expand your knowledge of the newsgathering process.

By the end of the course, you should have an understanding of mass media and of how to report and write media stories appropriate for publication in print, online and for broadcast. More generally, you will be able to write effectively in any professional environment.

Course Requirements:

Since one of the course goals is to help you improve your writing, there will be a variety of writing assignments.

Students who successfully complete this course should be able to:

* Detect grammatical, spelling and punctuation errors
*Produce news stories that are accurate, concise, objective, and in news writing style.

*Demonstrate effective use of attribution in news writing.

* Demonstrate skill in analyzing facts from interviews, fact sheets and other sources to produce effective news leads and show proper organization of facts in the body of news stories.

Through in-class discussion and outside interviews and assignments, develop the ability to take accurate notes quickly and organize materials efficiently for use in writing.

**Participation:**

If you do not participate in class discussions and activities what you learn will be significantly diminished, and your final grade will suffer.

**Schedule:**

**June 18-24: Zero Week**

**Lecture:**

Introduction and Orientation

**June 25-July 1: Week One**

**Lecture:**

Course Overview

**Lecture:**

Old and New Media: What's News?

**Keys to Good Writing**

**Assignment:**

Autobiography

**July 9-July 15: Week Two**
Lecture:
Leads, Attribution, Quotes and Story Basics

Lecture:
Social Media and the Shape of Things to Come

Writing Assignment:
Tustin Immigration Controversy

July 16 – July 22: Week Three

Lecture:
Sources of Information, the Internet and Online Writing

Lecture:
How to Conduct Successful Interviews

Exam:
Midterm via Webinar

Assignment:
Classmate Biography

July 23 - July 29: Week Four

Lecture:
Public Relations and Press Releases

Lecture:
Writing about Complex Issues

Assignments:
Press Release
Multiple Source Story

July 29-August 1: Week Five

*Lecture:*

The Feature Story: Writing with Detail and Flair

*Lecture:*

Ethics, Diversity and the Media: Doing the Right Thing

*Assignment:*

Feature Story

July 31:

FINAL EXAM

Details to be announced