Approval: 9th senate meeting

Course Number: HS 358

Course Name: Science Writing
Credits: 3-0-0-3

Prerequisites: None
Intended for: UG
Distribution: Elective for all
Semester: Odd/Even

Preamble: This course is an introduction to writing about science–including nature, medicine, and technology–for general readers. In our reading and writing we explore the craft of making scientific concepts, and the work of scientists, accessible to the public through news articles and essays.

Course Outline: As part of our exploration of the craft of science writing, we will read essays and articles by writers such as David Quammen, Alan Lightman, Michael Pollan, and Elizabeth Kolbert. The module includes science essay as a genre for study and during the stipulated contact hours proposes to learn writing and studying a science essay. As part of the course a student is expected to write five science essays and revise 4 of them, and re-revise 1 of them, in addition to a few short non-revised homework assignments. Each student will also make a brief oral presentation. Readings will serve to get a student thinking and provide models of good writing; they'll provide inspiration for the student essays. In addition, it develops a student's skills in writing and speaking clearly and effectively; it hopes to cultivate an awareness of science practices in writing.

Course Module:

1. Introductions-Class overview- Writing for a general audience- Zinsser, William. "Science, Technology and Nature." Chapter 15 in On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction. 30th Anniversary ed. Harper Perennial, 2006, pp. 147–64. ISBN: 9780060891541. (4 Contact hours)

2. The pleasures and challenges of science writing- The science essay- Introduce Essay1
Lightman, Alan. "The Accidental Universe." Harper's, December 2011. (4 Contact hours)

3. Description: Accuracy + making it fresh- A writer's voice
"From Devils to Mathematics." Example student work. (2contact hours)

4. WORKSHOP Essay 1 (full class and small groups) [EH] Chapter 1, and skim chapter 2
ALSO, Select book for Book Review. (3 Contact hours)

5. Return essays-What do we mean by revision?-Discuss News and Profile article assignments- Short News Articles on Science-Read several articles from different disciplines on ScienceNews.org (5 Contact hours)
6. The profile: Writing about science by writing about scientists
Brainstorm Profile/Archive assignment ideas, incl. background reading-Issues re: News stories? -Burgos, Ana. "A Professor of Puzzles." Angels, 2012. (5contact hours)
7. Complex issues: Getting readers to think like scientists-The research process: Why we cite. (4 Contact hours)

8.Taking a stand: Writing to persuade-The research process: Note-taking-Discuss Research proposals (4 contact hours)
9. The research process: Citing, quoting, paraphrasing-Writing and Structure (Hancock and handouts)-Organizing a longer article. (4 contact hours)
10. Revision issues- Discussion of favourite science writing -The Book Review: an important genre. (4 contact hours)
11. WORKSHOP Book Reviews: 1 full class, & small groups - Share "best writing"-Summing up & reflecting-Evaluations-All work due . (3 contact hours)

References

1. Elizabeth, Royte. "Fracking Our Food Supply." The Nation, November 2012.
2. Hancock, Elise. Ideas into Words: Mastering the Craft of Science Writing. The Johns
3. Hopkins University Press, 2003. ISBN: 9780801873300.
4. Kanigel, Robert. "The Science Essay." Chapter 22 in A Field Guide for Science Writers: The Official Guide of the National Association of Science Writers. 2nd ed. Edited by Deborah, Mary Knudson, and Robin Marantz Henig. Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 145–50. ISBN: 9780195174991.
5. Pollan, Michael. "Our Decrepit Food Factories," The New York Times Magazine, December 16, 2007.
6. Quammen, David. "Deadly Contact." National Geographic, October 2007.
7. Steingraber, Sandra. "The Whole Fracking Enchilada." Orion, September/October 2010. Zinsser, William. On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction. 30th An- niversary ed. Harper Perennial, 2006, pp. 147–64. ISBN: 9780060891541. http://www.ScienceNews.org