San José State University Department of English, School of Humanities & Arts English 129, Introduction to Career Writing, Spring 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Rachelle Escamilla (She, Her, They, Them)

Email: rachelle.escamilla@sjsu.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays from 6-7 PM Google Meet:Online SJSU Office Hours

Video call link: https://meet.google.com/rvj-hyop-srw
Or dial: (US) +1 216-532-5438 PIN: 453 347 116#

Class Days/Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays from 3:00-4:15 PM

Classroom: Google Meet joining info

Video call link: https://meet.google.com/kkg-yerq-gzo

Or dial: (US) +1 432-693-9010 PIN: 844 802 593#

Prerequisites: Upper-division standing

Course Format

Canvas, Gmail and MYSJSU Messaging

You are responsible for checking your email and the Canvas course page regularly. All readings, copies of major assignments, and important announcements will be posted on Canvas. If, for any reason, Canvas is not working or a link/document is not working, please contact me as soon as possible.

You should also check your SJSU email regularly. If you do not use your official SJSU account to email me, please include your full name and student ID with your email. I work for SJSU on Mondays from 4-5 PM and Tuesdays and Thursdays. I will attempt to answer emails on the same day, but emails received after 7 p.m. may not be answered until the next day when I work for SJSU. Emails received on weekends will not be answered until Monday.

Technology Use

In-class writing and group activities will be major parts of this class. I will try and source programs that are open and available and do not require specific types of computers to complete. You will absolutely need to have access to the internet for this course. I usually use Piktochart for visual media, but you can also use InDesign, or anything you're familiar with and whatever is in your budget. I would suggest creating a soundcloud account for the podcast assignment.

Weekly Blogging: You will be creating and maintaining a website & blog at www.wix.com

Major Written Assignments: Microsoft Word is still the industry standard for submitted articles. However, most of the work that you can do in Microsoft can be done for free with Google Drive and the suite that

comes free with your gmail account. This being the case, I expect you to submit your articles in Word (.doc) format. I don't want .pdfs (unless I specifically request them). I certainly don't want .pages files.

Assignment 4, 6, and Media Production: As a SJSU student, you have free access to Adobe Creative Suite, major programs for media production. For Assignment 4, you will need to have access to InDesign on your personal computer or by using the computers in the classroom. For Assignment 6, you will be producing a podcast, and you may want to use Adobe audition for this project (you could also choose to use Audacity or another program). Download these and play around with them, especially if you want graphic/layout/web experience.

Adobe Creative Cloud: http://its.sjsu.edu/services/software/adobe/index.html

Course Description

In this course, students write to get published in the places that they read and to practice in the types of writing they might do in the workplace. We'll work on skills for writing for creative nonfiction publications, social media, and marketing and communications. Students also write and produce the English Department newsletter, an episode for a class podcast, and their own blogs and professional websites. Expand your portfolio, learn some new skills, and march boldly forth with a publishable work in hand. This is a required class for the Professional and Technical Writing concentration.

What does "career writing" entail? For the purposes of this class, we are looking at the major genres of entry-level writing—writing that someone will be happy to pay you for. You will get experience writing in a bunch of new formats, develop the ability to shift in voice and style depending on your writing goals, AND build a professional website and portfolio to use for your job search.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

- 1. G1. Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric. (All reading assignments fulfill this.)
- 2. G2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature. (While this is a professional writing class, in-class writing exercises will draw upon examples from literary works to demonstrate effective characterization, dialogue, setting, and use of detail.)
- 3. G3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject. (Every major assignment fulfills this goal.)
- 4. G4. Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively. (All major assignments will require students to research organizations and/or publications, and pieces such as the newsletter piece, review, and feature article will also require students to incorporate outside research in their work.)
- 5. G5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts. (Discussion of readings will always incorporate contextual discussions along comparative lines.)

By the end of this class, you will be able to:

- Apply analytical tools that allow you to not only understand a piece of writing, but also to understand the professional contexts under which writing is currently published.
- Produce marketable writing within a genre of nonfiction writing that you are already experienced in, or on a topic that you are an expert in.

- Engage a genre of nonfiction writing or topic with which you are unfamiliar and apply analytical tools towards the process of researching and writing with authority on unfamiliar topics.
- Assess, edit, and improve your own writing.
- Work professionally with other writers, both as an editor of other students' writing, and in the group production of a publication.

Required Texts/Readings

All readings for this class will be posted to Canvas. Such an arrangement allows us to stay current with what's going on in publishing, and also lets me tailor our readings to class interests. I expect you to have either paper or screen in front of you for classroom discussions.

The readings in this class are fairly short and specifically chosen to highlight a particular aspect of engaging writing (setting, details, dialogue, etc.) or to demonstrate a particular genre. I expect everyone to show up to class not only having read these short assignments, but also to have read and thought about the discussion questions before class. THIS IS NOT A LECTURE CLASS. We are analyzing writing to find ways to improve our own writing. Whether or not our class time is worthwhile is entirely dependent on how well you prepare.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Main Assignments

According to <u>University Policy S16-9</u>, "Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

You will complete the following assignments (some of these assignments will have pre-writing elements that will also be turned in):

Assignment #1: Content Writing (Cover Story)

Assignment #2: English Department Newsletter

Assignment #3: Review

Assignment #4: Micro-Profile & Design

Assignment #5: Feature Article Assignment #6: Class Podcast

Assignment #7: Revised Piece & Pitch Letter

Other assignments: Blog and professional website, in-class writings

Generally, all topics and genres are open to you, as long as you are writing something that someone else would want to read. Travel, sports, gaming, food, history, technology—you choose the kind of writing to be done, the subjects, the audiences, and your target publication. These assignments are intended to give you the opportunity to explore several of the subgenres of writing, so please feel free to take some risks.

To produce all of this within our limited timeframe, you will need to work on assignments simultaneously. Please study the attached schedule and plan your semester accordingly. It might also help if you could choose a central topic or focus; that way your research can be cumulative.

One Unit Enhancement

To explore multiple genres and prepare adequately for professional writing in the workplace, students will be spending four units of work on this course. The fourth unit will allow students to explore writing beyond just written text. Students in this course will also be interviewing subjects outside of class (Assignment 2 and 4), putting written text into designed pages with Adobe InDesign (Assignment 4), translating written scripts to audio production (Assignment 6), and maintaining a blog and creating a professional webpage. The additional unit allows students time to learn and work with these common professional writing skills and tools.

Quizzes/In-Class Exercises

I will be giving quizzes or in-class writings about or based on the readings and/or class topic. You will not always have a quiz or in-class writing, but you won't know when they are ahead of time. You may also have other in-class writings that deal with practicing certain writing skills. Quizzes and/or writing exercises may be at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of class. To avoid missing these exercises, plan to arrive for class on time and stay for the entire duration of class.

Blog Posts

In this class we will each start a personal website / blog at wix.com . You can choose to have an overall "theme" of your blog or you can switch topics each time. Generally, I will assign a skill you will practice for your blog, and the post will be due the next class. If there is time left in class after our discussion, we'll use remaining class time to start writing. Once your writing is posted, you will submit the direct URL to me via Canvas. I will check each assignment for completion, and then holistically grade your blog at the end of the semester. There is no make-up for these assignments. Please see the Blog/Professional Website Assignment sheet on Canvas for more details.

Peer Review of Blogs. Nobody wants to write in a vacuum. In addition to writing a weekly blog, you should check out the blogs of other students and comment in the comments section. Just a sentence or two with some encouragement or a question. I use Canvas to randomly assign peer reviews though the Assignments section. Be sure to keep up with these.

Production Teams

For the *English Department Newsletter* and your podcast episode, you will be assigned a production team. These production teams are your opportunity to learn how a publication develops within professional collaborations AND are a good line to put on your resumes. You will be graded as to how well you complete your duties.

Note: Though I have set aside time in class for some production activities and meetings, some of these activities will need to be conducted outside of class time.

Assignment Submission

For the major assignments, you will submit your assignments via Canvas when possible. If Canvas will not accept a file because of file type or file size, you may email the file to me.

All work should be submitted on time, and you are responsible for ensuring that I receive the paper. **Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due by midnight PT on the day they're due**. If ever you need to submit a project early, and you have already revised and edited fully, that is fine.

Draft Workshops

Sharing our writing with others and getting advice is a major aspect of this class. Professional writers are not only expected to produce quality writing, but they are also expected to give helpful advice to others. *All people in your group* need to be able to access your draft.

If you fail to attend a workshop or come to the workshop but do not bring your draft, you will not get any comments from me on your draft. Yes, even if you email me your draft before class – you don't get anything if you're not here to help others with their work. This generally results in losing at least one letter grade.

Final Examination or Evaluation

Revised Article/Pitch Letter. Your final assignment for this class asks you to research a publication and revise an assignment from this class to meet this publication's submission requirements. In addition, you will write a pitch letter to that publication's editor to explain your article, your qualifications, and how your article fits the publication. You will be graded on the quality and professionalism of both the pitch letter and the revised article.

Completed Professional Website. Your complete professional website will make a case for yourself as a professional writer, and you will upload polished materials that you will be able to use to apply for writing jobs. You will be graded on the quality and professionalism of the entire website, including the written materials you include.

Grading Information

Drafts

In assessing your rough drafts, I take the time to comment extensively on organization, style, transition between ideas, beginnings, endings—the important stuff. I don't correct typos or errors (though I may highlight them) unless I see you consistently making mistakes that interfere with readability. I record my commentary and include a short discussion of how your draft fits or lacks components of the assignment's rubric.

Final Drafts

My commenting is limited if I comment at all. I compare your final draft against your rough draft, looking at how well you incorporated feedback and how much effort you put into revising your work. My feedback at this stage is primarily reflected in the grading rubric. Look to where you missed out on points to see where you can improve.

This is my basic level of feedback. If I don't hear anything back from you, I assume you are happy with what you get from me. For those of you who want more feedback, I will enthusiastically talk with you about your paper for as long as you can stand it. Come early to class, come to my office hours, or set up an appointment with me.

Assignment Grade Distribution

Assignment #1: Content Writing

• Draft of Organizational Analysis: 10 pts

Final assignment: 100pts

Assignment #2: English Department Newsletter

Article Pitch: 10 ptsFinal article: 100pts

Production work: 10 pts

Assignment #3: Review

• Full review: 100pts

Assignment #4: Misro Profile

Assignment #4: Micro-Profile

• Full micro-profile with design work: 100pts

Assignment #5: Feature Article

• Publication and audience analysis: 10 pts

Full article: 100pts
Assignment #6: Podcast
Episode Pitch: 10 pts
Full assignment: 100pts

Assignment #7: Revised Article and Pitch Letter

• Full assignment: 100 pts

Professional Website: 50 pts

In-Class Writings/Quizzes: 100 pts (5-10 pts each) Blogging Assignments: 100 pts (10 pts each)

Final Grading Scale

A plus: 1000-980 points A: 979-940 points

A minus: 939-900 points B plus: 899-870 points B: 869-840 points B minus: 839-800 points C plus: 799-770 points

C: 769-740 points C minus: 739-700 points D plus: 699-670 points D: 669-640 points

D minus: 639-600 points

F: 599 and below

Grading Criteria: The following paragraphs sum up my criteria for grading an essay. Assignments are assigned letter grades, from A to F.

An "A" is awarded to work that is consistently excellent, professional, and publishable.

A "B" is awarded to work that is consistently above average—and occasionally excellent. Despite some bright spots, a client or editor would probably pass it back for more revisions or editing.

A "C" is awarded to work that is developing. Though the potential is there, a client or editor would likely pass on this.

A "D" is awarded to work that is incomplete or way off the mark.

An "F" is generally awarded to work that is not turned in. This usually comes in the form of a zero.

Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

Late Work Policy

I do not accept late work for this course. Part of being a writer is, though Earth itself may be aflame, you meet your deadlines. All of them. I understand your life is complicated, with many responsibilities pulling you in multiple directions. If you are unable to attend on a day that an assignment is due, it is up to you to make sure that you get me your work by deadline.

In-class writing/quizzes due to absence cannot be made up. If you are absent on the day an assignment is due, you are expected to turn it in on Canvas regardless.

(That said, I have an open-door policy for a reason—come talk to me if something is up.)

Classroom Conduct

Be kind to each other. You are to treat the instructor, any guests or substitute instructors, and your classmates with respect and courteous behavior. Keep in mind that we likely come from different backgrounds, honor different belief systems, have access to different tools, struggle with different concepts, and excel at different tasks and responsibilities. And that's okay.

Basic Needs Security

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact SJSU Cares. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess. SJSU also has the following initiatives:

- CalFresh Outreach Program
- <u>Emergency Funds</u>
- Emergency Housing
- Food & Shelter Program
- Mental Health Services
- Other: Food Resources
- Student Health Services

My open-door policy

I'm happy to talk with you at any time about the readings, assignments, and any other aspect of the course. Just talk to me after class, send me an email, come by during office hours, or arrange to meet with me. I understand that sometimes office hours are difficult to get to, so I'm always happy to meet with you at another time if you contact me.

University Policies

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. To learn important campus information, view <u>University Policy S16-15</u> and SJSU current semester's <u>Policies and Procedures</u>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing

concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as the next step.

Timely Feedback on Class Assignments

Per <u>University Policy F13-1</u>, all students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

<u>University Policy S14-7</u> states that San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the <u>Academic Calendars webpage</u> at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/academic_affairs/resources/Academic_Calendars/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes (<u>Late Drop Information</u>). Information about the latest changes and news is available at the <u>Advising Hub</u> at http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

<u>University Policy S12-7</u>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- "Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material."
- In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- "Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent."

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The <u>University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7</u> requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. Visit the <u>Student Conduct and Ethical Development</u> website for more information.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. <u>Presidential Directive 97-03</u> requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the <u>Accessible Education Center</u> (AEC) to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs and other resources for student use are available in:

- Associated Students Print & Technology Center at http://as.sjsu.edu/asptc/index.jsp on the Student Union (East Wing 2nd floor Suite 2600)
- The Spartan Floor at the King Library at http://library.sjsu.edu/about/spartan-floor
- <u>Student Computing Services</u> at http://library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services-center
- Computers at the Martin Luther King Library for public at large at https://www.sjpl.org/wireless
- Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from <u>Collaboration & Academic Technology Services</u> located in IRC Building. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center has two locations: scheduled appointments are in MLK library, while drop-in appointments are in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

Note: There are at least two tutors in the Writing Center this semester who have taken this class before. They will not do your work for you, but they will certainly understand the material and my expectations.

SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services

The SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Carlos in the new Student Wellness Center, Room 300B. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide confidential consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling and Psychological Services website at http://www.sisu.edu/counseling

English 129, Intro to Career Writing, Fall 2019, Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. I will notify you of any changes to the schedule in class and I will upload a new schedule document on Canvas. I will make sure that there is ample time for you to make any changes to your schedule that you might need to.

^{*}Please do not work ahead. Changes are inevitable!

Week	Topics & Assignments	Due
1	Introductions, Syllabus FOR NEXT TIME: Reading 1 Set up class blog Blog 1	
2	What is Content Writing?, Go over Assignment #1 COVER STORY FOR NEXT TIME: Reading 2	DUE : Link to <i>Blog 1 (before class)</i>
2	Content Writing, Pt. 2 – Researching Organizations, Branding, & "Voice" FOR NEXT TIME: • Reading 3 • Blog 2	DUE: Organizational Analysis for Assignment #1 by midnight
3	Check-ins, Website development for Blog overview, Blog Pitches	
3	Content Writing, Pt. 3 – Writing for Online Media FOR NEXT TIME: Reading 4 Draft for Assignment #1	DUE: Blog 2
4	Editing for Concision; Workshop Assignment #1 FOR NEXT TIME: Reading 5 Blog 3	DUE: Draft for Assignment #1
4	Writing for the News/Newsletters, Pt. 1, go over Assignment #2 and pick topics	DUE: Blog 3

^{*}Make sure you flip/scroll to the next page to ensure you're not missing something that has gotten cut off in the table formatting. Though I do try to keep Canvas up-to-date, make sure you're keeping up with this calendar as well.

	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	Finish Assignment #1	
	Tillion Assignificate #1	
5	Interviewing and Researching, ENDL team meetings	DUE: Assignment #1
	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	Reading 6	DUE: Pitch for Assignment 2 (by end of
	Blog 4	class)
		<u> </u>
5	Writing for the News/Newsletters, Pt. 2; ENDL team	DUE: Blog 4
	meetings	
	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	Reading 7	
	Draft Assignment #2	
6	Introductions and Conclusions, Workshop	DUE: Draft of Assignment #2
	Assignment #2	
	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	• Reading 8	
	● Blog 5	
6	Writing as a Critic gapra analysis as ayer	DUE: Place
0	Writing as a Critic, genre analysis, go over Assignment #3, meet with ENDL team for final	DUE: Blog 5
	revisions	
	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	Reading 9	
	• Finish Assignment #2	
7	Extending reviews, Writing Food Reviews	DUE: Assignment #2
	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	Reading 10	
	● Blog 6	
7	Writing Entertainment and Product Reviews	DUE: Blog 6
	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	Reading 11	
_	Draft Assignment #3	1
8	Dramatic and Narrative Summary, Workshop	DUE: Draft of Assignment #3
	Assignment #3	
	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	• Reading 12	
	● Blog 7	
8	Writing Profiles, go over Assignment #4	DUE: Blog 7
	FOR NEXT TIME:	Joe. 510g /
	Reading 13	
	• Finish Assignment #3	
9	Analyzing publication guidelines, Content Magazine	DUE: Assignment #3
	discussions	_
	FOR NEXT TIME:	
	Reading 14	
	● Blog 8	

		I
9	Basic InDesign to format pages, time to work in class on micro-profile page FOR NEXT TIME: Draft of Assignment #4	DUE: Blog 8
10	SPRING BREAK	
11	Writing with Purpose, Determining your Concept FOR NEXT TIME: Reading 17 Blog 10	DUE: Assignment #4
11	Clickbait!!!, Meaningful Introductions, organization FOR NEXT TIME: • Reading 18 • Blog 11	DUE: Blog 10 Assignment 5 Publication and Audience Analysis
12	The Workscape: How to Get Writing Gigs, Refresh on professional website assignment FOR NEXT TIME: Reading 19 Draft of Assignment 5	DUE: Blog 11
12	Workshop Assignment 5, introduce Podcast assignment (Assignment 6) FOR NEXT TIME: Podcast Listening Assignment	DUE: Draft of Assignment #5
13	Podcast overviews	
13	Podcast class topic brainstorming, form groups and brainstorm episode topics FOR NEXT TIME: Reading 20 Finish Assignment #5	DUE: Podcast Listening Assignment
14	Podcasting, team production meetings, work on episode pitch FOR NEXT TIME: Complete episode pitch Reading 21	DUE: Assignment #5
14	Finish episode pitch, work on writing script, scheduling audio recording FOR NEXT TIME: • Reading 22	DUE: Brief episode pitch
15	Continue working on podcasts, writing script, scheduling audio recording FOR NEXT TIME:	

	Reading 23	
15	No Class – Thanksgiving	
16	Refresh on Pitch Letters Working on podcasts, editing audio, team production meetings FOR NEXT TIME: • Wrap up audio recording • Reading 24	
16	In-Class Revision/Website meetings, final team production meetings FOR NEXT TIME: • Set up professional website	DUE: Assignment #6
17	Final reflections, In-Class Revision/Website meetings	DUE: Professional website (should all be set up except, possibly, the "Your Work" page)
Final Exam	Final portfolio meetings	DUE: Assignment #7, Pitch/Revised piece via Canvas Completed website if you weren't already complete