



Communication and Creative & Performing Arts Division  
1400 Tanyard Road, Sewell, NJ 08080  
856-468-5000

## **COM 205: Feature Writing**

Syllabus

Lecture Hours/Credits: 3/3

### **Catalog Description**

*Prerequisite: ENG 101*

This course in non-fiction writing teaches the novice writer to write and market effective article manuscripts. Students evaluate selected newspaper and magazine markets, write query letters to editors, and research, write, and submit articles to self-chosen publications. They conduct readability level tests on self-written articles and, on occasion, share manuscripts with other students.

### **Textbook and Course Materials**

It is the responsibility of the student to confirm with the bookstore and/or their instructor the textbook, handbook and other materials required for their specific course and section.

Click here to see current textbook prices at [rcgc.bncollege.com](http://rcgc.bncollege.com).

Evaluation Assessment

### **Online Proctoring**

All courses offered at RCSJ, whether they are web-enhanced, hybrid, or fully online, may include assessments that make use of Online Proctoring. To find out more about Online Proctoring, and to learn about the minimum technical requirements, visit [rcsj.edu/elearning/online-proctoring](http://rcsj.edu/elearning/online-proctoring).

### **Grading Scale**

The grading scale for each course and section will be determined by the instructor and distributed the first day of class.

## Rowan College South Jersey Core Competencies

(Based on the NJCC General Education Foundation - August 15, 2007; Revised 2011)

This comprehensive list reflects the core competencies that are essential for all RCSJ graduates; however, each program varies regarding competencies required for a specific degree. Critical thinking is embedded in all courses, while teamwork and personal skills are embedded in many courses.

1. **Written and Oral Communication:** Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.
2. **Quantitative Knowledge and Skills:** Students will use appropriate mathematical and statistical concepts and operations to interpret data and to solve problems
3. **Scientific Knowledge and Reasoning:** Students will use the scientific method of inquiry, through the acquisition of scientific knowledge.
4. **Technological Competency:** Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals
5. **Society and Human Behavior:** Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.
6. **Humanistic Perspective:** Students will analyze works in the fields of art, history, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language
7. **Historical Perspective:** Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.
8. **Global and Cultural Awareness:** Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples.
9. **Ethical Reasoning and Action:** Students will understand ethical issues and situations.
10. **Information Literacy:** Students will address an information need by locating, evaluating, and effectively using information.

### COM 205 Core Competencies

This course focuses on five of RCSJ's Core Competencies:

- Written Communication and Oral Communication
- Technological Competency
- Information Literacy
- Global and Cultural Awareness
- Ethical Reasoning and Action

## Student Learning Outcomes: Feature Writing

Successful Completion of COM 205 will help students:	RCSJ Core Competencies	Evaluation / Assessment (Additional means of evaluation may be included by individual instructors)
Recognize the media, writers and roles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the differences and similarities in the role of the news media, the role of public relations, and the role of advertising.</li> <li>• Analyze feature articles in media sources</li> <li>• Understand the characteristics of controlled and uncontrolled messages</li> <li>• Understand media writing as a profession</li> </ul>	Written and Oral Communication Technological Competency Information Literacy Global and Cultural Awareness Ethical Reasoning and Action	Written Assignments Feature Articles (See Rubric) Quizzes Discussions Class Participation Rubric
Recognize the differences in feature writing from other forms of news writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify hard and soft news in media writing</li> <li>• Understand what constitutes “news values”</li> <li>• Understand the differences in writing feature articles for print, online, and broadcast media</li> <li>• Utilize the principles of <i>news style</i> by conforming to newspaper English and stylebooks</li> <li>• Employ unique, but simple language to make feature articles more interesting and reader friendly</li> </ul>	Written and Oral Communication Technological Competency Information Literacy Global and Cultural Awareness Ethical Reasoning and Action	Written Assignments Feature Articles (See Rubric) Quizzes Discussions Class Participation Rubric
Analyze methods of writing feature leads and feature articles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate and understanding of various feature leads and the occasions to use them</li> <li>• Understand the “abc’s” of media writing</li> <li>• Demonstrate how news elements can be “<i>featurized</i>” in the lead</li> </ul>	Written and Oral Communication Technological Competency Information Literacy Global and Cultural Awareness Ethical Reasoning and Action	Written Assignments Feature Articles (See Rubric) Quizzes
Design and execute effective searches and interviews for information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate library tools to access information in print and electronic formats relevant to a particular topic</li> <li>• Evaluate and consider reliability (including consideration of academic vs. popular sources) when deciding how to use sources in a feature article</li> <li>• Apply technology effectively to locate, interpret, organize, and present information</li> </ul>	Written and Oral Communication Technological Competency Information Literacy Global and Cultural Awareness Ethical Reasoning and Action	Written Assignments Feature Articles (See Rubric) Quizzes

<p align="center"><b>Successful Completion of COM 205 will help students:</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>RCSJ Core Competencies</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Evaluation / Assessment (Additional means of evaluation may be included by individual instructors)</b></p>
<p>Communicate in ethical ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate other writers' credibility and authority</li> <li>• Seek verification of material from multiple sources</li> <li>• Differentiate between libel, slander, and fair comment</li> </ul>	<p>Written and Oral Communication Technological Competency Information Literacy Global and Cultural Awareness Ethical Reasoning and Action</p>	<p>Written Assignments Feature Articles (See Rubric) Quizzes Class Participation Rubric</p>
<p>Distinguish among objective, persuasive and advocacy journalism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand characteristics of editorials and columns</li> <li>• Analyze the language of editorials for its effectiveness</li> <li>• Understand the process for writing a column</li> </ul>	<p>Written and Oral Communication Technological Competency Information Literacy Global and Cultural Awareness Ethical Reasoning and Action</p>	<p>Written Assignments Class Participation Rubric</p>
<p>Work collaboratively by expressing opinions with tact, listening to others, and shouldering an appropriate share of the workload:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen and contribute comments to class discussion without dominating the conversation</li> <li>• Prepare for peer activities</li> <li>• In small groups, stay focused on work at hand: offer input that is helpful and insightful, not distract by socializing; and occasionally record and report</li> </ul>	<p>Written and Oral Communication Technological Competency Information Literacy Global and Cultural Awareness Ethical Reasoning and Action</p>	<p>Written Assignments Class Participation Rubric</p>

## Topical Outline

- What is a Feature Article?
  - In Newspapers
  - In Magazines
  - On Television
  - On the Internet
- The Staff Feature Writer vs. the Freelance Writer
- The Importance of Observation
- Interviewing Skills:
  - Preparing for the Interview
  - Asking Appropriate Questions
  - Taking Notes
  - Verifying Information
  - Following Up
- Writing Leads, Transitions, and Endings for Feature Articles
- Organizational Methods and Models for Feature Articles:
  - Chronological
  - All-Sides
  - String-of-Pearls
  - Step-by-Step
  - List
  - Question-and-Answer
- Generating and Developing Ideas for Feature Articles
- Types of Feature Articles:
  - Human Interest
  - News Feature
  - Descriptive Article
  - Color Story
  - Personality Sketch/Profile
  - Personal Experience
  - Narrative
- Landing an Assignment as a Feature Writer
- Marketing and the Query Letter

## **Affirmative Action Statement**

The Board of Trustees is committed to providing a work and academic environment that maintains and promotes affirmative action and equal opportunity for all employees and students without discrimination on the basis of certain enumerated and protected categories. These categories are race, creed (religion), color, national origin, nationality, ancestry, age, sex (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), marital status, domestic partnership or civil union status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, genetic information, liability for military service, or mental or physical disability, including AIDS and HIV related illnesses.

For questions concerning discrimination, contact Almarie J. Jones, Special Assistant to the President, Diversity and Equity/Title IX and Compliance, 856-415-2154 or [ajones@rcsj.edu](mailto:ajones@rcsj.edu) or (Cumberland) Nathaniel Alridge, Jr., JD, Director, Diversity and Equity/Title IX and Judicial Affairs, 856-691-8600, ext. 1414 or [nalridge@rcsj.edu](mailto:nalridge@rcsj.edu). For disability issues or any barriers in the learning or physical environment related to a document condition/disability please contact: Gloucester campus – Dennis M. Cook, Director, Department of Special Services, ADA/504 Officer at 856-415-2265 or [dcook@rcsj.edu](mailto:dcook@rcsj.edu); or Cumberland Campus – Meredith Vicente, Senior Director, Physical & Learning Disabilities, Center for Academic & Student Success (CASS) at 856-691-6900 ext. 1282 or [mvicent1@rcsj.edu](mailto:mvicent1@rcsj.edu)

## **Department of Special Services**

The Department of Special Services is located in the Instructional Center, room 425A. The Special Services Department is committed to providing support services and ensuring equal access to eligible students with documented disabilities as outlined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act with Amendments. If you are an eligible student with a documented disability please visit our website at [RCSJ.edu/SpecialServices](http://RCSJ.edu/SpecialServices) or call the office at 856-415-2265 or 856-415-2247 to speak to the Assistant Director Carol Weinhardt, [cweinhar@rcsj.edu](mailto:cweinhar@rcsj.edu).

## Reporting Allegations of Sexual Assault and Resource Referrals (8/2020) Gloucester Campus

There are multiple safe places for students to report allegations of sexual assault, both on and off campus. Reports of sexual assault can be made to any of the following offices listed in the chart below.

All students are encouraged to report alleged crimes on campus. Crimes that pose a threat to the campus community must be reported to 9-1-1, Security, the Sheriff's Office or the Deptford Township Police Department. All employees, including Security staff, must report incidents of discrimination, harassment or sexual misconduct to the Title IX Officer.

Service	Resource	Phone Number/Location/Website
<b>Non-Confidential Reporting</b>  Local Law Enforcement	Gloucester County Sheriff's Office Deptford Township Police Dept. Gloucester Co. Prosecutor's Office Sexual Assault Response Team	856-681-2200 856-845-2220 856-384-5500 856-384-5555
<b>Non-Confidential Reporting 9-1-1 and Campus Security</b>	<b>9-1-1</b> Gloucester County Emergency Management Dispatch  Campus Security <b>Blue Light Emergency Phones OR ext. 4444 from any campus desk phone</b>	<b>9-1-1 or push RED button on</b> Campus <b>Blue Light</b> Emergency Phones  856-681-6287
<b>Non-Confidential On-Campus Reporting Support Services</b>	Almarie J. Jones Special Assistant to the President <b>Diversity and Equity/Title IX and Compliance</b>  John F. Ryder Director <b>Student and Veteran Affairs</b>	856-415-2154 College Center, Room 116 <a href="mailto:ajones@rcsj.edu">ajones@rcsj.edu</a>  856-468-5000, ext. 6456 College Center, room 202 <a href="mailto:iryder@rcsj.edu">iryder@rcsj.edu</a>
<b>Confidential On-Campus Counseling and Support Services</b>	Lois Y. Lawson-Briddell, Ph.D. MSW, LSW, Director <b>Counseling &amp; Wellness Services Center</b>  William Leonard, Ph.D. <b>Intervention Teams Consultant</b>  Crystal Noboa, LSW, MSW Director, The Center for <b>People in Transition (PIT)</b>  Diane Mussoline, EdS, LMFT <b>Director of Behavioral Services</b>	856-464-5236 <a href="mailto:l Lawsonb@rcsj.edu">l Lawsonb@rcsj.edu</a> College Center, Room 206  <a href="tel:856-415-2119">856-415-2119</a> <a href="mailto:wleonard@rcsj.edu">wleonard@rcsj.edu</a> <a href="mailto:wleonard@rcsj.edu">College Center, STEM Office C-168</a>  856-415-2264 <a href="mailto:cnoboa@rcsj.edu">cnoboa@rcsj.edu</a> Workforce Development Bldg., room 809  856-494-5665 <a href="mailto:dmussoli@rcsj.edu">dmussoli@rcsj.edu</a> College Center, Room 200A
<b>Confidential Off-Campus Full-Service Support</b>	<b>Center for Family Services/ Services Empowering Rights of Victims (SERV)</b>	1-866-295-7378 Camden and Gloucester counties <a href="http://centerffs.org/serv">centerffs.org/serv</a>
<b>Hospitals with Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners</b>	<b>Inspira Medical Center</b>  <b>Jefferson Washington Township Hospital</b>	700 Mullica Hill Rd. Mullica Hill, NJ · 856-508-1000  435 Hurffville-Crosskeys Rd., Turnersville, NJ · 856-582-2500