Course Description

Students involved in study abroad programs like Forum-Nexus are passionate about traveling and discovering the magic of new cultures, different people, amazing cities, great art and architecture, different political and economic systems, and so much more. Many of these students desire the skills and vision to capture these new experiences in writing, through works of fiction and non-fiction, blogs, personal essays, journalistic articles, travel guides, and social media content. The purpose of this course is to provide the necessary training and insights to facilitate and encourage the production of quality travel and adventure writing.

This Supervised Independent Study (SIS) course will guide students through the basic principles of travel and adventure writing, while providing the opportunity for an independent exploration of the subject.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Understand the fundamentals of travel journalism
2. Learn the secrets of crafting a great travel story
3. Conduct pre-trip and on-the-road research
4. Implement various techniques for accomplishing successful interviews
5. Understand how to develop their own brand as travel writers
6. Become familiar with how to get published or monetize their work
7. Identify resources and trends for travel writing

Course Requirements

This course requires independent research, organization, and academic discipline. Students are expected to complete the required and additional readings in pace with their assignments and the course outline. Students will meet with their SIS Supervising Professor(s) regularly throughout the course for consultation and assistance. There will be an oral presentation, a midterm exam, a final exam, and five essay assignments.

Students are also required to participate in a minimum of three Forum-Nexus professional visits and three cultural visits. Students may also pursue individual visits to companies and organizations as part of their independent study.
Essay #1 (minimum length: 1,500 words)

• What is travel writing? What does it mean to be a travel writer?
• How do you find your style and stand out amongst the rest?
• Explain the differences between writing for different types of media (newspaper, magazine, online media, etc).
• Write a compelling bio for yourself as a travel writer

Essay #2 (minimum length: 500 words)

• Write a travel guide for Amsterdam. Provide insider tips and recommendations. Highlight top attractions.
• Create your guide as if it were to appear on a travel news site.

Essay #3 (minimum length: 1,000 words)

• Write a story about an experience in Paris. Provide context and details, and be descriptive.
• Write your story as if it were to appear in a travel magazine.

Essay #4 (minimum length: 500 words)

• Write a blog article about an experience in Italy. Provide details and recommendations.
• Write your article as if it were to appear on a personal blog.

Essay #5 (minimum length: 1,000 words)

• Explain current trends in travel and adventure writing
• Cite 3 resources for travel writers and explain why they are helpful
• Highlight 1-2 of your favorite travel writers and explain why they are your favorite

Presentation

Deliver a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation summarizing the main findings of your independent study. Required components include:
• Summary of your goals and objectives
• Overview of travel and adventure writing
• Recap of your travel guide
• Recap of your story
• Recap of your blog article
• Reflection on what you’ve learned through the SIS course

Required Reading

Lonely Planet’s How to be a Travel Writer
by Don George
Lonely Planet, 4th Ed., 2017

Additional Readings

Identify 2-5 additional readings (online or printed text) to complement your independent study of travel and adventure writing.
Components of Final Grade

Midterm exam 20%
Final exam 20%
Essay #1 10%
Essay #2 10%
Essay #3 10%
Essay #4 10%
Essay #5 10%
Presentation 10%

Grading Scale

93-100 % A
90-92.9 % A-
87-89.9 % B+
83-86.9 % B
80-82.9 % B-
77-79.9 % C+
73-76.9 % C
70-72.9% C-
67-69.9 % D+
63-66.9 % D
60-62.9 % D-
Below 60 % F

Course Outline

Chapter 1: So you want to be a travel writer...
  • The rewards of travel writing
  • What do you want to write?
  • Do you have what it takes?
  • Getting published

Chapter 2: A short course in travel writing
  • Finding your story
  • Understanding travel trends
  • Researching your story
  • Shaping your story
  • Bringing your story to life
  • Finding your style
  • Rewriting and self-editing

Chapter 3: Getting published
  • Breaking into print media
  • Writing for newspapers
  • Writing for magazines
  • Press trips and freebies
  • Syndicating your stories
  • Writing books
Chapter 4: Writing a travel blog
• Why do you want to blog?
• Setting up your blog
• Writing your blog
• Monetizing your blog

Chapter 5: Life on the road
• The realities of travel writing
• Making money as a travel writer
• Tools of the trade
• Career maintenance
• Courses
• Basic administration

Chapter 6: Becoming a travel photographer
• How photography helps your writing career
• Choosing your gear
• Travel photography tips

Chapter 7: Resources
• Online resources
• Resources for writers
• References and tools
• Travel trends and information

Schedule of Classes and Visits

The detailed schedule of classes, professional visits, and suggested cultural visits for each session is available online at www.forum-nexus.com/schedules.

Academic Integrity

Ramon Llull University, Franklin University Switzerland, and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart place a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.
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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
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| 5/15 – 6/30| Pre-Program Preparation  
Become familiar with the syllabus, identify additional readings, begin readings and essay | 1 - 3    |
| 7/2        | Amsterdam| Essay #1 Due                                        |          |
| 7/2 -7/3   | Amsterdam| Meeting with SIS Supervising Professor(s)           |          |
| 7/5        | Paris    | Essay #2 Due                                        |          |
|            |          | Complete Readings                                    | 4 - 5    |
| 7/10-7/11  | Chamonix | Meeting with SIS Supervising Professor(s)           |          |
| 7/11       | Chamonix | Essay #3 Due                                        |          |
| 7/12       | Chamonix | Midterm Exam                                        |          |
| 7/16       | Milan    | Meeting with SIS Supervising Professor(s)           |          |
|            |          | Complete Readings                                    | 6        |
| 7/20       | Rome     | Essay #4 Due                                        |          |
| 7/23       | Rhodes   | Meeting with SIS Supervising Professor(s)           |          |
|            |          | Complete Readings                                    | 7        |
| 7/25       | Rhodes   | Essay #5 Due                                        |          |
| 7/26       | Rhodes   | Final Exam                                           |          |
| 7/27       | Rhodes   | Final Presentation                                  |          |