Duke DEL-MEM

Independent Study Proposal

“*Environmental Journalism”*

The purpose of this independent study is to build upon the skills gained in the Professional Writing Module and to gain competence in writing on environmental subjects for a broad audience. The study will build towards the preparation of an original piece of writing suitable for submittal to a periodical with an environmental focus. Independent readings will provide an understanding of contemporary environmental writers and leading periodicals. Writing exercises will provide an overview of the skills needed by a freelance environmental writer. The semester will be capped by the preparation of a feature length article (1,500 + words) with an environmental theme.

Writing Exercise #1 - Developing a Query

This assignment will involve the preparation of a brief query identifying a topic and presenting a clear, original, and provocative thesis for a potential environmental article. The query will pertain to the central article to be written for the class. Additionally, the query shall identify potential periodicals for submittal and demonstrate an understanding of the periodicals style, content, and tone.

Writing Exercise #2 –Draft

Approximately mid-way through the semester, an initial draft will be submitted for review.

Conference Calls

Conference calls will be scheduled every two weeks to discuss writing progress, review of drafts, and discuss readings.

Writing Exercise #3 – Final Version

A final draft suitable for submission to a periodical will be submitted. The writing shall be informed and influenced by the materials provided in the Professional Writing modules.

Books and Literature:

1. American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau, Bill McKibben, 2008 (selected readings to be determined)
2. Ongoing review of materials in the Professional Writing module and Writing Studio
3. Other articles of relevance to be determined.