Course Title: How to Sell Your Novel: Writing Query Letters, Synopses, and Elevator Pitches
Course Code: NVL 33
Instructor: Shirin Yim Leos

Course Summary:

*Please see course page for full description and additional details.

Note About Live Attendance and Recording:

These class sessions will not be recorded.

Grade Options and Requirements:

• No Grade Requested (NGR)
  o This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.

• Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  o Attendance of at least four of six class meetings required to receive credit

• Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  o A - Attend all six meetings, complete all assignments
  o B - Attend five meetings, complete five assignments
  o C - Attend four meetings, complete four assignments
  o D - Attend three meetings, complete three assignments
Tentative Weekly Outline:

Week 1
**What’s your book really about?**
Course overview
Writing the synopsis
Real world examples
Q&A
*Homework: 1000-word synopsis*

Week 2
**Getting it down**
The synopsis - review
The synopsis - critique (group exercise)
When less is more
Q&A
*Homework: 500-word synopsis*

Week 3
**Understanding hook and theme**
What’s in a theme?
The elevator pitch
Real world examples
Q&A
*Homework: 150-word elevator pitch*

Week 4
**Now for the Query Letter**
Elevator pitch - review
Elevator pitch - critique (group exercise)
Assembling the query letter
Shirin’s secret sauce
Q&A
*Homework: One-page query letter*

Week 5
**Workshopping the Query Letter**
The query letter - review
The query letter - critique (group exercise)
From written to oral
Pitching technique

Please contact the Stanford Continuing Studies office with any questions
365 Lasuen St., Stanford, CA 94305
continuingstudies@stanford.edu
650-725-2650
Q&A
*Homework: Polished 150-word verbal pitch*

**Week 6**
**Now, you try!**
Pitch practice in front of an agent and/or editor, and a publishing coach (individual exercise)
Final Q&A