Course Title: The Craft and Business of Freelance Writing  
Course Code: WSP 130  
Instructor: Chaney Kwak

Course Summary:  
In the first session you will fine-tune your goals as a writer and identify potential outlets. You will also look at actual query letters by freelancers—the good, the bad, the ugly, and everything in between. Together we will study examples of excellent magazine and newspaper feature writing by freelancers. We will also take apart an article of your choice and reverse-engineer a pitch from it. On the second day, you will present your pitch to other participants in a supportive workshop, and discuss strategies for snapping up assignments. A New York magazine editor will field and answer questions as well. Whatever the topic you aspire to cover, you will leave this course with tools to help you launch a career in freelance writing.

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

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 Students must attend both sessions and actively participate in class discussions.

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.
Tentative Outline:

Assignment for February 4
1. Before attending the first class, consider which magazine or newspaper you’d like contribute to, and bring several recent print issues to class. If the publication is online only, bring a tablet or a laptop.

2. Bring two paper copies of an article that you wish you’d written and published.

Agenda for February 4
- Introduction and goal setting
- The structure and vocabulary of the freelancer pitch
- Case study 1: A travel story for The Wall Street Journal from pitch to publication
- In-class exercise: Creating a query letter from a published article
- Case study 2: Espionage 101 — how to find the right editor

Assignments for February 11
1. Profile your target presentation by identifying the outlet’s readership, recent coverages on your topic, specific departments/columns you wish to get into, and how to find the editor’s contact information.

2. Write a one-page query email. Bring copies for workshopping.

3. Email both 1 and 2 to the instructor by the morning of Thursday, February 9 at the latest.

Agenda for February 11
- Workshop protocols
- Pitch workshop
- Case study 3: A culinary story for Afar—art imitates life
- Brown bag lunch: Q&A with an editor
- “Thick skin and an elastic heart”: a reality check