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NEWS

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University of North Texas to offer Graduate Certificate in Narrative Journalism to prepare professionals for a changing media industry

DENTON (UNT), Texas – Professionals working in journalism and other fields of creative writing and editing are facing an uncertain future. As advertising dollars wane, publishers are trimming staff and expecting those who remain to expand their skill sets.

The Mayborn Graduate School of Journalism has developed a program designed to give these journalists a competitive edge. Starting in the 2009 spring semester, the school is offering a Graduate Certificate in Narrative Journalism. The certificate requires 15 hours of professional development coursework that can apply later toward a master's degree in journalism.

The program is aimed at professional journalists, authors, writing instructors, editors and researchers currently working for newspapers, magazines, book publishers and public relations firms. The certificate program is designed to teach exceptional narrative writing, editing and other storytelling skills that the school's faculty believes will become essential in the ever-evolving world of nonfiction publishing.

This spring, the courses in the graduate certificate program include "Narrative Journalism" and "Magazine Writing and Publishing." The program also includes nonfiction seminars and workshops.

According to Dr. Mitch Land, director of the Mayborn Graduate School of Journalism and chair of the Department of Journalism, the program was developed because professionals in the Dallas-Fort Worth region wanted an opportunity to augment their professional skills by learning the craft of narrative journalism—a style of nonfiction writing that focuses on storytelling.

The school took its first steps toward delivering professional training in the summer of 2005 with the first Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference of the Southwest. The annual literary conference brings in renowned nonfiction storytellers from across the country for lectures and workshops. This year's conference will be held at the Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center in Grapevine July 24 through 26, and will feature renowned host of National Public Radio's "This American Life," Ira Glass.

Students in the graduate certificate program also will participate in the school's literary journalism class held in Archer City, hometown of UNT alumnus and renowned author Larry McMurtry.

George Getschow, journalism lecturer and a former bureau chief of The Wall Street Journal , said that the Archer City course offers graduate students an opportunity to live in Archer City and interact with legendary storytellers such as McMurtry and speakers at the Mayborn Conference. Both the Archer City course and the Mayborn Conference will be important elements of the graduate certificate program.

“Archer City has inspired some of the greatest stories ever written,” Getschow said. “It’s fertile ground for narrative nonfiction writing.”

Except for the narrative nonfiction seminars and workshops in Archer City, all of the spring coursework will be offered in downtown Dallas in the late afternoon or early evening.

Visit the UNT Admissions web site at <http://www.unt.edu/admissions.htm> to apply for admission to the graduate certificate program. Applicants must complete an application to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies and submit a \$50 fee and official transcripts from all schools or colleges attended. Applicants will not have to take the GRE.

For more information contact Land, at (940) 565-2205 or mitch.land@unt.edu.

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