

Fall Semester 2013
Administration of Justice 14
Report Writing & Communications

Instructor: John C. I. Rocke, MPA, JD

Course Day and Time: Thursday, 3:30 to 6:40 pm, Section #3013

Location: Instructional Building, (Inst) #2004

Office Hours: Thursday, 2:30 to 3:30 pm in Room 2004, and any time via email: jrocke@socal.rr.com

Deadline to ADD full term classes.....Friday, September 6
Last day to receive a REFUND.....Sunday, September 8
Last day to DROP classes, without a AW@.....Sunday, September 8
Last day to DROP classes, with a AW@..... Sunday, November 17

Textbook and Materials:

Written & Interpersonal Communication Methods for Law Enforcement, 5th Edition, 2013, by Harvey Wallace and Cliff Roberson

Supplemental materials will be handed out throughout the semester, including reports and instructional matter in the subject field.

Recommended Purchase:

Dictionary and Thesaurus

*Remember, LA Mission College and the Community College District strictly prohibit contraband, weapons, or disruptive behavior in class. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Purpose of the Course and Student Learning Outcomes:

No other subject matter is as troubling and yet so necessary for the administration of justice student than report writing. More law enforcement officers are stymied in their career progression because they simply don't understand the mechanics and procedures involved in writing good reports. (We write well, not write good!)

This course takes a fun approach, and lets the student develop an improved writing style, suitable for police, probation and parole writing requirements. Emphasis is placed on clarity of writing, clarity of thought and clarity of expression.

Students will be expected to show improvement in their own writing style. We will literally relearn the rules of writing and communications to present a clear, concise, correct approach, that will enable the student to succeed in the very important area of the written and spoken word.

Logic, clarity and clear thinking—that's all it takes! In one semester we can't promise all three will awaken the creative writer within you, but the goal is to do just that.

Specific Student Learning Outcomes:

- (1) Be able to write a basic crime report.
- (2) Be able to interview a victim or witness to a crime and record their statements in a police report
- (3) Be able to answer the critical questions of who, what, when, where, and how when writing a police report.

Grading: Students will be graded on improvement shown in written reports and communications exercises. Class participation and attendance are important factors, as well as attitude toward the goal of improving writing skills.

There will a midterm and final, along with class participation to account for your grade.

Specific Grading:

Quizzes	25%
Written Assignments	25%
Midterm	25%
Final	25%
Extra Credit	25%

The grades are calculated on a percentage system, based on the following:

100	B	90	=	A
80	B	89	=	B
70	B	79	=	C
60	B	69	=	D
59 or below			=	F

Plagiarism: Dishonesty, or any act of cheating, is strictly forbidden by the Los Angeles Community College District, and Mission College. If discovered, it could lead to disciplinary suspension or exclusion from the College.

ADA or other Student Concerns: Please inform me if you have any special needs or ADA problems with the classroom, or any other concern. The College makes every effort to assist students with any questions or uncomfortable situations.

Class Calendar

August 29

Orientation

Introduction to the Class: discuss Student Learning Outcomes, review syllabus, textbook and grading. Read OJ Simpson police report; and defamation report. Begin overview of criminal justice system

Written exercises issued every week, submitted the following week.

September 5

Criminal Justice

Chapter 7

What is a crime? Discuss purpose and reason for police reports.
Handout

police report BLAPD style of writing. Discuss pages 100 - 101, 21 points of report writing, drafting the report, and organization

September 12

Criminal Law

Chapter 13

Discuss criminal law, elements of the offense, purpose of, and technical approach to writing police reports.

September 19

Criminal Law Contd.

Chapter 1

English quiz; importance of good spelling; public recordsBhow a police report is used in the criminal justice system and the media. Discussion of various departmental reports

English quiz; oral versus written communications; what is a good police report? Intro, body, conclusion. Correct word usage in police reports. Channels of information within a police department.

October 3 Questioning and Interviewing Chapter 9

Custodial interrogation (Miranda) versus interviewing. Techniques of good interviewing and interrogation. (Handout? police report)

October 10 Interviewing and Interrogating Chapter 10

Discussion continued of techniques and goals of interviewing and interrogation.
Student conducted interviews

October 17 Note Taking Chapter 3

Entire class will be spent reviewing video on note taking; and actual police incident (domestic violence).

October 24 Midterm

Police video used to take notes and write a police report

October 31 Group Report Writing Chapter 4

Review of midterm results; Moon Game exercise emphasizing group dynamics of report writing; review a series of reports.

November 7 Different Types of Reports Chapter 6

View different departmental reports; comparison of arrest reports; narratives and styles. Series of police reports will be issued.

November 14 Independent Study

November 21 Guest Speaker

November 28 Thanksgiving Holiday

December 5 Final Review

Summary of good police report writing; Review of techniques and reports issued throughout the semester.

December 12 Final

Final begins at 5:30 pm in Instructional Building Room #2004

Changes may occur as scheduling needs arise. Students are encouraged to participate in class, and lend their experience.

John C. I. Rocke
(818) 624-1815
jrocke@socal.rr.com

Police Reports: Throughout the course of the semester, you will receive actual police reports, or real live incidents. Some of the language and actions are graphic. If you have any difficulty or personal problems with profanity, or criminal conduct depicted in the reports **PLEASE** let me know. This is not a class designed to hurt anyone, or tread on any personal sensitivities. Again, we're dealing with the way things are, not how they ought to be, or we'd like them to be.

The ultimate goal of report writing is to learn how to write a good police report. Hopefully, you will learn the professional approach to detach yourself from the incidents you will be involved with.

The Inside Scoop: You can learn to write. You can make writing happen. Writing is a skill like riding a bike or fixing a car, and as a skill, it **CAN** be learned.

This course is for people who may be feeling excited, confused, scared or even all three about the prospect of putting words on paper.

This is hopefully a place where you'll find straightforward, down-to-earth answers to your most troubling questions about report writing. Here you'll learn to separate the myths about writing from the realities. You'll learn the current realities of the report writing business. And you'll find comfort, inspiration, and encouragement.

If You Read Nothing Else, Read This

Everyone holds personal beliefs about writing. These beliefs affect how one learns.

Sometimes students give up too quickly because they believe writing well should happen quickly.

Students who are amazingly successful in college are willful, skillful, curious, open-minded, and self-disciplined.

Lastly, to be the best student possible, you need to consider how you would answer these questions: What information are you bringing to college with you? What kind of studying methods do you need to be successful? What do you want as an end result?

Good Luck, and Let=s Have Fun!

