

# **Syllabus**

Writing for Social Justice

Author, Director, College Writing Program, University of California, Berkeley,  
Maggie Sokolik

## **1. Course Description**

- a) Pre-requisites: fluent English

### Abstract

Can writing change your world? Writing with power about personal, social, and political issues can change minds, introduce solutions to old problems, and help you become a more engaged participant in public life.

Everyone has issues that matter deeply to them, whether they are:

- Personal--such as defining the goals and ideas that are important to you,
- Local--such as the governance of the public library or enactment of local laws and propositions,
- National--including critical political and social issues being decided on a larger scale, or
- Global--challenges facing the planet from perspectives of social and ecological change.

In Writing for Social Justice, you will learn the importance of word choices in writing for different genres in order to reach your audience. Specifically, you will learn to:

- keep a personal journal to help you identify issues and ideas that matter in your world
- write letters to public officials that will capture attention without being dogmatic or offensive
- craft opinion articles that take opposing positions into account, while using critical thinking and effective strategies for successfully arguing logically for your own ideas
- optionally, develop and maintain a blog or podcast of your writing in order to reach a wider audience

There will be short example readings included in the course, which will serve as models of different persuasive genres. You will also share your writing with other students in the course, getting and offering feedback on assignments.

## **2. Grading System**

The final grade is comprised of attendance and final essay and is calculated according to the formula:

$$FG = 50\% \text{ Attendance} + 50\% \text{ Essay}$$

where attendance is proven by screenshots of every completed module and assignment.

## **3. Examination Type**

Tests and essay.

## **4. Methods of Instruction**

Lectures.

## **5. Special Equipment and Software Support (if required)**

None required.