**Unit 1: Writing in the Natural Sciences**

**Science Reporting with a Latina/o Studies Focus**

**Feeder 1: Finding a Research Topic**

**Prompt:** For our natural sciences unit, we’ll be partnering with the [UNC Latina/o Studies Program](https://lsp.unc.edu/) to write about how natural science topics impact Latina/o/x people and communities. After reading examples of journalistic reporting on the connection between various scientific topics and Latina/o/x communities in class, the next step is to choose a scientific, peer-reviewed article that you’d like to draw on in your newspaper article.

We’ll discuss how to use UNC Library databases to find peer-reviewed scientific research, and how to focus searches on research relevant to our Latina/o Studies focus. Some areas of natural science research that will likely be productive:

* The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as well as related crises in healthcare ([click here to read about an upcoming symposium related to this topic](https://lsp.unc.edu/event/undergraduate-symposium-call-for-papers-apply-by-december-15/))
* Environmental racism and/or LatinX environmentalism(s)
* Research related to working conditions of Latina/o/x people
* STEM empowerment in K-12 education
* STEM and social justice

For your **first draft** of this feeder, please provide an MLA citation of the natural science research article you’ve chosen, as well as one short paragraph (3-5 sentences) explaining how this research is relevant to Latina/o Studies. Upload this document to Sakai by noon on Friday, January 29.

For the **second draft**, make any necessary edits and add a draft of a journalism-style paragraph summarizing this research for a general audience. We’ll discuss science writing for a general audience in class, and practice eliminating jargon, responsibly paraphrasing, and proper citation. The second draft is due at noon on Wednesday, February 3.

**Feeder 2: Report on Existing News Stories**

**Prompt:** Now that you know what natural science research will ground your article, it’s time to investigate how reporters have already covered this topic’s relevance to Latina/o/x people. For your **first draft** of this feeder, write a 500-600 word report on four previously published articles that connect your natural science topic to Latina/o Studies. In class, we’ll discuss how to evaluate a piece of journalism’s intended audience—try to select at least one article written for an assumed Latina/o/x audience, in addition to at least one article written for a more general readership. Feel free to be critical of the pieces you choose, as well as highlight what the journalists do well. This first draft is due Wednesday, February 10.

In your **second draft** of this feeder, make any necessary changes and add ~200 words explaining how you plan to avoid any oversights, informational gaps, or misconceptions you found in previous pieces while writing your own article. These strategies may include: (remote) interviews, careful application of peer-reviewed scientific research, and/or a consideration of audience. This draft is due on Wednesday, February 17.

**Unit 3 Project: Newspaper Article**

**Prompt:** Demonstrate your understanding of the natural science research you’ve chosen, as well as your ability to write about scientific research for a general audience in a ~1,000-word newspaper article. This article should address how this natural science topic affects Latina/o/x people, and may be supplemented by interviews, references to previously published journalism, and/or press releases (from public agencies, for example). Please cite all outside sources using MLA citation style.

Your article should conform to the genre expectations of journalism we discussed in class, including a professional writing style, elimination of unnecessary jargon, and inclusion of relevant information from a minimum of three sources.

Rhetorical Chart

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Genre** | **Purpose** | **Audience** | **Role** | **Rhetorical Situation** |
| Newspaper article based on natural science research | Help readers understand an issue the Latina/o community faces using scientific research | Local newspaper reader with potentially limited knowledge of scientific subject | Science Writer/ Journalist | You have decided to write an article on the intersection between a natural science topic and Latina/o Studies. |