UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
HealthCare Public Communications Specialist
Job Code: 129131

Grade: K
OT Eligible: No
Comp Approval: 9/18/2009

JOB SUMMARY:
Develops, writes and prepares creative feature stories for print and internet publication and/or broadcast on health policy and related issues for the California HealthCare Foundation Center for Health Reporting and its partner news organizations. Mentors colleagues where appropriate at partner organizations on journalism approaches, techniques, methods and reporting process. Appears on television and radio news discussion programs and on live-talk sessions on the internet to discuss stories done for the California HealthCare Foundation Center for Health Reporting.

JOB ACCOUNTABILITIES:

*E/M/NA % TIME
__________ __________ Cultivates and maintains effective working relationships with writers, editors and producers in the print and electronic media – on national, regional and local levels.

__________ __________ Appears on television and radio news discussion programs and on live-talk sessions on the internet to discuss stories done for the California HealthCare Foundation Center for Health Reporting.

__________ __________ Responds to requests from partner news organizations for coverage of health policy and related issues. Mentors colleagues where appropriate at partner organizations on how to undertake a major project; and journalism approaches, techniques, methods, and reporting process, etc. such as how to develop a reporting hypothesis, find good sources, collect and analyze data and organize material for multipart, multimedia series, etc.

__________ __________ Takes initiative to suggest principal themes of story to editor, states what story should be and what shape it should take. Discusses themes of story with peers and collaborators.

__________ __________ Identifies individuals to interview for story. Arranges interviews with individuals such as officials, experts or community leaders. Determines type of questions to ask, selects quotes from people interviewed, chooses anecdotes from materials gathered, selects meaningful statistics from data analyzed to be incorporated into story.

__________ __________ Serves as originator of healthcare related stories. Develops, writes and prepares creative, imaginative and complex feature stories, etc. on health policy and related issues for publication in print, broadcast and on the internet. Determines through research the reporting hypothesis; determines best sources; and determines officials, experts or community leaders to interview, types of questions to ask, data sets to purchase and search, places to visit, etc. Follows leads and adjusts direction of story as appropriate in pursuit of story line. Informs editor of story status and obtains suggestions through collaboration.

__________ __________ Researches health policy issues utilizing the internet and other sources. Develops appropriate sources for news stories and next set of questions to pursue.
Works closely with editor near end of a project that may have multiple parts such as three or four major stories running on consecutive days for newspaper and newspaper’s website, which may include charts, graphs, photographs, and video and audio components for website. Determines in collaboration with editor what charts, graphs, photographs and video and audio components for the website to be utilized.

Collaborates and works with center editors, multimedia specialists, photographers, freelance journalists, etc. to develop reports and materials to disseminate for utilization in newspapers and their websites. Provides direct guidance to photographers such as what subjects and scenes are important to the stories.

Travels on behalf of the California HealthCare Foundation Center for Health Reporting for news coverage and to participate in professional programs and seminars.

May supervise journalism interns working for the California HealthCare Foundation Center for Health Reporting.

Performs other related duties as assigned or requested. The university reserves the right to add or change duties at any time.

*Select E (ESSENTIAL), M (MARGINAL) or NA (NON-APPLICABLE) to denote importance of each job function to position.

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE/RECOVERY:**

Essential:  

Yes  In the event of an emergency, the employee holding this position is required to “report to duty” in accordance with the university’s Emergency Operations Plan and/or the employee’s department’s emergency response and/or recovery plans. Familiarity with those plans and regular training to implement those plans is required. During or immediately following an emergency, the employee will be notified to assist in the emergency response efforts, and mobilize other staff members if needed.

**JOB QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Minimum Education:**

Bachelor’s degree

Combined experience/education as substitute for minimum education

**Minimum Experience:**

5 years

**Minimum Field of Expertise:**

Journalism experience. Demonstrated excellent written and oral communication skills. Skilled in narrative, explanatory and investigative reporting and able to undertake complex projects, including multimedia components. Adept at storytelling, weaving policy issues with compelling, people-based storylines. Demonstrated finely honed collaborative sense. Knowledgeable about California, its diverse population, its government and politics and its news media.

**Preferred Education:**

Master’s degree

**Preferred Experience:**

7 years

**Preferred Field of Expertise:**
Experience with multimedia dissemination of news reports. Familiarity with health care policy issues. Fluency in Spanish.

Skills: Other:

- Analysis
- Assessment/evaluation
- Communication -- written and oral skills
- Conceptualization and design
- Conflict resolution
- Interviewing
- Knowledge of applicable laws/policies/principles/etc.
- Multimedia dissemination of news reports
- Networking
- Newsgathering and reporting
- Organization
- Planning
- Problem identification and resolution
- Project management
- Public speaking/presentations
- Research
- Scheduling
- Statistical analysis
- Teaching/training

Skills: Machine/Equipment:

- Computer network (department or school)
- Computer network (university)
- Computer peripheral equipment
- Fax
- Personal computer
- Photocopier
- Word processor

Supervises: Level:

- May oversee student, temporary and/or resource workers.

Comments:

- Frequent and extensive travel throughout the state is required.

SIGNATURES:

Employee: ____________________________  Date: ____________________________

Supervisor: __________________________  Date: ____________________________

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed. They are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties and skills required of personnel so classified.
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