FALL 2022 ENTRANCE EXAM

NEWS ANALYSIS (Suggested Time: 35 - 45 minutes)

Write a news analysis – no more than 400 words - on _one_ of these five topics. Aim for a factual, editorial-style piece or an expository essay. Use specific examples.

FORMAT: Please indicate which question you have chosen. You are not allowed to use spelling- or grammar-check software on the computer. If you do, your test and application for admission will be voided.

1. News coverage of the disappearance and killing of Gabby Petito left many U.S. media organizations criticized once again for projecting "missing white woman syndrome." Discuss the reasons why such coverage occurs, what the impacts of such coverage are on audience's perceptions of crime, and what changes, if any, are needed by news outlets to improve coverage of such events.

2. The COVID-19 pandemic is nearly two years old, has killed 700,000 Americans and has led to yet another political divide for the country. In what ways should news media continue to cover COVID-19 in order to keep audiences engaged and informed, especially when audiences may be getting desensitized, confused and/or frustrated from the amount and types of coverage?

3. Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism students are assigned to get to know New York City communities and write illuminating articles about issues important to residents. Some residents have expressed fatigue of reporters coming into their areas for a short period just to fulfill assignments. Discuss how student reporters can demonstrate their professionalism and the benefits of news coverage for these communities in ways that are less extractive.

4. Journalists are facing unprecedented challenges--physical distancing, virtual meetings, attacks on their persons, home-life changes--in trying to do their jobs. For whom do these challenges hit the hardest? In what ways should journalists and journalism organizations address issues of journalists' well-being?

5. The spread of misinformation continues to erode public trust in government and traditional news media. The Radio Television Digital News Association says "those who create misinformation deliberately try to manipulate legitimate journalists into covering false or misleading content, knowing that a poorly worded headline or debunk can give a rumor or hoax much needed oxygen." How should news media inform audiences about misinformation without amplifying it? What steps should news organizations take to prevent the incorporation of misinformation into their reporting unwittingly?

NEWS WRITING DRILL (Suggested Time: 45 minutes)

Part 1. (Suggested time for Part 1: 20 - 25 minutes) Here are some notes gathered from interviews with several sources. Selecting what you need from these notes, write a news story of about 250 words. You are not allowed to use spelling- or grammar-check software on your computer. If you do, your test and application for admission will be voided.

The journal Science Translational Medicine published results of a study related to Alzheimer's disease.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia.
It is a progressive disease beginning with mild memory loss and possibly leading to loss of the ability to carry on a conversation and respond to the environment. Alzheimer's disease involves parts of the brain that control thought, memory, and language.

The study published today in Science Translational Medicine focused on a brain stem area known as the locus coeruleus, or LC. The results are based on 174 older, mostly cognitively healthy, adults. All had MRI scans to gauge the "integrity" of the LC.

Using different brain imaging techniques, researchers found that lesser "integrity" in the brain-stem region was linked to a faster decline in memory and thinking in older adults, as well as certain brain changes seen in early Alzheimer's.

The CDC says in 2020, as many as 5.8 million Americans were living with Alzheimer's. This number is projected to rise to 14 million people by 2060.

The research published today in Science Translational Medicine is the latest effort to find "biomarkers" that could aid in earlier Alzheimer's diagnosis. Right now, most people with Alzheimer's are diagnosed based on evaluations of their memory, reasoning and other thinking skills, said Rebecca Edelmayer, senior director of scientific engagement for the Alzheimer's Association.

Heidi Jacobs, the study's lead researcher and an assistant professor at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston: "Even though Alzheimer's has no cure, having early markers that reliably spot people on a trajectory toward the disease is critical."
Past studies, of brain autopsies, have indicated that the LC is the first site in the brain to be hit with an abnormal accumulation of tau. Tau is a protein present in healthy brain cells. In people with Alzheimer's, the brain becomes riddled with tau "tangles," as well as "plaques," which are abnormal clumps of another protein called amyloid.

Part 2 (Suggested time for Part 2: 10 - 15 minutes) What further questions might you ask if you were the reporter on this story? How would you go about getting the answers?