



JOUR 405: Nonfiction Television

4 Units

Fall 2015 — Tuesdays — 9:00 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.

Section: 21239D

Location: ANN 210

Instructor: Professor Daniel Birman

Office: ANN 205A

Office Hours: Tuesdays 8:00 - 9:00 a.m. and by appointment

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Production Coach: Megan Chao

Office: ANN 204F

Office Hours: By appointment

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I. Course Description

JOUR 405 is a hands-on production course that teaches a methodology on crafting a longform nonfiction television story. From story conception and pre-production, through production and post-production, students will, by semester's end, be proficient in best practices and how these apply to the evolving trends in the television and documentary industries.

Producing a longform story goes beyond the scope of traditional television news. It provides an opportunity for in-depth reporting and storytelling that offers viewers greater perspective. The goal of this class is to further develop what you already know about news reporting and apply these skills to a longer story.

The key to success in the class is coming up with ideas that are visual and for which you have access. Story subjects need to be relevant and practical, but they also need to be evergreen. A story about a news event can work as long as the approach takes an in-depth look at a larger problem. Example: If a car company introduces a line of cars that no longer need gasoline to operate – this is a news story. However, if you produce a story about the larger problems associated with our dependence on oil, the news of a new breed of automobile just becomes one minor part of the story.

The bulk of the work is creating a workable idea from concept through completion. Students pitch marketable projects, do extensive research, identify experts and visual sequences that can help tell the story, write a script, edit, and revise their stories for publication. The class teaches you how to think about a story visually and how to build it using visual sequences within a manageable story arc. Students learn how to shoot with professional cameras, write, and edit for longform storytelling in ways that will translate to any medium.

At the heart of all this is journalistic integrity and values. Your finished products should be creative and be able to stand up to the rigors of fairness and credibility. And you should be proud of your work.

II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment

Students taking JOUR 405:

- Research ideas that can be produced within a semester
- Pitch a story idea with a specific placement in mind
- Review and analyze current and historical documentaries
- Collect relevant research materials
- Organize content for pre-production planning
- Learn advanced shooting and editing practices
- Shoot visual sequences for the documentary
- Log and transcribe the material
- Write a producible script
- Edit the nonfiction short program
- Make revisions based on first edit evaluations.

These objectives define the day-to-day work of longform nonfiction television. Every aspect of this television form is complex, but equally interesting. Research, experts, actualities, interviews, visuals, sound, music, and graphics – these are the basic elements of a longform story. The payoff is rewarding for the producer and for the viewer.

As we go through the semester, we'll discuss terminology and application so that when you walk away from this course, you'll have a strong and defensible approach to making important, honest and fair television.

Keep in mind that you're in control of content that demands some levels of creativity to get people to watch. As you define the story through research and interviews, you'll develop the visual context as well. Your job is to create the content flow (the story) and decide how best to visualize it.

It's not enough to just create informational content though. We're in a highly competitive marketplace that includes digital platforms and broadcast networks and they're all vying for great work. But when you're among thousands of other content creators, what are you going to do to stand above all the rest?

JOUR 405 will teach you how to think about your own story to make it marketable. Digital sites measure hits and retention while networks monitor what audiences do second-by-second... losing an audience in the first moments is a disaster and becomes a problem for the producer.

Through observation (critiquing existing content), organization, and hands-on producing, you'll learn some secrets behind longform storytelling that will, by extension, help you in your professional career.

III. Assignments and Assessment

CLASS DELIVERABLES:

- **Pitches** need to be typed out, proofread and checked for grammar. You'll create two to three ideas. Each idea must be no longer than one typed paragraph. Turn in hard copy printouts as instructed in the course schedule. You'll also need to prepare for a verbal pitch in class. You should be able to get to the "So what?" and "Who cares?" elements within the first sentence – the big picture. You'll be graded on your ability to articulate ideas – based on credible facts – and how well prepared you are to answer questions pertaining to the topic.
- The **bibliographies** need to be in MLA format, clear and concisely laid out. Turn in hard copy printouts as instructed in the course schedule. You should be able to demonstrate an ability to conduct in-depth research with legitimate and reliable sources, like journal articles, feature stories, etc. Wikipedia is not a source. Think of big picture concepts in connection with your story – e.g. If you're producing a story about earthquakes in southern California, you need to cite statistics from the USGS about how many earthquakes happen in the region, how often, etc. One bibliography per team.
- **The story arc** is to be submitted via e-mail as Microsoft Word documents. You will be graded on presentation of a clear, thought-out narrative and approach to the storytelling based on gathered, or yet-to-be-gathered elements. One story arc per team.
- **Edited sequences** are to be submitted as exported QuickTime files via the Impact server. Lee Warner, your production supervisor, will guide you through the technical process in the editing workshop and in his tutorials.
- **Scripts** are to be submitted as Microsoft Word documents via e-mail to the instructor. (Please refer to the Optional Readings and Supplementary Materials section on pages 5-7 for format.) You will be graded on good visual descriptions in the left column, and how the story flows in the right column. *I will not grade an assignment that deviates from the example provided.* One script per team.
- The **rough cut edit** is to be submitted as an exported QuickTime file via the Impact server. This is where it all starts to come together. You'll edit based on your script and any associated notes from me. You'll be graded on your how well you achieved what you said you were going to do in your script, as well as pacing, storytelling and visual sequences.
- The **fine cut edit** is to be submitted as an exported QuickTime file via the Impact server. This is your final product.
- **Final deliverables: Release forms** for all featured persons in your stories are **REQUIRED**. I will not give a final story grade for segments missing release forms. Hard copies are to be turned in upon fine cut delivery. Our required release form is posted to Blackboard and available on the *Impact* website. Please be sure to make extra copies and put them in your camera bag before going on a shoot. *Any missing deliverables will result in no grade for the assignment.* A **conformed script** that reflects your fine cut from beginning to end is required, as well. Please e-mail the Word document to the Impact team at impact@usc.edu.

IV. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	% of Grade
Story Pitch	5
Research Bibliography	15
Story Arc	10
Edited Sequences (2 x 5%)	10
Script	15
Rough Cut	20
Final Edit & Final Delivery: Release Forms + Conformed Script	25
TOTAL	100%

b. Grading Scale

The following is the grade scale that I use to assign letter grades. **It is up to you to keep track of your grades and to make an appointment with me to discuss any concerns you might have.** We will have a mid-course evaluation to let you know where you stand.

94 – 100	A
90 – 93	A-
87 – 89	B+
84 – 87	B
80 – 83	B-
77 – 79	C+
74 – 76	C
70 – 73	C-

c. Grading Standards

An “A” grade means that the student has a full grasp of the concept and is doing exceptional work. Work is completed on time with minimal amount of editing required to complete the task. The grade demands that students exhibit professionalism.

A “B” grade means that the student understands and executes the work on time. There may be more extensive editing needed to complete the work, it is clear that the student grasps the concepts and exhibits professionalism.

A “C” grade means that the student completes the work with a minimal amount of effort. The work is done, but requires a fair amount of editing. It is clear that the student might not have done in-depth research, and the assignment does not meet professional standards.

A “D” grade requires excessive rewriting, has numerous errors and should not have been submitted. Work is unsatisfactory or fails to show important elements.

An “F” grade means you’ve failed to meet the major criteria of the assignment, are late, have numerous errors or both. Your writing should not contain any errors in spelling, style, grammar and facts. Accuracy is the first law of journalism. The following are some other circumstances that would warrant a grade of “F” and potential USC/Annenberg disciplinary action:

- Fabricating a story or making up quotes or information.
- Plagiarizing a script/article, part of a script/article or information from any source.
- Staging video or telling interview subjects what to say.
- Using video shot by someone else and presenting it as original work.
- Using the camcorder to intentionally intimidate, provoke or incite a person or a group of people to elicit more “dramatic” video.
- Promising, paying or giving someone something in exchange for doing an interview either on or off camera.
- Missing a deadline.

V. Assignment Submission Policy

- All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, unexcused late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F.
- Written assignments must be submitted via e-mail to the instructor per guidelines outlined in the syllabus.
- Video edits must be exported as QuickTime movies and submitted through Xchange. We will provide training on the system during the editing workshops. For technical issues, please contact Victor Figueroa, *Impact's* Media Production Supervisor at vfiguero@asc.usc.edu.
- Completed projects will be eligible for broadcast on *Impact*, USC Annenberg’s award-winning student-produced newsmagazine series. For more information, please visit: <http://impact.uscannenberg.org>**

About the video shot for this class... the footage you shoot for this course is the property of the University and the Annenberg School, only to be used by you for your story as an assignment, as part of your thesis project, and in all cases, as a story for possible inclusion on *Impact*. The footage cannot be used for any other purpose – whatsoever – without written permission from Annenberg.

You will be entitled to use completed copies of your stories for demonstration purposes and your resume. You may link to the *Impact* site on any Website that is specific to you and your job search. The story may not be used for any commercial purpose. Please refer to the Procedures and Guidelines for greater clarification on this policy.

VI. Optional Readings and Supplementary Materials

TEXTBOOKS AS REFERENCES:

Through observation (critiquing existing shows), organization, and hands-on producing, you’ll learn the secrets behind long-form storytelling. In addition to the semester’s work, the following reading list – available at the bookstore – will give you an even greater understanding of the history behind documentary television and the work that goes into creating it.

- Barnouw, Erik. *Documentary: A History of the Nonfiction Film*
- Rabiger, Michael. *Directing the Documentary*
- Bernard, Sheila Curran, *Documentary Storytelling: Making Stronger More Dramatic Nonfiction Films.*

SCRIPT FORMAT:

The following pages show you a couple of examples of the script format that we will use. It's a format used in the nonfiction world. Notice the elements...

There is a **header row** that gives the segment title, show name, episode number, producer name, date, draft number, and on the right...the page number.

In the **left column**, the visual elements are described, whether they are interview references or sequences. Notice the reference to clip numbers, time code and its appropriate descriptions. All of this information makes it possible for an editor to find the clips and edit as laid out on the script with relative ease.

What's heard is shown verbatim in the **right column**, transcribed sound bites and narration. The **narration** is in all caps with 1.5 spacing. The SOTs are single-spaced in upper/lower case.

This first example is from my documentary for Discovery Channel and TLC about Captain Chesley Sullenberger's 2009 landing of US Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River. Narration is used. Sound bites push the story along, and narration writes into and out of the sound bites. You won't need to worry about numbering your rows like I have.

Brace for Impact
Producer / Writer: Daniel H. Birman
V: Fine 1 – November 9, 2009 – Conformed to Fine Cut

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NATS Sully arrives SUPOR & SON – walks to his plane – sees it for the first time	11	IN JUNE, 2009, U.S. AIRWAYS PILOT CHESLEY SULLENBERGER ATTENDS A REUNION. THE LAST TIME SULLY SAW THIS AIRCRAFT, IT WAS STILL FLOATING IN THE MIDDLE OF NEW YORK'S HUDSON RIVER AFTER A FLOCK OF CANADA GEESE FORCED IT OUT OF THE SKY.
VO SULLY [6_21_A1_Supor1_4] [08:01:33:00] Continue sequence from above – Sully walks-up and touches the plane, show it in WS	12	My sense is that the birds struck the airplane a lot of areas. The fuselage, the wings, the engines, but, um, I don't know.
NATS WS Sully continuing to walk around the plane	13	THERE WASN'T TIME TO WONDER, FOR THE CREW AND PASSENGERS ABOARD FLIGHT 1549, THERE WAS ONLY TIME TO ACT.
TRANSITION	14	

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NY Aerials		
VO NARRATOR GYRON – NY Aerials / LaGuardia Tower	15	ON JANUARY 15 TH , 2009 150 PEOPLE MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH A COLD WINTER DAY TO NEW YORK'S LAGUARDIA AIRPORT FOR A FLIGHT TO NORTH CAROLINA.
VO NARRATOR Sully and jeff walk to press conf. Aerials - LaGuardia	16	CAPT. "SULLY" SULLENBERGER AND FIRST OFFICER JEFFREY SKILES ARE THE PILOTS ONBOARD U.S. AIRWAYS FLIGHT 1549. FLIGHT 1549 LEFT NEW YORK'S LAGUARDIA AIRPORT AT 3:25 P.M. THAT DAY, HEADED FOR CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA. TWO PILOTS, THREE FLIGHT ATTENDANTS, AND 150 PASSENGERS BUCKLE-UP FOR THE FLIGHT.
NATS Chicopee Six barbecue	17	
SOT JORGE MORGADO [7-18-A2-CHICINT1-8] 02:37:19	18	We've been doing this trip for, God, I don't know, guys eight years? Um, this is, uh, kind of like, uh, a tradition for us.
VO NARRATOR 6 at BBQ	19	JORGE MORGADO, JEFF KOLODJAY, HIS FATHER, ROB, JIM STEFANIK, DAVE CARLOS AND RICK DELISLE ARE FRIENDS AND RELATIVES FROM CHICOPEE, MASSACHUSETTES. THEY ARE HEADED TO NORTH CAROLINA FOR THEIR ANNUAL GOLF VACATION WHEN THEY BUY THE LAST SIX TICKETS ON 1549.
SOT DENISE LOCKIE [10_30_A1_Lockie1_4] 00:03:40	20	I was the first person to board the aircraft // I saw the entire crew // I looked at all the passengers, I always like to analyze people when they come on the plane. // It was very much a business crowd that day. And everyone had winter coats and gloves and scarves.

Brace for Impact

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Producer / Writer: Daniel H. Birman

V: Fine 1 – November 9, 2009 – Conformed to Fine Cut

VO NARRATOR Taxi shots	21	OVER THE DRONE OF JET ENGINES, THE PASSENGERS RECEIVE A STANDARD SAFETY BRIEFING ABOUT WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.
LORI LIGHTNER [7_8_A2 LIGHTNER 15] 2:02:47	22	I fly a lot for business, in general but I've never been a good flyer. I've always been a little bit scared every time. It just doesn't feel natural, being in something that big.

When you have completed editing your piece, watch the segment and follow along with the script. What changed? What worked? What might you do differently next time? Take notes.

This will all be foreign for a while. With practice, you'll gain confidence in thinking through content and visual sequences. When you do that, you'll know that you can take-on any type of story, and that's when it all turns from stress to quality in-depth reporting – the thrust of this course.

VII. Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [Annenberg Virtual Commons](#) for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's [Information Technology Services](#) website.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/24/15 – 12/4/15)

Friday, September 11: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Friday, September 11: Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

Tuesday, September 15: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, October 9: Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the week three equivalent for short sessions) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, November 13: Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

For more information, please refer to: <http://academics.usc.edu/calendar/2014-2015/>

VIII. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change – and probably will change – based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

Week	
<p data-bbox="180 388 332 451">1 08.25.2015</p>	<p data-bbox="332 388 1458 451">INTRODUCTIONS</p> <p data-bbox="332 451 1458 493">Lecture: Understanding Documentary and Longform</p> <ul data-bbox="389 493 1458 651" style="list-style-type: none">▪ Realms of nonfiction television▪ Journalism and integrity as a longform practice▪ Passion and creativity behind the craft▪ Taking the timeliness out of newsworthy events▪ The power of multimedia for longform <p data-bbox="332 682 1458 724">Finding the Story and Presenting the Pitch</p> <ul data-bbox="389 724 1458 850" style="list-style-type: none">▪ Crafting viable story ideas for decision-makers▪ Access and feasibility for execution▪ Thinking about the audience▪ Looking at the big picture: You have an idea. What does it mean? <p data-bbox="332 913 1458 955">Assignments:</p> <ul data-bbox="389 955 1458 1081" style="list-style-type: none">- Research ideas for a 15-20 minute documentary project.- Write single-paragraph pitches for <u>three</u> story ideas – one main, two as backup. E-mail Word document to instructor by next class.- Prepare to present verbal one-minute pitch for next class.
<p data-bbox="180 1144 332 1207">2 09.01.2015</p>	<p data-bbox="332 1144 1458 1186">** DUE: PITCHES (WRITTEN AND VERBAL). HARD COPIES DUE IN CLASS.</p> <p data-bbox="332 1239 1458 1281">PITCH SESSION & In-Class Feedback</p> <p data-bbox="332 1333 1458 1375">Lecture: Visual Literacy</p> <ul data-bbox="389 1375 1458 1501" style="list-style-type: none">▪ Thinking visually: marrying pictures and sounds with journalism▪ Deconstructing the elements: people, locations, actualities, topics & questions▪ Pre-production: being prepared, informed and in control▪ Utilizing available tools and resources to bring a creative vision to life <p data-bbox="332 1533 1458 1575">The Power of Research in Longform Storytelling</p> <ul data-bbox="389 1575 1458 1627" style="list-style-type: none">▪ Research methodologies – how to find solid sources▪ Statistics, accuracy of information and thinking critically <p data-bbox="332 1690 1458 1732">Assignments:</p> <ul data-bbox="389 1732 1458 1858" style="list-style-type: none">- Form teams & e-mail decisions on team members and topic by Friday 9/4.- Begin in-depth research and compiling sources for bibliography.- FOR NEXT WEEK'S MANDATORY WORKSHOP: Read the shooting guidelines for the Sony EX-1 (will be e-mailed).

Week

3

09.08.2015

Advanced Camera Workshop - Part 1: Introduction to the Sony EX-1

- Cinematography terms and techniques
- Audio basics
- The interview: Techniques for longform television
- Release forms and protecting yourself legally

Assignments:

- Check out the camera for practice.
- Begin gaining access to locations, characters and experts. Conduct pre-interviews.
- **Compile in-depth research by topic into MLA format. Bibliography due next week.**

4

09.15.2015

**** DUE: RESEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY. HARD COPIES DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.**

Advanced Camera Workshop - Part 2: Shooting in Sequences

- Shooting sequences: Capturing visual information that conveys a basic narrative
- Getting a variety of shots and angles: wide shots, medium shots, close-ups, cutaways, etc.
- What to do on location and dealing with subjects
- Taking a pause to observe your surroundings
- Looking for telling details that reveal character, behavior, skill, humor, etc
- Quantity v. quality

Assignments:

- Begin shooting.
- Bring media cards in to class next week for the edit workshop.

5

09.22.2015

**** DUE: RAW FOOTAGE.**

Lecture: Crafting the Story Arc

- Pre-production: being prepared, informed and in control
- Identifying the main elements in your story
- Understanding your subjects, their environments and the right questions to ask before heading out on your first shoot

Edit Workshop – Part 1: Media Management and Organization

- Media management
- Project setup
- Importing footage
- Setting audio channels
- Your new best friend: The Impact Server

Assignments:

- Continue shooting. Log and transcribe footage. Bring footage to class next week.
- Begin preparing a story arc in outline format via Microsoft Word. Outline three sequences.

Week

6

09.29.2015

**** DUE: RAW FOOTAGE.**

Managing Your Production Schedule

- Importance of staying organized and planning ahead
- Anticipating obstacles and learning how to troubleshoot them
- Delivering your product on time

Edit Workshop – Part 2: Advanced Editing Techniques

- Translating your vision: from camera to edit
- Finding good sound bites, building a solid narrative
- “Radio cut” – creating a “selects” timeline
- Creating sub clips: logging and understanding your footage

Assignments:

- Continue shooting. Log and transcribe footage. Bring footage to class next week.
- **Finish your story arc** for your approved project. Due next class.

7

10.06.2015

**** DUE: STORY ARC. HARD COPIES DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.**

Edit Workshop – Part 3: Editing for Longform Storytelling

- Cutting sequences
- Transitions
- Split edits
- Pacing
- Exporting sequences and uploading to Xchange

Team Meetings: Midterm check-in

Assignments:

- Continue shooting. Log and transcribe footage.
- **Edit Sequence 1.** Due next week in class. **Export and upload to Xchange by 8 a.m. on 10/13.**

Week

8

10.13.2015

**** DUE: SEQUENCE 1.**

Review Sequence 1

In-class review and feedback.

Lecture: Story Development

- Troubleshooting storylines: weak story beats, missing footage
- Journalists' choices
- Additional sources for information or footage

Lecture: Writing the Script

- Translating raw footage to a script
- Screening footage for good story beats
- Script format and annotations
- Responsibility of a journalist in longform: sourcing and attribution
- Writing to a longform audience
- Managing large quantities of footage in preparation to write a script

Assignments:

- Continue shooting. Log and transcribe footage.
- **Begin writing script.** Refer to the *Supplementary Materials* section of your syllabus on pages 5-7 for format.
- **Edit Sequence 2.** Due next week in class. **Export and upload to Xchange by 8 a.m. on 10/20.**

9

10.20.2015

**** DUE: SEQUENCE 2.**

Review Sequence 2

In-class review and feedback.

Lecture: Additional Storytelling Elements

- Getting creative with visuals for nonvisual subjects
- Building on a skill set
- Discussions about progress and process

Production Troubleshooting

- The problems we predict
- Camera techniques: what's working, what's not working
- The ones we can't anticipate
- Project completion problems
- Ethical dilemmas

Assignments:

- Continue shooting. Log and transcribe footage.
- **Continue writing script.** Refer to the *Supplementary Materials* section of your syllabus on pages 5-7 for format.
- **Begin editing rough cut.**

Week	
10 10.27.2015	<p>** DUE: SCRIPT. E-mail appropriately formatted Word document to instructor prior to class.</p> <p>Lecture: Translating the script to the edit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to turn your writing into video ▪ Changing the see-and-say mindset into thinking in sequences ▪ Letting shots go and pacing ▪ Rethinking the script ▪ Advancing the story <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct pickup shoots, if necessary. - Continue editing rough cut. Due in two weeks.
11 11.03.2015	<p>Lecture: Current state of nonfiction television & career choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The blurring lines between nonfiction and entertainment ▪ Understanding the marketplace: your ideas v. network interests and competition ▪ Realities of the industry ▪ Pitching your ideas: where to go and who to talk with ▪ What it means to work in longform ▪ How class projects can help you find work ▪ Industry feedback <p>Assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finish editing ROUGH CUT. Due next week in class. Export and upload to Impact server by 8 a.m. on Tuesday 11/10. - Conduct pick-up shoots, if necessary.
12 11.10.2015	<p>** DUE: ROUGH CUT.</p> <p>ROUGH CUT SCREENING In-class feedback. Instructor will e-mail notes and grades.</p> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct pick-up shoots, if necessary. - Continue editing.

Week

13

11.17.2015

Lecture: Comparing your vision with the execution of a story

- What you pitched v. what we watched
- Surviving executive notes

Making Editorial Decisions

- Deciding when material hurts the storytelling
- Learning to fall out of love with too much footage
- Knowing when to trim and cut
- Journalists' choices
- Strong v. weak story beats

Assignments:

- **Edit PROGRESS CUT.** Due next week in class. **Export and upload to Impact server by 8 a.m. on Tuesday 11/24.**

14

11.24.2015

**** DUE: PROGRESS CUT.**

PROGRESS CUT SCREENING

In-class review and feedback.

Assignments:

- Continue editing your project. **FINE CUT** due next week. **Export and upload to Impact server by 8 a.m. on Tuesday 12/1.**
- Assemble final deliverables – ALL release forms and a conformed script.

15

12.01.2015

**** DUE: FINAL EDIT + DELIVERABLES (conformed script + release forms)**

FINE CUT SCREENING

In-class feedback. Instructor will e-mail notes and grades.

YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE A GRADE IF ANY DELIVERABLES ARE MISSING.

IX. Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

Attendance

Class attendance is *mandatory*. Students are advised to attend the first class meetings of their journalism classes or the instructors may drop them. The School of Journalism adheres to the university policy, which states “an instructor may replace any student who without prior consent does not attend... the first class session of the semester for once-a-week classes. It is then the student’s responsibility to withdraw officially from the course through the Registration Department.”

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

Presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words - is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/b/11-00-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism’s policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

“Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an ‘F’ on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators.”

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

b. Support Systems

Equity and Diversity

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/departement-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community - such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member - can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <https://sarc.usc.edu/> describes reporting options and other resources.

Support with Scholarly Writing

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.

Stress Management

Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge.

Emergency Information

If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

X. About Your Instructor

Daniel H. Birman is an award-winning documentary producer based in Los Angeles. He recently produced *Perfecting Flight: Bob Hoover*, an independent documentary about a legendary aviator from WWII, and *The Big Bang Machine* for NOVA on PBS. The special was about one of the great scientific discoveries of modern times, the Higgs Boson particle, which explains how the universe was formed.

Among his notable projects: *Chasing Speed: Leslie Porterfield* for Velocity follows the world's fastest woman on a motorcycle in her quest for more world records. *Me Facing Life: Cyntoia's Story* is an award-winning feature documentary about a young woman sentenced to life in prison as juvenile. The film aired on PBS - Independent Lens (domestic), continues to air internationally, was part of the ITVS Community Cinema Program, and has been incorporated into school curricula. *Brace for Impact: The Chesley B. Sullenberger Story* for TLC and Discovery Channel details the successful landing of US Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River. *Naked Science: Death of the Universe*, a special for Nat Geo, explores new theories about how the universe will end. *Europa: Mystery of the Ice Moon*, for Science Channel, looks at a moon of Jupiter that just might support life, and *Medical Maverick*, a limited series for Discovery Health, goes into the ER with a world-class trauma surgeon.

His production company, Daniel H. Birman Productions, Inc., is active on a number of television series and specials.

Birman currently serves on the Board of Governors for the Television Academy representing the documentary peer group, and is also chairman of the membership committee.

Birman is the faculty advisor and executive producer for IMPACT, USC Annenberg's award-winning television newsmagazine show.