



**JOUR 552: Television Reporting and Production**  
**Units: 2**

**Fall 2017 – Wednesdays – 9 a.m. - 12:40 p.m.**  
**(7 weeks starting 10/18/17)**

**Section: 166-21567**

**Location: ANN 211**

**Instructor:** Kingsley Smith

**Office:** Media Center

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Contact Info:** [kingsles@usc.edu](mailto:kingsles@usc.edu), (310) 975-9218

### **I. Course Description**

Students have seven weeks to produce a pilot news program. This will be a magazine-style format rather than a daily news show. Working in teams, students will design the look of the show, select the segments (packages, interviews, etc.), write the open, close, and intros, and pre-record the anchor(s) and other in-studio features such as touch screen and green screen. Students will each research, shoot, write and edit two packages. At the end of the semester we'll screen the pilots, possibly with popcorn.

Prerequisites: Summer Digital Immersion and Fall Digital Immersion or permission of the instructor

### **II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment**

One goal of this course is to build on what students know about telling stories with video. The aim is to get better at finding, researching, and pitching stories, preparing and conducting interviews, shooting, writing, editing, graphic design, on camera presence and vocal delivery.

The second goal is to think big—bigger than an individual story. Students will conceive and create an entire show—making decisions about the theme, the look, the sound, the tone, the content, the rundown, the writing, graphics, editing style, pacing, the audience, and the impact.

The third goal is to learn about the advantages and challenges of working on a team, and together create a professional quality production.

### III. Description of Assignments

Each student will be required to complete two packages for the pilot. The grade for the package will be based on the pitch, reporting, writing, and editing. The pilot is 40 percent of the grade. Everyone on each team will be responsible for the final result. The grade for the pilot will be based on the quality of the content and design of the show. At the end of the semester, students will complete an evaluation—of their contribution and that of their peers. Those comments will be factored into the grade. Class participation, homework, and in-class exercises will also be assessed.

### IV. Grading

#### a. Breakdown of Grade

ASSIGNMENT	PERCENT OF GRADE
PCK#1	20
PCK#2	20
Pilot Project	40
Self and peer evaluation	10
Participation, HW, in-class exercises	10
TOTAL	100

#### b. Grading Scale

95 to 100: A	70 to less than 75: C+	45 to less than 50: D-
90 to less than 95: A-	65 to less than 70: C	0 to less than 45: F
85 to less than 90: B+	60 to less than 65: C-	
80 to less than 85: B	55 to less than 60: D+	
75 to less than 80: B-	50 to less than 55: D	

#### c. Grading Standards

All assignments will be edited on a professional basis and you will be judged first on the accuracy, fairness and objectivity of your stories. You will then be evaluated for broadcast style, editing, production value, originality and the ability to meet deadlines.

**“A” stories** are accurate, clear, comprehensive stories that are well written and require only minor copyediting (i.e., they would be aired or published). Video work must also be shot and

edited creatively, be well paced and include good sound bites and natural sound that add flavor, color or emotion to the story.

**“B” stories** require more than minor editing and have a few style or spelling errors or one significant error of omission. For video, there may be minor flaws in the composition of some shots or in the editing. Good use of available sound bites is required.

**“C” stories** need considerable editing or rewriting and/or have many spelling, style or omission errors. Camera work and editing techniques in video stories are mediocre or unimaginative, but passable. Sound bites add little or no color - only information that could be better told in the reporter’s narration.

**“D” stories** require excessive rewriting, have numerous errors and should not have been submitted. Camera work is unsatisfactory or fails to show important elements.

**“F” stories** have failed to meet the major criteria of the assignment, are late, have numerous errors or both. Your copy should not contain any errors in spelling, style, grammar and facts. Any misspelled or mispronounced proper noun will result in an automatic “F” on that assignment. Any factual error will also result in an automatic “F” on the assignment. 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.
- Shooting video in one location and presenting it as another location.
- 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**

Written assignments and YouTube links to videos will be emailed to the instructor as a Word document. They’re due before class starts.

## **VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

There are no textbooks for 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 Digital\*\*](#)

**Lounge** for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's **Information Technology Services** website.

### **Add/Drop Dates**

**Monday, October 23:** Last day to add

**Monday, October 23:** Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund

**Friday, November 3:** Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade

**Tuesday, November 28:** Last day to drop with a mark of "W"

### **VIII. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

Note: Events, speaker availability, and student progress could influence the syllabus. Expect the unexpected. That's news.

#### **WEEK 1: October 18**

The semester ahead

Types of news shows

Screen previous student pilots

Discuss ideas for pilots

What to include in the pilot pitch

Discuss Package #1 (2:00)

#### **HW DUE WEEK 2 (OCT 25)**

HW: 1) Watch an entire episode of a news magazine program from a list provided. Write a critique. For guidance on what to include, see the News Magazine Checklist provided. One page should be sufficient. Submit the written critique as a Word attachment before class starts and be prepared to discuss your observations.

HW: 2) Prepare a written and oral pitch for a news pilot.

HW: 3) Prepare a written and oral pitch for Package #1

#### **WEEK 2: October 25**

Submit a written pitch for the pilot before class starts

Pitch the pilot in person

Submit a written pitch before class starts for Package #1

Pitches Package #1 in person to the class

Discuss critiques of video news magazines

#### **HW DUE WEEK 3 (November 1)**

1) Package #1 (2:00)

#### **WEEK 3: November 1**

Submit script and YouTube link to Package #1 before class  
Screen Package #1  
Teams discuss preliminary rundowns for their pilots

Differences and similarities between long form packages and breaking news  
--Research, prepping for interviews  
--Story structure and writing  
--Shooting  
--Enterprise and investigative reporting

Discuss Package #2 for pilot

#### HW DUE WEEK 4 (NOVEMBER 8)

- 1) Pitch Package #2 (in writing and in class)
- 2) Teams write a Pilot Progress Report based on the Pilot Checklist

#### **WEEK 4: November 8**

Submit written pitch for Package #2 (2:00) before class

Pitch Package #2 in class  
Teams present Pilot Progress Report

ON CAMERA: tips, delivery, practice

#### HW DUE WEEK 5 (NOVEMBER 15)

Set up and start shooting Package #2. Submit written progress report before class describing: what you've shot, what's left to shoot, how you plan to open the story, your thoughts about the structure, and any challenges.

#### **WEEK 5: November 15**

Package #2 Progress Report and be prepared to discuss in class  
Media Center (MC)  
-- How to create a rundown  
--Studio tour

#### HW DUE WEEK 6 (NOVEMBER 22)

Package #2 (script and edited package)  
Pilot Progress Report

#### **WEEK 6: November 22**

Submit script and YouTube link to edited Package #2 before class  
Screen and critique Package #2

Final preps for the in-studio components of the pilot (logo designs for the anchor desk and backdrop; anchor scripts for the open, close and intros to each segment; any green screen/touch screen plans, rundowns, etc).

### **WEEK 7: November 29**

Record pilots in the studio

### **FINAL PILOT DUE the week of DECEMBER 10.**

We will set a time to screen your pilots.

## **IX. Policies and Procedures**

**If for any reason you cannot be in class, explain your absence in writing in advance to the instructor. Computers and mobile devices are to be used only for work related to this class.**

### **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://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>). 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://dps.usc.edu/contact/report/>). This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community - such as a friend, classmate, adviser, or faculty member - can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The *Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services* (<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>) 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 adviser or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* (<http://ali.usc.edu/>) which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs* (<http://dsp.usc.edu/>) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.

Students requesting test-related accommodations will need to share and discuss their DSP recommended accommodation letter/s with their faculty and/or appropriate departmental contact person at least three weeks before the date the accommodations will be needed. Additional time may be needed for final exams. Reasonable exceptions will be considered during the first three weeks of the semester as well as for temporary injuries and for students recently diagnosed. Please note that a reasonable period of time is still required for DSP to review documentation and to make a determination whether a requested accommodation will be appropriate.

### *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**

Kingsley Smith has been teaching graduate and undergraduate courses at Annenberg School for Journalism since 2014. He's also a writing coach in the student-run newsroom.

Kingsley Smith, an award-winning broadcaster with over 25 years of live television production experience. He's currently a Senior Producer for the NFL Network on the programs *NFL Total Access* and *21<sup>st</sup> and Prime* starring Deion Sanders. Previously, he was the News Director for KTTV (FOX) in Los Angeles. He's worked in newsrooms in Dallas, St. Louis, Philadelphia and Los Angeles leading, creating, producing and managing news and information programs for on air and online. He also operates his own custom video production and marketing company creating original brand journalism and related content for small and large business, individuals, corporations and organizations.