

JOUR 207: Writing and Reporting I 4 units

Course is taken in conjunction with JOUR 321

Spring 2018 – Thursdays – 9 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

Section: 21042D Room: ANN 406

Instructor: Joy Horowitz

Office: ANN Lobby

Office Hours: Thurs., 12:30-1:30 p.m., or by

appointment

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appointment

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Course Description

Students will learn about the role and responsibility of a journalist in American society through a variety of campus and local community-based reporting and writing assignments. This course will introduce you to the step-by-step process of producing news content, from understanding the concept of news judgment – when an event is news and why - to the research, reporting, writing and dissemination of news in a 21- century news ecosystem. This course will focus on writing, reporting and news judgment. The course that follows, JOUR 307, will hone the skills learned in JOUR 207 and focus more on complete broadcast story packages and longer text-based stories. In the opening weeks, you will have in-class exercises and homework assignments to introduce you to journalistic concepts, followed by reporting on USC events and people and the communities of Downtown and South LA.

We'll also learn to produce content across platforms. Students will incorporate social media tools including Twitter and Instagram in the reporting and writing process and the dissemination of their work.

The work you produce in this course will *introduce* you to the skills you will need in television, radio, web or print news organizations. To support your classroom instruction and assignments, you will also attend a mandatory weekly four-hour shift at the Annenberg Media Center, where you will contribute to student-produced news outlets across multiple platforms and continue polishing the skills you learn in class. This course is taken in conjunction with JOUR 321, Visual Journalism, which will introduce students to a variety of digital storytelling skills.

Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Exercise news judgment in various situations.
- Conduct research and interviews and develop sources for news stories.
- Use data to support reporting in news.
- Report, write, revise and produce well-sourced content across broadcast, digital and print platforms, adhering to AP style.
- Understand the role of social media in the gathering, consumption and dissemination of news.

Annenberg Media Center requirement

You are required as an enrolled student in J207 to complete a four-hour weekly shift at the Annenberg Media Center. During your one continuous four-hour shift, you will produce daily content for TV, radio and web or practice community reporting skills. The work you produce during your shift accounts for 15 percent of your final grade in this class. More details about the Media Center requirement are found at the end of the syllabus.

Description of Assignments

This course will develop your writing and reporting skills through in-class exercises and homework assignments, as well as reporting on USC events and people and stories in the surrounding communities. After your midterm, you will learn the basics of broadcast journalism, including writing radio and television copy and recording, shooting, and editing audio and video. Your final requires both a text story and a video story.

Assignments will be graded on accuracy, grammar, spelling, AP style, clarity, deadlines, conciseness, structure, proper punctuation, quality of interviews/reporting and use of quotes (if applicable), use/number/quality of sources, attribution, research, objectivity, production value, etc. You must abide by the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics (http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp), NPPA (https://nppa.org/ethics), SND (SND (http://www.snd.org) and the RTNDA Code of Ethics (https://www.rtdna.org/content/rtdna.code.org of ethics#.VTNMjItAwUU).

Assignment Submission Policy

A. All assignments must be submitted via Blackboard in a Word doc.

B. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Text stories should be uploaded to Blackboard in a Word file. Broadcast scripts should be uploaded to Blackboard, and video files to Exchange. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of "F."

C. All assignments will count toward the final grade. There will be no dropped assignments.

<u>Grading</u>	Assignment % of Grade	
AP Style Modules		5 percent
In-Class Exercises (full credit if you are in class)		5 percent
Annenberg Media Center Requirement		15 percent
Homework		20 percent

Campus/Community Stories

(4 total, higher weights for later stories)

Midterm Story

10 percent

Midterm AP Test

5 percent

Final Project – Text (with required drafts)

10 percent

Total

20 percent

10 percent

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	

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.

Assignment Submission Policy

Instructor: Describe how, and when, assignments are to be submitted. Examples:

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F.

B. Assignments must be submitted via [Blackboard, Multimedia Asset Management (MAM) system, email, etc.]

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Please note: These texts can be bought used or rented through Amazon.com.

"The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law," edited by Darrell Christian, Sally Jacobsen and David Minthorn 201.

"Inside Reporting, A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism 3. Edition" (although 2. Edition will likely suffice), by Tim Harrower, 2013.

ISBN-13: 978-0073526171 ISBN-10: 0073526177

"News Now: Visual Storytelling in the Digital Age, 1. Edition, by Green et al, 2011.

ISBN-10: 0205695914 ISBN-13: 978-0205695911

NOTE: Please see additional reading links embedded in the syllabus.

Suggested Readings

As journalists, it is imperative you become a daily news consumer. Watch, read and check news sources every day. You must follow the news and be familiar with what is going on around the world, the country, California, and Los

Angeles. You should read the *LA Times* and *New York Times* EVERY DAY. Watch at least one national newscast each day.

Watch at least one local newscast every day: KABC, KCBS/KCAL, KNBC, KTLA, KTTV

Listen to KPCC (http://losangeles.cbslocal.com/station/knx-1070/) at least once each day.

Develop a list of other news sources you check daily, sign up for newsletters and download apps from news organizations. Follow newsmakers and news organizations on Twitter. This business.

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 <u>Annenberg Digital Lounge</u> for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's <u>Information Technology Services</u> website.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/8/18 – 4/27/18)

Friday, January 26: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Friday, January 26: Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

Tuesday, January 30: last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, February 23: 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, April 6: Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

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. Readings are to be completed by the day listed on the syllabus.

Week 1

Jan. 11

CORE JOURNALISM CONCEPTS: News judgment/Critical Thinking; (Hard, straight, direct) Leads Introduction to class and class policies, including reporter safety in the field.

Introduction to news judgment. Discussion of news judgment. What is it, and how do you develop it? How do we cover hard/breaking news?

What makes a good text lead? Fundamentals of journalistic writing: who, what, where, when, why and how. How the inverted pyramid is still valid, especially for deadline news.

Students will be briefed on AP style and grammar, punctuation and active and passive voice.

Readings: Harrower, Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

In-class: Write leads.

Homework: Write more leads.

Week 2

Jan. 18

CORE JOURNALISM CONCEPTS: News briefs; Diversity; Writing for Twitter and Instagram We will continue our discussion of leads. We will introduce news briefs, which are basically short stories ranging from one to three paragraphs in length.

We also will begin discussing how to cover a major metropolitan city like Los Angeles, and its neighborhoods.

We discuss what it means to have a diverse range of sources and how to use data to achieve wider reach in your journalism. That includes socio-economic, gender, youth, race, and ethnicity, and others types of diversity (Maynard's Fault Lines).

We will discuss best practices for Twitter and Instagram.

We will review other types of writing -- (for social media, AI, Tweet threads, etc.).

Readings: Harrower, Chapters 4 (pgs. 88-90), and 8.

In-class: Write news briefs.

Homework: Write more news briefs.

Week 3

Jan. 25

CORE JOURNALISM CONCEPTS: Covering Public Events, Speeches and Meetings; Data We discuss the preparation and research you should conduct in advance of covering a public meeting, speech or a public event, and how you determine what to write about. This discussion is a good exercise in helping you continue to develop your news judgment.

We also discuss the use of databases for finding diversity in its many forms: socio-economic, gender, youth, race, and ethnicity, and others.

Database resources:

PolicyMap is a multi-disciplinary interactive online tool that provides access to a range of data, including, demographic, income and spending, housing, lending, quality of life, economy, education, and health

https://libproxy.usc.edu/login?url=http://usc.policymap.com/maps

American FactFinder offers statistics about population, housing, industry, and business. http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml

The U.S. Census Bureau

http://www.census.gov/

Readings: Harrower, Chapter 4 (pgs. 86-88) and Chapter 5.

In-class: Write a speech story from a factsheet.

Homework: Story No. 1, cover an on-campus speech. 350-00 words. Due Week 4.

Week 4

Feb. 1

CORE JOURNALISM CONCEPTS: The Art of Interviewing.

We discuss the art of interviewing and the different types of interviews. We will cover in depth the preparation for an in-person interview, how you conduct an interview and the importance of the follow-up question. We'll also discuss the do's and don'ts of attribution.

Discuss pros and cons of face to face interviews vs. email interviews.

We also discuss the depth of sourcing for stories. How many sources do you need for a story? When do you know you have enough? The difference between primary and secondary sources. Why you should avoid interviewing friends and family in most cases.

Review Story No. 1.

Readings: Harrower, Chapter 4 (pgs. 74-86).

In-class: Go out and interview students across campus on a topic TBD.

Homework: Interview simulation (details TBD). Due Week 5. But Start thinking about Story

Pitch No. 2 (an issue in South Los Angeles), due Week 6.

Week 5

Feb. 8

CORE JOURNALISM CONCEPTS: Story pitching; Editing and revising; community coverage. We discuss how to pitch stories to your editors/producers, as well as professional outlets as a freelancer.

We also discuss the art of rewriting, revision and self-editing your work. Here are the steps you should take in assessing the clarity and precision of your work before submitting it your editor.

We will discuss how to cover a community (geographic or a community of interest) by learning about that community, walking around in the community, and talking to various members of the community informally or through informational interviews. This all helps build sources.

Review interview simulation assignment. Review initial ideas for Story No. 2.

Readings: Harrower, Chapter 7. See additional readings and tip sheets on Blackboard.

In-class: Start researching potential story idea (s).

Homework: Pitch for Story No. 2 due next week. Story due Week 8.

Week 6

Feb. 15

CORE JOURNALISM CONCEPTS: Short features and nut grafs. An introduction into short features, how feature leads (soft or delayed or indirect leads) and structure differ from hard news stories, an intro to nut grafs, which are used in longer features.

We will also look at the difference between hard news stories and longer, feature stories

Readings: Harrower, Chapter 6

In-class: Write a short feature from a fact sheet. Review story pitches. **Homework:** Review for next week's midterm. Story No. 2 is due Week 8.

Week 7 Feb. 22

In-class midterm

First half of class:

(An AP style test and a written text story from a factsheet).

Second half of class:

We will discuss how to cover courts, police and justice issues in general. "Beats" vs. "Obsessions."

We will discuss the similarities and differences between text and broadcast.

Readings: Harrower, Chapters 7 and 9.

In-class: Review professional audio and video stories; discuss how they differ from text.

Homework: Story No. 2 is due Week. 8.

Week 8

March 1

CROSS-PLATFORM REPORTING: Writing for the eye and ear

Understanding how radio and television writing style differs from print writing. Revision of the fundamentals of journalism: who, what, where, when and why. Introduction to broadcast language and broadcast style (i.e. what is a reader, VO, VO/SOT, VSV, live shot, package, etc.) Constructing the broadcast lead. Adding the element of time.

Story No 2 is due today. We will review stories in class.

Readings: News Now Ch. 2 (p. 22-29 and 34-36) and Ch. 7

In-class: Write broadcast leads from fact sheets

Homework: Write five broadcast leads from fact sheets.

Week 9

March 8

CROSS-PLATFORM REPORTING: Producing broadcast news

Writing concisely without sacrificing accuracy and completeness in a broadcast story. Continue to go over broadcast leads, as well as the two-column script format. Explain newsroom duties (producer, assignment editor, reporter, anchor). An introduction to writing VOs.

Readings: Harrower, Ch. 8.

In-class: Go over broadcast leads homework.

Homework: Students will find a story that has been covered in text, on radio and in television. They will write 350 words on the differences and similarities of each story, including how the reporter chose to lead into the story. Write a VO from a fact sheet.

Spring Break – March 11-18

Week 10

March 22

Core Journalism Concepts: Radio VS. Television and The Art of Broadcast Interviewing

The differences between "live" in-studio and in the field interviews, POS interviews, taped interviews. Diverse sources. How many sources do you need? This will include an introduction to POS/VoxPops. We will discuss how to log tape and choose soundbites/actualities. We will also go the differences between writing for radio and writing for television. Discuss a text reaction story.

READINGS: https://www.thenewsmanual.net/Manuals%20Volume%201/volume1 23.htm

In-class: Go over leads and VOs.

Homework: Story No. 3 Record and edit VoxPops and do a short text reaction piece. Due week 11.

Week 11

March 29

An Introduction to Television VO/SOTS VSVs and Pro Tips on Getting Good Video

We will go over the VO/SOT VSV writing conventions and talk about when to use sound bites and when to use VO. Writing in and out of sound. We will also go over how to get good visuals. From shooting techniques, to different situations to shoot in, and how to getting good audio for television. Also, we will go over pitching stories for broadcast.

Readings: News Now, Ch. 6

In-class: Write VSV in groups from video fact sheets **Homework:** Write VSV from video fact sheets.

Start working on story No. 4 pitch, due Week 12. Story Due Week 13

Week 12

April 5

Finally, the broadcast package!

This week we take the leap into full broadcast packages. We will watch examples, look at how to incorporate the reporter in the stories, and how, why, and when to do "standups" that matter.

Readings: News Now, Ch. 9

In-class: Pitch Story No. 4 VSV feature/issue story.

Homework: Work on VSV assignment due week 13. Start working on your final story pitch,

due week 13.

Week 13

April 12

The MC staff will provide advanced editing training on packages. During the second half of class we'll pitch our stories for the final.

Readings:

In-class: Pitch your final project.

Homework: Start working on your final projects. Drafts are due on Week 15.

Week 14

April 19

Broadcast Day: We will continue to go over package construction, talk about when we should use a stand-up and look at more examples. Differences in reporter packages, nat sot packages and social videos. Review stories that have been done as a traditional package and as a social video. Discuss the utility of short, videos with narration for a mobile viewing audience versus a longer story that plays during a broadcast. We discuss the broader meanings of community engagement and how engagement with the public enriches the practice of journalism.

Readings:

In-class: We will practice standups and go over writing packages.

Homework: Continue working on your final projects.

Week 15

April 26

One-on-one meetings to go over drafts of the final.

Final

Tuesday, May 8, 8-10 a.m.

Present final to class; upload to Bb

IX. Policies and Procedures Additional Policies

Instructor: Add any additional policies specific to your class that students should be aware of: missed classes, attendance expectations, checking USC email, use of technology in the classroom, dress code, etc.

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 by 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

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu

X. About Your Instructors

Joy Horowitz has worked as a staff writer for the *Los Angeles Times* and began her journalism career as a sports reporter for the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*. She has freelanced for a range of publications including *The New York Times, the New Yorker, Los Angeles Magazine* and *Time*. She is the author of a memoir, *Tessie and Pearlie: A Granddaughter's Story* (Scribner) and an environmental investigation, *Parts Per Million: The Poisoning of Beverly*

Hills High School (Viking). She was awarded a National Health Journalism Fellowship in 2011, which led to the publication of "Parkinson's Alley" for Sierra Magazine, documenting a link between a higher incidence of Parkinson's disease in Central Valley farm towns and pesticide contamination of water wells. A graduate of Harvard and Yale Law School, she has taught writing and journalism courses at Yale, Harvard, Northeastern and USC's Annenberg School. Currently, she is a contributing editor to the Los Angeles Review of Books.

Lew Rothbart has worked for NBC News, ABC News, and CNN, along with several local Los Angeles radio and TV stations. He has conducted seminars for foreign journalists and been a speaker at PR Conferences, and Business Crisis Seminars, He has been a news director, executive producer, line producer, assignment editor, field producer, content producer, news writer, and video editor. He has won several Golden Mike awards and was nominated for the local Emmys. He has been a member of Radio-TV News Association. He is a graduate of Cal State Northridge and was in graduate studies at the Journalism School at Columbia University, New York.

students, employees and representatives t	grant permission to the University of Southern California, its o videotape, photograph and otherwise digitally record ther with my name, voice and likeness, in news reports and e USC Annenberg School of Journalism.
other publicity and demonstration materia and in any format. I agree that these image I understand that I will have no right to inspective of the materials. I hereby release the trustees and representatives from, and I he way to the images recorded or materials probelow, I confirm that I am at least 18 years terms. If this consent form is being signed	rts, these materials may include advertising, promotional and ls, and may be used locally, nationally or globally at any time es may be used indefinitely without compensation to me, and pect or approve any of these images. I will not request any se University of Southern California, its students, employees, ereby waive, any claims that I may have that are related in any roduced in connection with this consent form. By signing of age and have read this consent form and understand its on behalf of a minor child, then the parent or legal guardian standing of and agreement to all of the terms of this consent
For additional questions, please contact Lis	a Pecot-Hébert (213) 821-1184 or at pecotheb@usc.edu
Name:	Age:
Signature:	Date:
Name of Parent/Guardian (if minor):	
Signature of Parent/Guardian:	
Student's name and contact information	
Instructor's name and contact information	