COURSE DESCRIPTION

With the growth of ContentEverywhere, new technology platforms, inventions and innovations, coupled with new distribution models, which are yielding innovative ways of distributing content all over the world (and in space), there are many new methods for distributing and exploiting professionally-created content through all forms of media, including through various apps and other distribution channels worldwide. Indie content creators create and distribute the majority of content available all over the world. These content creators in the industry are actively developing, acquiring and creating content for exploitation across all available platforms and helping create experiences for bleeding-edge technologies.

Through this course, you will gain a basic understanding of what industry professionals do to source, acquire and seek financing for creating content, for exploitation and distribution in all territories worldwide. This will include how to navigate the rights issues which could derail a project at beginning stages; and you will also gain a basic understanding of the process of distributing and exploiting professionally-created content, including some of the structure of these deals (in terms of distribution) and what rights allow and enable the various business models and means of delivery which facilitate worldwide distribution.

COURSE GOALS

- To understand the terms, basic business models, customs and procedures involved in the pre-production process of content (short and long-form) intended for worldwide distribution (primarily digitally, but including theatrical)
- To comprehend the importance of chain-of-title in financing, acquiring and developing content
- To define and analyze each distribution right, business model, and means of delivery
- To grasp the basic issues involved in financing and production of projects for worldwide distribution (short and long form)
- To provide an understanding of ancillary/subsidiary rights in content and their value
READING MATERIALS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- Any additional handout materials posted on blackboard.

HBS CASE STUDIES (IN READER)

- Warner Bros. Entertainment
- Motion Picture Finance
- Strategic Marketing in Creative Industries – Managing and Marketing Talent
- Strategic Marketing in Creative Industries – The Promise of Digital Technology
- MGM and Tom Cruise
- Marvel

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADED ACTIVITIES

- **Just-In-Time Minute Paper**
  Before class, a topic will be posted on Blackboard about the day’s lecture. Each student will submit a paragraph about that topic on blackboard by **one hour before the start of class time**. The paragraph can be the student’s opinion, reaction and experiences about that topic. After class, all students will comment and react to the other postings on that subject and continue the dialogue during the week on this subject. This will not happen before every class but on most class days (i.e., not on presentation days, finals, or project days). Students will be graded on assignment compliance, including posting and reacting/commenting to other postings in a substantive manner. These will occur before each class (8 assignments).

- **Reaction Papers**
  After each class, a question will be posted on Blackboard about some aspect of the day’s lecture, discussion or activity. Each student will write a one-page paper reacting to the question posed, which should include aspects of what was provided in that day’s class. No specific format style is required. The paper must be one-full page, single-spaced, 1” margin, in Times New Roman or Arial fonts only, saved in Word format using the nomenclature format of lastname_firstname-mmddyy.docx (i.e., mmddyy is the class date). **Reaction papers are due within 48 hours of the end of class.** These will occur after class (10 assignments).
The Media Feud
For this graded activity, the class will be divided into two teams (families) and the families will compete against each other in a live activity in the format of the American game show “The Family Feud”. Three rounds of questions and a bonus round will be played, with the questions and “survey answers” all derived from terms, business models, means of delivery and practices of content distribution. Teams will be allowed to confer with each other to answer questions, with incorrect answers garnering strikes (“X”). Three strikes allow the other team to steal game points and the round. The team who wins 2-3 rounds goes on to the bonus round to earn bonus points for the group. Grading is by group (team/family) dynamic, with each individual in the team graded equally on participation, collaboration, and answer accuracy. Bonus points are awarded to the winning team through the bonus round and are awarded to each team member.

The Board Room
Each student in class will be assigned a department role in a mock indie content company (i.e., legal, publicity, marketing, domestic/international sales (including Redbox, hotel/ships/airlines and syndicated TV), digital distribution (TVOD, SVOD, ADVOD, short-form, social media), home entertainment, creative/development, business affairs, finance,) and take on that role in the company. We will all meet for class simulating a real corporate studio development meeting, with the President of the company. One week before, an Agenda will be circulated to all students with twenty (20) projects listed, with their current status. In the meeting, the President will go through each project one by one, with the members of each department and we will make decisions whether or not a project would be “greenlit” or approved, what problems are happening with a given project, or for completed projects, how and where to exploit/distribute certain projects (both short and long form). This exercise will require collaboration/cooperation of all students in the class, since the President will ask questions of some departments based on his information or based on the responses of other students. Each student will be graded individually on breadth of knowledge, collaboration/cooperation and effectiveness of response.

Final Exam Project
Each student will make a short 5-6 minute oral presentation taking a position (positive or negative) on one of the following subjects: a) the future of digital distribution (discussing either PVOD, VR or theatrical); b) How studios can help solve the diversity problem in Hollywood; c) The disruption of the modern studio system by Amazon, Netflix and Apple. Each presentation should be a dynamic, professional presentation, at the requisite level of Director-level equivalent and above. Each presentation can be in any media (custom created video, Powerpoint or Keynote deck, prezi, etc.) The project should be presented in a “pitch” style, wherein the general presentation structure should be “problem-solution-impact of solution-future impact.” Each student will be graded live for overall quality of presentation, professionalism, strength of argument and creativity of position and solution.
Bonus Opportunities
Throughout the term, there will be some opportunities to earn additional points on various assignments. Additionally, if students feel they need to earn extra points, a bonus assignment can be completed: write a 5-7 page paper analyzing one of the case studies presented. The paper must provide insight, analysis and propose a solution to the problems/issues raised in the chosen case study. The paper can be completed any time between the first class and the last class (before finals). The paper should be in APA format with no less than 8 verified academic or professional sources.

CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reaction Papers:</th>
<th>200</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Media Feud</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Board Room</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just-In Time</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation &amp; Attendance</td>
<td>140 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam Project</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points Available</td>
<td>800 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bonus Assignments

| Opportunity Points Awarded within Each Activity | Varied |
| Bonus Paper | Up to 50 pts. |

This course is designed to provide you an academic and practical foundation of the intricacies involved with the creation & distribution of content and the inherent culture of this business. Firm understanding of the class lectures, class projects, lecture notes, texts and presentations is crucial to ensure your future success as a working professional. You will demonstrate your understanding of these lessons and this class through your participation and completion of all assignments.

Grading Rubric

The grading rubric for this course is on a standard 90/80/70/60 scale:

| 100-94% | A | Exceptional performance in all areas |
| 93-90%  | A- | Excellent performance in all areas |
| 89-87%  | B+ | Very good performance in all areas. |
| 86-84%  | B | Good performance in all areas, with some areas of weakness found. |
83-80%  |  B-  | Good performance in all areas, with some significant areas of weakness or low performance.
79-77%  |  C+  | Average performance in all areas, with strong weakness in academic performance in the class.
76-74%  |  C   | Average to weak performance in all areas, with performance in some areas insufficient for course success.
73-70%  |  C-  | Below average performance in all areas, with significant performance insufficiencies.

Performance below a C- is not considered passing for this course, regardless of the actual letter grade. For this graduate program, all students must achieve a minimum of a 3.0 GPA (a “B” grade) earn the degree.

❖ Participation

Class participation is essential and is a portion of your grade. Everyone is expected to contribute questions or comments to the class – even if it is to clarify a statement or concept because you simply did not understand it. This class is not just instructional, but collaborative. Participation is a lesson itself: if you are not an active participant in the entertainment industry and in the department and company in which you will work, your success will be stunted. If I do not know your name by the end of the semester, you did not participate sufficiently.

❖ Absence and Lateness

Class will begin promptly at 6:00PM; therefore, being late will result in you missing a vital portion of the day’s lesson. Nevertheless, being absent or late to class will sometimes occur. The first unexcused absence is always forgiven. A sign-in sheet will be circulated during class twice to certify that you were present. More than one unexcused absence will result in a loss of that day’s participation points (or fraction thereof). More than three unexcused absences during the term may result in you being dropped from the class. If you need to be absent for a period of time, please consult with me ASAP so that we can make arrangements to continue your participation in the class so that you may finish the class.

If you arrive late (e.g., up to thirty minutes late) without notifying me, you will lose all participation points for that day. If you arrive very late (e.g., over one hour from the start of class) this is considered as absent, unless prior arrangements have been made with me. Please try to arrive on-time or no later than fifteen (15) minutes after class has begun. If there is some reason why you may have to arrive late on a consistent basis, please consult with me to make applicable arrangements.
Assignment Due Dates

All assignments are due when specified on the assignment summary or as outlined herein. Assignments should be either posted to Blackboard or emailed to me directly (the preferred method will be outlined in class). The timestamp from the server (via either Blackboard or my email server) shall act as your posting time.

Late Assignments/Corrupted Files/Emergencies

No late assignments will be accepted.

If you have a legitimate and verifiable emergency that makes it impossible to turn in your assignment on time you must: (1) email me before the beginning of class of the day the assignment is due to notify me of your emergency, (2) provide official proof (doctor’s note or other evidence) if required, and (3) arrange to complete the assignment at a time to be determined.

As a future professional, you are expected to have verified that the file to which you are submitting to me is in readable, executable condition, and not corrupted. If a corrupted file is received by me it is treated as if the file never arrived. You will be notified that the file is corrupted only if there is time for you to re-submit the file (e.g., more than 1 hour prior to the deadline time), and only if I detect the file is corrupted in time, both at my sole election. It is your responsibility to determine if your deliverables are ready and readable.

Recording Policy

No recording of any lecture via any media, now known or hereafter devised, (including, but not limited to iOS/Android devices, through Word for Mac or any other recording device/method) is permitted. Lecture and other class materials will be provided online via blackboard, but this will not replace the discussion value in the class and you cannot pass the class without attending. Attendance is strongly encouraged. I reserve all rights in connection with any use of my personal or professional name & likeness rights and any such use in any and all media now known or hereafter devised is prohibited without my express written consent.

Office Hours & Questions

Office hours are 5:00-6:00PM, by appointment, just before class. Arrangements can be made in the event you have questions or need to discuss a concept further prior to class or at a mutually convenient time on or off-campus (including at Sony Studios or at my general meeting location in Hermosa Beach). Meetings can also be arranged via Google Hangout, Facetime, Skype, etc., or for a different day, around the same time. Please feel free to email me with any questions or
issues for which you require answers or clarification. I always make myself available to support your academic success.

**LAPTOP POLICY**

Effective fall 2014, all undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors will be 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. Notwithstanding the foregoing, laptops (or other tablet devices) are not to be used in class for note taking or recording of lectures without prior approval.

**USC ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.

All work you submit must be your own and you may not inappropriately assist other students in their work beyond the confines of a particular assignment. There is a no-tolerance policy for academic misconduct in this course! The minimum penalty for academic misconduct will be a failing grade (F) for the course – further academic and disciplinary penalties may be assessed.

**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.

**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 Part B, 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.

**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. https://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. http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship & 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. https://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: http://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.
https://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. https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710
Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/

Diversity at USC – https://diversity.usc.edu/
Tabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students

Students With Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

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 Preparedness/Course Continuity In A Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.
COURSE OUTLINE – (SUBJECT TO CHANGE: ALL SPEAKERS ARE TENTATIVE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Week</th>
<th>What We Will Learn In Class</th>
<th>Reading Assignment for this Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Week 1      | Introduction to the Courses and Class | Producing Book: Ch. 1, 11, 13-14  
Case Study: Warner Bros. Entertainment  
The Biz: Ch. 1 (Jargon Translation Guide) and Ch. 2 |
| Week 2      | The Overall of Originating Content (short-form, long-form, transmedia/marketing) | Producing Book: Ch. 14-16  
Distribution Book: Ch. 1 |
| Week 3      | Chain-of-Title: Success Strategies & pre-production of content | Producing Book: Ch. 5-6, 9-10, 12  
Distribution Book: Ch. 2-3  
The Biz: Ch. 3-6, 8-9  
Case Study: Motion Picture Financing |
| Week 4      | Distributing Content: Rights & Methods overall (including Traditional methods) | Distribution Book: Ch. 4-6  
Producing Book: Ch. 2-5  
The Biz: Ch. 10 |
| Week 5      | Distributing Content: Digital Platforms and the pitfalls of online marketing/advertising (embedded/social media ads/Analytics) | Distribution Book: Ch. 7  
The Biz: Ch. 10-12  
Case Study: Strategic Marketing – Digital FTC Materials |
| Week 6      | Speaker: Katharine Linke  
VP, Multi-Platinum Programming  
Disney Channels (US) | Producing Book: Ch. 2-5 |

REMEMBER: EACH WEEK A REACTION PAPER IS DUE WITHIN 48 HOURS FROM THE END OF CLASS. EACH REACTION PAPER IS ASSIGNED IN BLACKBOARD 1 HOUR AFTER THE END OF CLASS.
| Week 7 | Speaker: Tatiana Simonian  
Head of Partnerships, Tumblr | Catch up any reading |
|-------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Jun 27 | July 4th!!!  
|       | Catch up reading, stare at exploding things, think about upcoming activities. |
| Week 8 | July 4  
|       | Catch up reading, stare at exploding things, think about upcoming activities. |
| July 11 | Distributing Content: Ancillary Rights  
(Merch/Music/Transmedia)  
(Other Rights) | Distribution Book: Ch. 8  
The Biz: Ch. 10-12  
Case Study: Marvel |
| Week 10 | Activity: The Media Feud | Case Study: MGM and Tom Cruise |
| July 18 |       |       |
| Week 11 | Activity: The Board Room |       |
| July 25 |       |       |
| Week 12 | Final Projects |       |
| Aug 1  |       |       |