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**JOUR 552: TV Reporting and Production**

**2 Units**

**Fall 2018 – Mondays – 9 a.m.-12:20 p.m.**

**Section:** 21686D

**Location:** ANN L115

**Instructor: Barbara Pierce**

**Office:** Media Center

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Contact Info:** [bhpierce@usc.edu](mailto:bhpierce@usc.edu); 213-999-5217

**I. Course Description**

The Media Center quickly becomes the center of the universe for graduate students in the Master of Science program. On a typical day, the state-of-the-art student-run newsroom is buzzing with the excitement and challenge of covering the day’s news.

Each week teams of graduate students produce stories for several platforms—audio, video, text/digital, and social media. The Annenberg TV News shift requires students to pitch, research, shoot, write, and edit a story by 6 p.m. **the same day.** Whew.

This course offers the opportunity to produce video stories **without** the pressure of a same-day deadline. More time can be spent on every phase of the process including pitching, shooting, writing, editing, on camera presence and vocal delivery. There will be opportunities to showcase the enterprise reports produced for this class throughout the semester.

In addition to learning how to present professional quality work in front of the camera, students will also be introduced to the basics of show producing: what to include in a newscast, how to create a rundown, how to write teases and transitions, how to incorporate tools like green screens and touch screens, and how best to use the studio space. For the Final Project, students will work in teams to create a pilot.

Course requirements: J528 Summer 2018 Digital News Immersion and enrolled in J531 Fall 2018 Digital Immersion

**II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment**

The goal is to work on the fundamentals of video reporting and produce professional quality stories that students would be proud to show an employer. The skills learned in this class can also be applied to videos produced for the Midterm and Final Projects of Fall Immersion and the Capstones due in the spring semester.

Pitches must be well-researched. Students will be given time to develop their shooting skills. Scripts will get a thorough critique before getting approved. And students will receive suggestions on how to fine-tune the editing to maximize the story’s impact. Improving on these fundamentals will better prepare students for their day-of-air Media Center shifts. Students will also be introduced to the basics of show producing.

Grades for video packages will depend on the quality of the pitch, reporting, shooting, writing, and editing. Students will have an opportunity to revise packages based on the instructor’s notes. Successful Final Project Pilots will look professional with every member of the team contributing.

**lll. Description of Assignments**

Each student will produce four enterprise videos. Teams will produce a News Pilot for the Final Project. Team responsibilities include: A title, editing the open for the show, designing a logo, writing the rundown and the teases and transitions, anchoring in the studio. Throughout the semester there will be in-class exercises and homework assignments. Class participation matters: Arrive on time (traffic isn’t an excuse), stay tuned, and join discussions. If a student is going to be absent for any reason, an explanation must be emailed to the instructor as far in advance as possible.

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

Package 1 (1:30-2:00) 9 a.m., Sept. 10 (Week 4)

Package 2 (1:30-2:00) 9 a.m., Oct. 1 (Week 7)

Package 3 (1:45-2:15) 9 a.m., Oct. 22 (Week 10)

Package 4 (1:45-2:15) 9 a.m., Nov. 12 (Week 13)

Record Pilot Time TBD (Week 15)

Pilot Screening 11 a.m., Dec. 10

**IV. Grading**

**a. Breakdown of Grade**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ASSIGNMENT | PERCENT OF GRADE |
| PACKAGE 1 | 15 |
| PACKAGE 2 | 15 |
| PACKAGE 3 | 15 |
| PACKAGE 4 | 15 |
| IN-CLASS, HW | 15 |
| PARTICIPATION | 5 |
| PILOT | 20 |
| **TOTAL** | **100** |

**b. Grading Scale**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 95% to 100%: A | 80% to 83%: B- | 67% to 69%: D+ |
| 90% to 94%: A- | 77% to 79%: C+ | 64% to 66%: D |
| 87% to 89%: B+ | 74% to 76%: C | 60% to 63%: D- |
| 84% to 86%: B | 70% to 73%: C- | 0% to 59%: F |

**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**

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified before the start of class.

B. Assignments will be submitted via email. The subject line must have the course number J552. Scripts and other written assignments will be submitted as Word documents. Videos will be submitted as YouTube links. **All videos must be accompanied by the script and every word of each sound bite (SOT) must be written out in the script.**

**VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

There is no textbook for this class.

**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**](http://www.annenbergdl.org/) for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s [Information Technology Services](http://itservices.usc.edu/wireless/support/) website.

**VIII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/20/18 – 11/30/18)**

**Friday, September 7:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, September 7:** 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 11**: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001

**Friday, October 5:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, October 5:** Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

**Friday, November 9:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

**IX. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

***Important note to students:*** *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 1 — Aug. 20**

-Introductions

--Course expectations

--Syllabus review

--Thinking video

--Examples of Natural Sound Stories

--Finding and pitching stories

--The written pitch—what to include

--The required process for every package: 1) Research 2) Pitch 3) Shoot 4) Log 5) Write 6) Edit

A script MUST accompany every package.

Homework:

1) Write two pitches for Package #1. (1:30-1:45). This first assignment will be a natural sound profile of someone significant, someone who makes a difference. To underscore the importance of audio and video, the story will be told **without** the voice of the reporter. What you shoot, the variety of locations you shoot, and the interviews will be your only story-telling tools. The aim is to reinforce an important lesson early in the semester—always shoot much more footage than you think you need. And it’s not just how MUCH you shoot but WHAT you shoot.

Email the two written pitches as an attachment BEFORE class starts. Be prepared to pitch them in class.

2) Bring camera kit

**WEEK 2 — Aug. 27**

PCK 1 Natural Sound Profile pitches (oral and written)

How to shoot an interview

Examples of video interviews

Video Interview exercise

Best practices for script writing

Writing exercise

HW: Shoot PCK 1 (NOTE—NO CLASS NEXT WEEK—LABOR DAY HOLIDAY)

**WEEK 3 — Sept. 3 (NO CLASS-LABOR DAY HOLIDAY)**

**WEEK 4 — Sept. 10**

Screen PCK 1 Natural Sound Profile. Email script as Word attachment and include YouTube link to video

Media Center Tips

--iNews essentials

--Work Flow Keynote

--Examples of good Day-of-Air packages/reports

--Tips for reporting on deadline

--Shooting a standup

HW: 1) 2 pitches for PCK 2 (written and oral)

2) One of the best ways to learn about standups and live shots is to study the pros. Watch a half hour national newscast **AND** a half hour local newscast. For EACH STORY in BOTH newscasts, write the name of the reporter and the subject. Write your observations about the live shot and/or recorded standup—include comments about the location, framing, delivery, appearance, movement (camera and/or reporter), and content. Are there differences between network and local reporters? What lessons did you learn about what to do and what NOT to do? You may write as an essay or bullet points. One page should be sufficient.

3) Bring camera kit

**WEEK 5 — Sept. 17**

Present 2 written and oral pitches for PCK 2

Due: written analysis of live shots and standups from local and national newscasts

Discuss observations of live shots and standups

Live shot tips

Live shot exercise

HW: Begin shooting PCK 2

**WEEK 6 — Sept. 24**

Progress report on PCK 2: What have you shot? What’s left? Problems/concerns?

Video script writing tips

Dissecting a well-written script

Script writing exercise

HW: PCK 2 due

**WEEK 7 — Oct. 1**

Screen PCK 2. Email script as Word attachment and include YouTube link to video

Pilot Season:

--Examples of student news pilots

--Discuss ideas for themes, topics

--Team responsibilities

--Teams selected

--Peer/Self Evaluations

--Team members meet/share ideas

HW: 1) 2 pitches for PCK 3 (written and oral)

2) Teams present preliminary ideas for pilot

3) Bring camera kit

**WEEK 8 — Oct. 8**

Present 2 written and oral pitches for PCK 3

Teams present preliminary ideas for pilot

Live shot exercise with roll cue

HW: 1) PCK 3 Progress report: What have you shot? What’s left? Problems/concerns?

2) Pilot Team progress report

3) Bring camera kit

**WEEK 9 — Oct. 15**

PCK 3 Progress Report

Pilot Team progress report

Shooting practice: sharpening your skills

Good examples of sequences

Shooting exercise

Writing on deadline exercise

**WEEK 10 — Oct. 22**

Screen PCK 3 Email script as Word attachment and include YouTube link to video

Show Producing

-Responsibilities: from morning meeting to showtime

-Creating a rundown

-Anatomy of a newscast

-Rundown exercise

HW: 1) 2 written and oral pitches for PCK 4

2) Bring camera kit

**WEEK 11 — Oct. 29**

Present 2 written and oral pitches for PCK 4

Pilot team progress reports

Vocal Delivery Tips

Live shot exercise with hecklers

HW: Work on PCK 4

**WEEK 12 — Nov. 5**

PCK 4 Progress reports: What have you shot? What’s left? Problems/concerns?

Logo designs

Script Doctor exercise: Read an unedited script. Make it better.

HW: 1) PCK 4

2) Pilot Logo design

3) Preliminary rundown for pilot

**WEEK 13 — Nov. 12**

Screen PCK 4 Email script as Word attachment and include YouTube link to video

Teams present logo design

Teams present preliminary rundown

Media Center Studio Tour: cameras, anchor locations, touch screen, green screen, and interview couch

HW: 1) Rundown in iNews including text for all introductions and tags (a place for each team’s pilot will be created in iNews)

2) Bring camera kit

**WEEK 14 — Nov. 19**

Review rundowns

Live shot exercise with interview

**WEEK 15 — Nov. 26**

Record Pilot in Media Center Studio

**STUDY DAYS Dec. 1-4**

**FINAL EXAM PERIOD — Dec. 10, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

Pilot project and self/peer evaluations due by 11 a.m.

Screen pilots, possibly with popcorn

A look back at the semester

**X. Policies and Procedures**

**Additional Policies**

Multi-tasking is a required skill for journalists. But while in this class, laptops and phones can be used only if relevant to the in-class lesson.

**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

**XI. About Your Instructor**

Barbara Pierce has been teaching graduate and undergraduate courses at USC Annenberg School of Journalism since 2011. She’s also a writing coach in the student-run newsroom. For more than 25 years she was a producer for CBS News, working primarily for the CBS Evening News. She also produced segments for Sunday Morning, CBS This Morning, and 60 Minutes II. She covered breaking news and produced investigative reports as well as features. She was Senior Producer for the documentary, “Lavender Scare,” about the federal government’s persecution of gays in the McCarthy era. The film won ten Best Documentary awards at film festivals in 2017. She (with Vince Gonzales) received an Alfred I. DuPont-Columbia University Award and two National Emmys for Investigative Reporting. She has a Masters Degree from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a Bachelor of Arts from Williams College.