



JOUR 206 Community Reporting 1 Unit

Spring 2020 — Wednesdays

8-11:50 a.m./11 a.m.-2:50 p.m./2-5:50 p.m.

Sections: 21015/21017/21019

Location: Media Center, Wallis Annenberg Hall

Instructor: Henry Fuhrmann

Office: Media Center

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Info: hfuhrman@usc.edu; 818-970-2960 (voice/text)

I. Course Description

This course gives journalism majors hands-on experience in writing digital news and social media. It is taught in the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism's state-of-the-art Media Center in Wallis Annenberg Hall. Students work four hours a week for Annenberg Media to fulfill this lab shift, which runs concurrently with the core journalism courses Reporting and Writing I and Reporting and Writing II. The practicum is credit/no-credit.

The class meets in the Media Center at Wallis Annenberg Hall, outside of ANN205C.

II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment

- Identify elements that make a story newsworthy for different audiences
- Identify diverse sources and develop story ideas in a specific community
- Write news briefs and stories on deadline and in accordance with professional industry standards, under the guidance of student editors and faculty and in collaboration with other student reporters and editors
- Create content for digital and social platforms on deadline and in accordance with professional industry standards and in collaboration with other student reporters and editors
- Apply principles of ethics in real-life news situations

III. Description of Assignments

Students in this course fulfill a weekly lab shift of four consecutive hours in the Media Center at Wallis Annenberg Hall. Students will report and write news stories as assigned by student editors and with the support of faculty and coaches for publication on *uscannenbergmedia.com* and Annenberg Media social media platforms. At the beginning of the semester, students will participate in mandatory newsroom training. Students will write a handoff note at the end of their shifts describing what they did during their time. Failure to submit a handoff note in Trello (the newsroom system) means a student will not get credit for that shift and must repeat it.

Student duties include:

- Generating story ideas
- Finding and maintaining source lists
- Conducting research and interviews
- Writing news briefs, social media posts and longer stories
- Writing handoff notes for other reporters and editors summarizing their progress on stories

Students are required to keep up on the news by reading a variety of news outlets, listening to local and national radio or podcasts, and watching local and national news.

IV. Grading

This class is about hands-on learning. It is designed to give you practical experience in a newsroom. In order to succeed in this class, you will need to attend your shift and complete the tasks assigned to you, including a shift handoff note to be done before you leave the Media Center. The student-led news outlets that make up Annenberg Media are counting on you. If you must miss a shift because of documented illness or emergency, you must notify your instructor and student editors via the newsroom Slack channel and make up the session within two weeks (religious holidays are exempt, as are some other limited circumstances). Please arrive on time. If you are late, you will not get credit for the shift and must make it up. Do not schedule interviews or assignments for other classes during this time period or you will not receive credit and must make up the shift.

This class is a credit/no-credit class. You will not receive a letter grade for this class. However, you will be assessed on your effort and output, and the aim is to produce publishable work. That work could help you if you are seeking a job in a professional newsroom or as a student manager with Annenberg Media in subsequent semesters. You cannot pass this class without doing the hands-on work on site. You will need to check your USC email and Slack regularly.

V. Assignment Submission Policy

Students will work under the guidance of student editors and with the support of faculty, instructors and coaches. Every week, you should arrive with your own story ideas. Instructors will discuss current stories and review the previous week's work. All students must complete shift handoff notes in Trello before they leave the Media Center. You should check in with your instructor and student editors before you leave. If you do not complete a handoff note, you will not receive credit for your shift.

VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

You will be expected to arrive for your shift with a knowledge of what is happening in local and national news. You will write in accordance with AP style.

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.

VIII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/13/20 — 5/1/20)

Friday, Jan. 31: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Friday, Jan. 31: Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

Tuesday, Feb. 4: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, Feb. 28: 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 3 (or the 20% mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, Feb. 28: 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, April 3: Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

IX. 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 or guest speaker availability.

Week 1 — Jan. 15

- Onboarding and overview: Meet the Media Center director and executive editor. Review previous student work and Annenberg Media's greatest hits.
- Getting organized: Obtain a log-in for the Annenberg publishing system. Get on Slack and Trello. Follow Annenberg Media on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Review the Annenberg Media workflow.
- Lecture: "News Writing for the Media Center." Topics include ledes, the nut graf and basic story structure. We'll review examples from outside publications and analyze a sample breaking news story for a brief writing exercise.

Week 2 — Jan. 22

- More introductions: Meet your student editors for your weekly shift.
- Lecture: "Tips for Handoffs." We'll use the sample breaking news story from Week 1 to show how to summarize basic facts, use quotes and develop "story-fied" text for handoffs to Media Center reporters and editors working later in the news cycle.
- Lecture: "So You're a Reporter ... Now What?" Topics include identifying yourself as an Annenberg reporter; setting up and conducting interviews; reviewing Media Center ethics guidelines; covering sensitive topics; dealing with legal issues; mastering style and language basics.
- Bookmarks: Media Center guides (click the links):
 - [USC Annenberg Media Resources](#) — links to schedules, tools, guidelines, etc.
 - [Legal Guide](#) — writing about crime, minors, courts. Using anonymous sources.
 - [Guide to Thoughtful Language](#) — writing about age, disability, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality. Cautions on using obscenities, profanities, vulgarities.
 - [11 Style Rules to Know Now](#): Review of AP style. Using Amy the Stylebot in Slack.

Week 3 — Jan. 29

- Getting started in the Arc Composer publishing system: File a sample story using dummy copy and photos. Write a headline, subheadline, caption, hyperlink.
- Lecture: "How to Pitch a Story." What is an Annenberg Media story? Who is our audience? How does this translate into a pitch? Other topics: the typical shift schedule, filing pitches and reviewing story assignments in Trello, how to find stories.
- Lecture: "Annenberg Media Ethics and Guidelines." Topics include anonymous sources, corrections, conflicts of interest, privacy rights, personal politics, verification.
- Bookmarks: Media Center resources from the day's lectures (click the links):
 - [Media Center Ethics Guidelines](#) — a guide to practices and the workplace environment.
 - [Resources and Links: Pitching and Researching Stories](#) — writing a solid pitch, working with polls, tips for fact checking and verification, USC contact and expert lists.

Week 4 — Feb. 5

The student-led Media Center newsroom is up and running fully. You will work on stories as assigned by the editors. You are also encouraged to file your own story pitches to Trello the night before or arrive for your weekly shift prepared to share your story ideas. You will need to write a handoff note at the end of your shift.

Week 5 — Feb. 12

Newsroom production continues.

Week 6 — Feb. 19

Newsroom production continues.

Week 7 — Feb. 26

Newsroom production continues.

Week 8 — March 4

Newsroom production continues.

Week 9 — March 11

Newsroom production continues.

Spring Break — Week of March 16-20

**** No Classes ****

Week 10 — March 25

Newsroom production continues.

Week 11 — April 1

Newsroom production continues.

Week 12 — April 8

Newsroom production continues.

Week 13 — April 15

Newsroom production continues.

Week 14 — April 22

Newsroom production continues.

Week 15 — April 29

Newsroom production concludes.

Wrap party – Monday, May 4

You're invited to the Annenberg Media wrap party.

X. Policies and Procedures**Additional Policies**

Please see the clearly stated policies above. You will need to check your USC email and Slack regularly as well as follow the preceding rules about lab shifts.

Internships

Internships cannot be substituted for the Media Center practicum.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

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,” 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

Counseling and Mental Health — (213) 740-9355 — 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

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

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline — 1 (800) 273-8255 — 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) — (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours — 24/7 on call
<https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault/>

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) — (213) 740-5086 | Title IX — (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information and any other characteristic that may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation and violation of interim measures.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment — (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs — (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/ notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology and support for individual needs.

Campus Support and Intervention— (213) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu/

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC — (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, diversity liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation and various resources for students.

USC Emergency — UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 — 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety — UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 — 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-and-awards>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Breaking Bread Program [undergraduate students only]
<https://undergrad.usc.edu/faculty/bread/>

The Breaking Bread Program is designed to provide individual undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet and have scholarly discussions with faculty members outside the normal classroom setting. Through this program, students and faculty enjoy good company and great conversation by literally “breaking bread” over a meal together, and USC will pick up the tab. Your meal event can take place anywhere outside the normal classroom setting. Your venue can be a restaurant or eatery on or off campus.

XI. About Your Instructor

Henry Fuhrmann, who is in his fourth year as an adjunct instructor at Annenberg, worked as an editor at the Los Angeles Times from 1990 to 2015. As an assistant managing editor, he led the print and digital copy desks and chaired the newspaper's standards and practices committee. Fuhrmann was the first chief of the Times' morning copy desk, established in 2007 to serve *latimes.com*, and helped develop newsroom guidelines for publishing online. Before entering the news business, he studied engineering at Caltech and UCLA and worked as a science writer at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Fuhrmann holds two degrees in journalism: a B.A. from Cal State Los Angeles and an M.S. from Columbia University. He is a member of the executive board of ACES: The Society for Editing and the national advisory board of the Asian American Journalists Association.