



JOUR 517: Advanced Investigative Reporting
4 Units

Spring 2020 – Mondays – 12-3:20 p.m.

Section: 21110D

Location: ASC 331

Instructor: Mark Schoofs

Office: ANN 204-A

Office Hours: Thursdays, 12-4 p.m.

Contact Info: schoofs@usc.edu, 917-921-2022

I. Course Description

In this hands-on class, you will execute an original, substantial work of investigative reporting. Through that process — through running into walls and finding ways around, over, and under them — you will learn some of the real challenges investigative reporters face, and how to handle them.

This course will also teach you high-level skills that even many experienced journalists lack: digital security; how to meet sources in ways that that can't be surveilled; the ways in which powerful people and institutions try to undermine investigative journalists; how the law can help you — and hurt you; pitfalls that can lead to bad investigative journalism; innovative ways of sourcing and documenting; and undercover reporting. And you will learn how to organize your material — a huge challenge on a project that can take months or even years — and how to write explosive stories.

I will act as your editor and treat you as if you were members of a real investigations team. I will expect from you persistence, rigor, creativity, and a drive. You can expect from me professional-level guidance on strategizing about reporting and writing, [radically candid](#) feedback on what is going well and what needs improvement, and rigorous editing.

To enter this course, you must have a story proposal approved by the instructor, and it is *highly* recommended that you have taken JOUR 539 "Introduction to Investigative Reporting."

While this is a journalism course, students in related fields (for example, documentary students in SCA) can enroll with permission of the instructor. Exceptional undergraduates may also be accepted.

II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment

The main objective, by far, is to learn how to report and produce a work of investigative journalism, which you will learn by doing. The assessment is the story (in text, audio, or video) that you produce by the end of the course. This story forms the lion's share of your grade.

In addition, learning objectives include:

- Understand and implement basic security protocols (password manager, 2FA, VPN, Signal)
- Understand news gathering laws (as opposed to publishing laws) and how they can trip up journalists
- Know how a leak investigation is conducted and how to protect sensitive sources.

- Execute finding secure location for an interview
- Understand how powerful people and institutions fight back against investigative reporters
- Deploy expository and narrative writing styles

These skills will be assessed mainly through short assignments, pop quizzes, readings, and class discussion.

It is highly recommended that students have taken JOUR 539 “Introduction to Investigative Reporting.”

All students will need to submit a story proposal and gain approval from the instructor to take this course.

III. Course Notes

You mainly learn by doing — by reporting and producing a substantial work of investigative reporting. So this course is hard. Bring your ambition, smarts, and tenacity.

NB: This syllabus is a guide, but readings and assignment will change. You must thoroughly read any and all emails the instructor sends to your USC email account.

Finally, this class has a policy of no screens. Yes, you should bring your laptop to class, because occasionally we will do exercises that require going online. But in general you will not be on your phone, laptop, or any other screen. Please see below: “IX Laptop Policy.” **NOTE: This policy means that you must print out the readings and bring them to class.**

IV. Description and Assessment of Assignments

The most important assignment is the work of investigative journalism that you will pursue over the course of the semester. You will provide regular, written updates, and you will provide multiple drafts starting no later than mid-term.

There will be other assignments, ranging from implementing security protocols to scouting a secure meeting place, from writing a narrative scene to a variety of pop quizzes.

V. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	% of Grade
Class participation	15%
Pop quizzes	10%
Assignments	30%
Final story	45%
TOTAL	100%

b. Grading Scale

95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
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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

Journalism

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.

d. Grading Timeline

In general, assignments will be graded and returned within one week.

VI. Assignment Submission Policy

- 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 and also email to schoofs@usc.edu. All text assignments must be submitted in Microsoft Word. No PDFs!

Students are encouraged to submit their work for consideration to Annenberg Media or the Daily Trojan, or pitch it to mainstream media outlets. Visit <http://bit.ly/SubmitAnnenbergMedia> for more information about that submission and review process and email Daily Trojan news editors at dt.city@gmail.com for more on how to pitch your work to the campus newspaper.

VII. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Required textbooks:

The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law, by Associated Press

Bad Blood, By John Carreyrou

The Elements of Style, by Strunk and White

Additional required reading: There will frequently be additional reading material, usually distributed online. Much of this material will be investigative stories/case studies. You will be expected to read this material, and bring in written questions about it.

Other resources: If you need access to broadcast equipment or Web-server space not accessible to you through another class or learning lab, please work with your instructor as soon as possible.

News consumption: You should read at least one daily newspaper every day, review online news resources daily, and be familiar with daily news broadcasts.

VIII. Laptop Policy

The class will have a policy of no screens. Yes, you should bring your laptop to class, because occasionally we will do exercises that require going online. (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.)

But at all other times, phones, laptops, and other electronic devices must be put away. Why? With a hat tip to Professor Gabe Kahn, the following will help explain:

- [“Why you should take notes by hand – not on a laptop”](#)
- [“The Case for Banning Laptops in the Classroom”](#)
- Studies of the late Stanford University Professor Cliff Nass that show the dangers of multitasking (summarized in this [NPR segment](#))
- [“How Smartphones Hijack Our Minds: Research suggests that as the brain grows dependent on phone technology, the intellect weakens”](#)
- The *Los Angeles Times* article on an [“off the grid” policy](#).
- [“The Myth of Multitasking”](#)

Please note: The no-screens policy means that when assigned a reading from the web, you need to bring a printout to class.

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.

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

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

Friday, January 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, February 4: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund for Session 001

Friday, February 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 three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, February 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

X. 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.

Before the first class: read everyone’s story proposal, which the instructor will email to you, and be prepared to present and discuss *your* story proposal in class on the first day.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 Date: 1/13	Course overview Presentation of proposals — discussion of reporting challenges	HOMEWORK In the whole semester, these first weeks have the least assignments and the most free time — so use these weeks focus on your reporting! Write a brief reporting update detailing what you have learned and obstacles you face. READING TBD.	Reporting update do 5 p.m., Fri., Jan. 31.
Week 2 Date: 1/20	NO CLASS	MLK DAY	
Week 3 Date: 1/27	Protecting the ultra-sensitive source: How to reach out, where to meet, how to communicate.	HOMEWORK Scout out a location to meet a source. Write a description of where	Location assignment due 9 a.m., Mon., Feb. 3. Graded.

	<p>Guest lecturer: Maura Godinez, former undercover CIA spy.</p>	<p>you decided to meet and why.</p> <p>READING Bartnicki v. Vopper: https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/532/514/</p> <p>Top Secret NSA Report Details Russian Hacking Effort Days Before 2016 Election: https://theintercept.com/2017/06/05/top-secret-nsa-report-details-russian-hacking-effort-days-before-2016-election/</p> <p>Arrest Warrant for Reality Winner: https://www.justice.gov/opa/press-release/file/971331/download</p>	
		<p>FBI interview with Reality Winner: https://ia800808.us.archive.org/7/items/RealityWinnerFBIInterview/Reality%20Winner%20FBI%20interview.pdf</p> <p>How the Intercept Outed Reality Winner: https://blog.erratasec.com/2017/06/how-intercept-outed-reality-winner.html</p> <p>Government's sentencing memorandum: https://www.courthouse.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/doj-sentencing-memo-winner.pdf</p>	

		<p>Winner's sentencing memorandum: https://www.courthouse.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/winner-sentencing-memo.pdf</p> <p>Reality Winner, Former N.S.A. Translator, Gets More Than 5 Years in Leak of Russian Hacking Report: https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/23/us/reality-winner-nsa-sentence.html</p>	
<p>Week 4 Date: 2/3</p>	<p>Anatomy of a leak investigation.</p> <p>Law of newsgathering: Bartnicki, espionage act, CFAA, hidden cameras</p> <p>Guest lecturer: David Laufman, former head of Counterintelligence and Export Control Section.</p>	<p>HOMEWORK Write first draft of your story, based on reporting you have now. At the end, append a description of what you hope to get and how you will make your story more powerful.</p> <p>READING Surveillance Self-Defense: https://ssd.eff.org/en/playlist/want-security-starter-pack#playlist</p>	<p>First draft due 9 a.m., Mon., Feb. 10. Graded.</p>
<p>Week 5 Date: 2/10</p>	<p>Digital security: How to protect yourself and your sources</p>	<p>HOMEWORK Implement the following: Password manager, 2FA, VPN, Privacy across social media, Signal. For those of you who are not secure, this is a massive, time-consuming effort. But do it! Your own security — and those of your sources — depends on it. I will conduct random spot checks.</p> <p>READING The Elements of Style.</p>	<p>Finish securing yourself digitally by 9 a.m., Mon., Feb. 24.</p>

		George Orwell, Politics and the English Language	
Week 6 Date: 2/17	NO CLASS	PRESIDENT'S DAY	
Week 7 Date: 2/24	How to write: expository	<p>HOMEWORK Write the first 500 words of your story in an expository style: An explosive lede followed by a strong and lucid nut section.</p> <p>READING American Mercenaries: https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/aramroston/mercenaries-assassination-us-yemen-uae-spear-golan-dahlan.</p> <p>Go to https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/washington-post-notably-work-katherine-boo and read these three stories: "Invisible Lives: D.C.'s Troubled System for the Retarded: Forest Haven Is Gone, But the Agony Remains," "System Loses Lives and Trust," and How the Dead Were Found."</p>	First 500 words due 5 p.m., Fri., Feb. 28. Graded.
Week 8 Date: 3/2	How to write: narrative	<p>HOMEWORK Write a second draft, highlighting a narrative section.</p>	Second draft due: 9 a.m., Mon., Mar. 16.
Week 9 Date: 3/9	Writing workshop: Bring your opening 750 words class	<p>HOMEWORK Report! Only six weeks to go.</p> <p>Set up a DocumentCloud account</p> <p>READING TBD</p>	
Spring Break	NO CLASSES	SPRING BREAK	

Dates: 3/16-3/20			
<p>Week 10 Date: 3/23</p>	<p>Fact-checking and bulletproofing. Using DocumentCloud.</p> <p>Private facts.</p>	<p>HOMEWORK</p> <p>Load source documents into DocumentCloud and start linking in your draft. REMEMBER TO REDACT PERSONAL INFORMATION</p> <p>READING</p> <p>I read 1,182 emergency room bills this year. Here's what I learned. https://www.vox.com/health-care/2018/12/18/18134825/emergency-room-bills-health-care-costs-america</p> <p>Danger: Learn at Your Own Risk. http://media.philly.com/storage/special_projects/lead-paint-poison-children-asbestos-mold-schools-philadelphia-toxic-city.html</p>	
		<p>David Farenthold tells the behind-the-scenes story of his year covering Trump. https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/david-farenthold-tells-the-behind-the-scenes-story-of-his-year-covering-trump/2016/12/27/299047c4-b510-11e6-b8df-600bd9d38a02_story.html?utm_term=.236ab0548f4c</p> <p>Lost Mothers: https://www.propublica.org/article/lost-mothers-maternal-</p>	

		health-died-childbirth-pregnancy	
<p>Week 11 Date: 3/30</p>	<p>Innovative ways of documenting and sourcing.</p> <p>Possible guest lecturer: TBD.</p>	<p>HOMEWORK Write near-final draft, with links to underlying material.</p> <p>READING The Mirage Tavern: Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=35&v=pPt2y4VCxtQ</p> <p>On this site, http://dlib.nyu.edu/undercover/mirage-pamela-zekman-zay-n-smith-chicago-sun-times, read the following articles: “I- Our Bar Uncovers Payoffs, Tax Gyps,” “II- Cheating the Taxpayer - 'Mr. Fixit' Tells How,” “XV - Ex-Cop in Huge Vending Skim”</p> <p>Chicago Sun-Times Pulitzers: was the Mirage a deception? (Note: no need to circle sources.) http://sites.dlib.nyu.edu/undercover/sites/dlib.nyu.edu.undercover/files/documents/uploads/editors/CJR_1979JulAug_pg16.pdf</p> <p>40 years later, reporters remember how they bought a bar to expose corruption. (Note: no need to circle sources.) https://chicago.suntimes.com/news/40-years-later-reporters-remember-how-they-bought-a-bar-to-expose-corruption/</p>	<p>Near final draft due 9 a.m., Mon., Apr. 6.</p>

		<p>On this page, https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/tony-horwitz, read “9 To Nowhere -- These Six Growth Jobs Are Dull, Dead-End, Sometimes Dangerous: They Show How '90s Trends Can Make Work Grimmer For Unskilled Workers” (Please do circle sources.)</p>	
<p>Week 12 Date: 4/6</p>	<p>Undercover reporting. (Mirage Tavern, private prisons)</p> <p>Ethics</p>	<p>HOMEWORK Report to fill final holes in your story.</p> <p>READING The Price of Nice Nails: https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/10/nyregion/at-nail-salons-in-nyc-manicurists-are-underpaid-and-unprotected.html</p> <p>Perfect Nails, Poisoned Workers. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/11/nyregion/nail-salon-workers-in-nyc-face-hazardous-chemicals.html?mtrref=www.nytimes.com&gwh=495DD837DAECE6FB258FFBC5ED9E651D&gwt=pay</p> <p>What the ‘Times’ Got Wrong About Nail Salons. https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2015/07/25/nail-salons-new-york-times-got-wrong/</p> <p>Rebuttal to The NYRB’s Article on NYT Nail Salon Series. https://www.nytco.com/press/rebuttal-to-</p>	

the-nybrs-article-on-nyt-nail-salon-series/

The New York Times' Nail Salons Series Was Filled with Misquotes and Factual Errors. Here's Why That Matters. (Part 1)

<https://reason.com/blog/2015/10/27/new-york-times-nail-salon-unvarnished>

How The New York Times' Flawed Reporting on Nail Salons Closed Opportunities For Undocumented Immigrants (Part 2).

<https://reason.com/blog/2015/10/28/new-york-times-nir-nail-undocumented>

The New York Times Says Working in Nail Salons Causes Cancer and Miscarriages. The Evidence Says Otherwise. (Part 3)

<https://reason.com/blog/2015/10/29/nail-salon-health-cancer-miscarriage-nir>

New Questions on Nail Salon Investigation, and a Times Response.

[https://publiceditor.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/11/06/new-questions-on-nail-salon-investigation-and-a-times-response/?module=BlogPost-Title&version=Blog%20Main&contentCollectio n=Opinion&action=Clic](https://publiceditor.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/11/06/new-questions-on-nail-salon-investigation-and-a-times-response/?module=BlogPost&Title&version=Blog%20Main&contentCollection=Opinion&action=Clic)

		k&pgtype=Blogs&region=Body A Rape on Campus. http://web.archive.org/web/20141119200349/http://www.rollingstone.com/culture/features/a-rape-on-campus-20141119 Everything We Know About the UVA Rape Case. http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2014/12/everything-we-know-uva-rape-case.html	
Week 13 Date: 4/13	Pitfalls (bad investigative reporting)	HOMEWORK Work on final draft READING TBD	
Week 14 Date: 4/20	How to work with lawyers	HOMEWORK Work on final draft	Final draft due 9 a.m., Mon., Apr. 27
Week 15 Date: 4/27	Presentation of final stories Submit course evaluations How to get a job Recap of class		
FINAL EXAM PERIOD Date: Friday, 5/8, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.	Summative experience		

XI. Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

Students are expected to read their USC email for messages from the instructors. Sometimes, readings or assignments will be changed, and it will be no excuse not to have read the email. Attendance is critical, because the discussion and in-class exercises are major parts of learning in this course. For field assignments, you will be representing USC, so you must conduct yourself in a professional and respectful manner.

Communication

Always feel welcome to reach out to the instructor via email or, if urgent, text. I will almost always reply within 24 hours, sooner if it is urgent.

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 or public relations class.

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, 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

studenthealth.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, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call

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 which 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.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

uscsa.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) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources>

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.

XII. About Your Instructor

Pulitzer Prize-winner Mark Schoofs [leads](#) investigative journalism at the USC Annenberg School of Journalism. Over his 30-year career, he edited Chicago's lesbian and gay newsweekly, *The Windy City Times*; [won a Pulitzer Prize](#) for his reporting on AIDS in Africa at New York's *The Village Voice*; [shared in another Pulitzer Prize](#) at *The Wall Street Journal* for reporting on 9/11 from Ground Zero; wrote the [opening](#) and [closing](#) stories in a *Wall Street Journal* series on Medicare fraud that was a [finalist for the Pulitzer Prize](#); oversaw complex investigations at ProPublica;

and launched and led a powerhouse investigative reporting team at digital powerhouse BuzzFeed News. In less than five years, that team, which he built from zero to more than 20 reporters, earned top prizes including a [George Polk Award](#) and a [National Magazine Award](#). His team's work was twice named as a [finalist](#) for the [Pulitzer Prize](#).