**JOUR 579: Journalism Internship**

**1-2 Units**

**Spring 2020 – Online**

**Section:** 21640D

**Instructor: Sarah (Favot) Girardot**

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Contact Info:** [sgirardo@usc.edu](mailto:sgirardo@usc.edu); 617-756-5643 (cell)

**I. Course Description**

Internships are an integral part of your graduate experience because they provide on-the-ground training for what you learn in class. In this online course – there are no formal class meetings -- students secure internships in a variety of professions from text and broadcast journalism, to public relations, both corporate and nonprofit, advertising and a host of other industries which find themselves at the intersection of creativity and communication.

Both traditional and new professional practices across industries are constantly changing.

In your internships, you should learn about the workflow of your respective professions. Your position in your organization will give you good insight for the ebb and flow of all these changes.

This course is intended to give you as much time pursuing your internship, so the classroom work is limited. You will produce short memo/posts that could be suitable for publication. The memo/posts should summarize the tasks you were assigned, started and/or completed, and include any issues (positive and negative) you may have encountered. There is a company analysis and the final is a two- to three-page paper that examines one aspect about the industry in which you have worked, and reflects about your experiences.

You are encouraged to publish your posts and your final paper on your personal blog or resume site, but this is not required.

**II. Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the semester, you will be able to describe a communications workplace and how it is changing, and identify a variety of related jobs, skills, and work styles. You will also learn about yourself and how you work, and what's needed to succeed in future internships and jobs.

**III. Description and Assessment of Assignments**

**Internship memos**: These four posts should be 150-300 words sent through Blackboard. Each post should be a publishable narrative that describes what you did, and includes information about your duties, the people you met, something new you learned or witnessed, and/or problems you may have had or insights you gained. You may add anything else you think is relevant such as a problem and how you resolved it. A more specific description of what each memo should contain is under the Course Schedule.

**Papers:** Students will submittwo papers:

**Company analysis:**

Write a 1,000-word analysis of the media organization where you are working. Starting with the way it fits into the marketplace. For example, is it the number one television station or newspaper in the city? Is it the largest public relations firm in the area? What does it specialize in? Research the organization, including a Web search, and include what has been reported publicly about your company.

This paper should not include proprietary “inside” information. Your paper will be stronger if you can meet with one of the decision makers to gain a better understanding of the company. (For example, what audience is the organization trying to serve, how is it reaching that target group, how does it assess its effectiveness?)

Please submit the paper as a Word document, double-spaced, through Blackboard. This paper constitutes 30% of your grade.

**Final/Ethics assessment**

Write a 1,000-word analysis of one or more ethical issues or problems the newsroom or public relations department faced during your internship. You should feel free to look for ideas in your memos that you have written throughout the term. Describe the issues or problem thoroughly, what principles were considered, and the decision-making process. Who was involved and what options were considered? Include interviews with the decision makers. Analyze the decision using the ethical standards you have learned at Annenberg and the code of ethics for the profession. What was decision and what were the consequences, if any? Was the correct decision made? Defend your conclusions with supporting research. You may also want to include resource material from your classes to support your conclusion. Please submit the paper as a Word document, double-spaced, through Blackboard. This constitutes 30% of your grade.

**IV. Grading**

**a. Breakdown of Grade**

| Assignment | % of Grade |
| --- | --- |
| **Internship memos.** There are four required posts, due roughly every two weeks of your internship, describing your activities and accomplishments. | 40% |
| **Company Analysis:**  A 1,000-word paper on the organization where you are interning and how it fits into the marketplace. (see above) | 30% |
| **Final/Ethics assessment:** a 1,000-word paper on problems you see, how they were resolved and your own evaluation of the ethical standards in making those decisions. (see above) | 30% |
| **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**

Assignments will be graded on grammar, spelling, AP style, clarity, deadlines, conciseness, structure, reasoning, analysis, use of quotes (if applicable), attribution, research, fairness, etc. You must abide by the Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics (<http://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp)>. **Late work is not accepted in this class and will result in a zero on the assignment.**

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”** papers 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”** papers 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”** papers 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”** papers require excessive rewriting, have numerous errors and should not have been submitted. Camera work is unsatisfactory or fails to show important elements.

**“F”** papers 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**

Memos will be graded and returned to students within the week of submission. Papers will be graded and returned within two weeks of submission.

**V. Assignment Submission Policy**

* 1. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking any prior discussion and agreement with me, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F.
  2. Assignments are **ONLY** accepted via Blackboard**.**

**VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

There are no required readings for this course, but as an industry professional, it is key for you to stay current on industry changes and trends.

**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: 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

**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, and unforeseen developments.

**NOTE: All assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. PST on the due dates below.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Topics/Daily Activities | Deliverable/Due Dates |
| Week 1  Dates: 1/13-1/17 | Finalize Internships |  |
| Week 2  Dates: 1/20-1/24 |  | [**MLK Day:** Monday, January 20] |
| Week 3  Dates: 1/27-1/31 | 1st Memo due: Describe the company, how it fits in the marketplace, and your role/duties as an intern. | **Due 1/29** |
| Week 4  Dates: 2/3-2/7 |  |  |
| Week 5  Dates: 2/10-2/14 | 2nd Memo due: What problems have you encountered. Problems or challenges the company is facing and what it’s doing to address them. | **Due 2/12** |
| Week 6  Dates: 2/17-2/21 |  | [**President’s Day:** Monday, February 17] |
| Week 7  Dates: 2/24-2/28 |  |  |
| Week 8  Dates: 3/2-3/6 | Company Analysis Paper | **Due 3/4** |
| Week 9  Dates: 3/9-3/13 |  |  |
| Spring Break  Dates: 3/16-3/20 | No Classes |  |
| Week 10  Dates: 3/23-3/27 | 3rd Memo due: Personality dynamics or problems you’ve faced or witnessed. How were they handled/resolved? | **Due 3/25** |
| Week 11  Dates: 3/30-4/3 |  |  |
| Week 12  Dates: 4/6-4/10 |  |  |
| Week 13  Dates: 4/13-4/17 | 4th Memo due: Has your role as an intern grown, were you given more responsibility or held back? Would you want a full-time job there? | **Due 4/15** |
| Week 14  Dates: 4/20-4/24 |  |  |
| Week 15  Dates: 4/27-5/1 |  |  |
| FINAL EXAM PERIOD  Dates: 5/6-5/13 | Final Ethics Paper | **Due 5/6** |

**X. Policies and Procedures**

**Communication**

I will respond to emails and telephone calls within 24 hours during the work week. On weekends, it will be within 48 hours.

**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 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](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, [policy.usc.edu/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*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](https://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](http://www.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](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](https://equity.usc.edu/), [titleix.usc.edu](http://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](https://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](http://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](https://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](https://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](http://dps.usc.edu/), [emergency.usc.edu](http://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](http://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.

*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 of 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 of the normal classroom setting. Your venue can be a restaurant or eatery on or off-campus.

**XI. About Your Instructor**

Sarah (Favot) Girardot is a freelance journalist with bylines in Bloomberg, The Boston Globe and the Los Angeles Daily News. She was previously an investigative data reporter at a national education news site, The 74. Her areas of expertise are politics, education, and courts. She has a B.A. in English and Communications from the University of Windsor in Windsor, Ontario, Canada and a Master's degree in journalism from Boston University.