



**CNTV-375 Breaking Into the Entertainment Industry**

**Units: 2.0**

**Fall 2020 – Thursday – 4:00pm - 6:50pm**

**Location:** Online

**Instructor:** Steven Brookman (Prof S)

**Office:** Zoom

**Office Hours:** By appointment only: Thursday, 2:30pm – 3:20pm

**Contact Info:** [sbrookma@usc.edu](mailto:sbrookma@usc.edu) | (424) 288-2000

**Student Assistant:** Josie Bullen

**Contact Info:** [bullen@usc.edu](mailto:bullen@usc.edu)

## Course Description

This 14-week course, inclusive of a midterm and final exam, is designed to introduce undergrads to the innerworkings and landscape of Hollywood with the objective of finding a first job and providing students with the toolbox to do so. Students will be learning about the various facets of the entertainment business as it relates to job opportunities and career paths. Additionally, students will be taught the practical skills necessary to network, interview, create a resume, and be mindful in their path to “breaking into” the entertainment industry. This is not a class about how to pitch, audition for a part, or the process of producing content. Rather, it is a class designed to expose students to the multitude of job opportunities at talent agencies, management firms, publicity companies, traditional studios, digital/streaming/OTT companies, financiers and “on set” production jobs (e.g. production assistant), as well as other point of entry positions. Moreover, the class will be highly interactive and will also have guest panelists (“DisLecturees”) who have reached success in various sectors of the entertainment industry.

\* Dis-Lec-ture (noun) | \ Dis' Lek-chər, -shər \ Definition of DisLecture (Entry 1 of 1): 1 A discussion between people + lecture to an audience or class especially for instruction.

Source: Prof S Dictionary est. 2020

## DisLecturees

Speakers will be confirmed before each class via email. Each week you will be expected to research these guests and have a general understanding of their background and current positions in the industry. For each class with a “DisLecturee,” Prof S will designate a “Crew,” who will be required to prepare questions in advance for said guest.

## Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

“The Mailroom” – David Rensin (finish by midterm – an essay for the midterm will be based upon your reading!)

## Recommended Weekly Reading

Variety.com  
HollywoodReporter.com  
Deadline.com  
Indiewire.com

## Recommended Media

*The Player*  
*Swimming with Sharks*  
*The Big Picture*  
*Entourage*  
*Call My Agent! (Dix pour cent)*  
*KCRW's: The Business (podcast)*

## Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Class Participation	100	10
Assignments	300	30
Midterm	250	25
Final	350	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>

### Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

### Assignment Rubrics

100 points = Participation (In-class engagement, questions, and discussion)

300 points = Written Assignments (5 graded assignments, 60 points per submission)

250 points = Midterm

(125 points – Part 1 – In-class Elevator Pitch)

(125 points – Part 2 – Essay)

350 points = Final – 2 Essays (TBD)

### Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments must be submitted through Blackboard by 11:59pm on the due date. \*\*

Late assignments will not be accepted. \*\*

## Additional Policies

- Be prompt and present.
- There are no excused absences. Attendance is required and class participation is expected.\* Please let your Student Assistant know if you will not be able to attend class in advance.  
*\*If you are in a time zone that makes it prohibitive to attend the live class, please reach out to Prof S. to discuss.*
- Students are required to have their cameras on, unless there are exigent circumstances, in which case, please reach out to your Student Assistant to discuss.
- No filming/recording classes.
- No discussing of class conversations outside of the classroom. “What happens in 375, stays in 375.”
- It is the student’s responsibility to know what the next class will consist of and note any alterations to the syllabus.
- All assignments must be submitted electronically via Blackboard by **11:59PM on the due date indicated.**
- By the end of this class, you will have a completed resume that you will work on independently. **Your faculty are neither your resume gurus nor your employment agents. Please see the USC or SCA Career Centers for additional resume and employment support.**
- **Halftime:** There will be a 10 minute break in the middle of each class. Please return to “class” promptly at the time requested by the professor.
- **Office hours:** 2:30-3:30pm every Thursday, prior to class via Zoom. Must be scheduled with the Student Assistant in advance.
- **Lean in and enjoy the 375 experience!**

## Online Learning Format

We will conduct all classes via Zoom. Students are expected to log in on time and have their audio and video feeds enabled at all times unless otherwise instructed. Failure to do so can and may affect your overall grade. Please make certain to find a quiet and private area with a strong internet connection. All assignments will be distributed via email and/or google drive. Please note that per University requirements, all lectures will be recorded by the faculty only and may only be accessed by students upon request.

**Note:** All sessions with guest speakers are confidential to students enrolled in the class. Guest speaker appearances may not be recorded, captured or duplicated in any technical format. Any student caught sharing recordings of guest speakers in any public forum will be brought up to SCA & student judicial review and may be subject to further criminal prosecution.

During Zoom Lectures:

- Keep yourself muted unless called on.
- Camera’s must be on unless otherwise discussed with your professor prior to the lecture.
- If your camera is on, please dress as you would in the classroom, and behave as you would in a professional environment.
- If you have a question for the SA during the lecture, use the Chat function. (The SA will direct the faculty attention to the question if they can’t answer it.)
- If you must ask a question out loud, use the “raise your hand” function on Zoom. A little blue hand will appear so that the SA knows you want to speak. The SA will get my attention and then I will call on you.

## About the Instructor

STEVEN BROOKMAN began his 30+ year career in Hollywood as an entertainment lawyer, joining the boutique Beverly Hills law firm, Bloom Dekom & Hergott as an associate in 1987. There he worked with Hollywood’s top actors, directors, writers, and producers, negotiating their film and TV deals. He also represented and made the employment deals for many of the industry’s most prominent studio executives. He was made a partner at the law firm in 1991.

After a 16-year career at the firm, Steven made the move to Creative Artists Agency (CAA) where he currently serves as a Senior Executive in the Motion Picture Business Affairs group. At CAA, he is responsible for structuring and negotiating today's most sophisticated and cutting-edge deals on behalf of their prestigious talent clients (i.e., actors, directors, writers and producers). He is regularly at the center of the deals involving CAA's packaging of clients for film and television projects.

During his college years, Steven coached junior tournament level tennis players (Steven played for Colgate University) and was also Co-Head of the Freestyle Ski Program at Stratton Mountain, Vermont. Additionally, Steven launched the Colgate Entertainment Group ("CEG") in 2011 and Bates Entertainment Arts and Media ("BEAM") in 2019, which are the schools' respective alumni networks for all aspects of the media and entertainment business. Steven also works with Bates College as a member of their Film Advisory Board.

Steven earned his B.A. from Colgate University and his Juris Doctor from University of California, Berkeley, School of Law.

## Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Deliverables/Due Dates
Week 1 – Aug 20	<p><b>INTRO: Welcome to Hollywood!</b></p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Part 1:</b> Getting to know you. Review syllabus.</p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break.</p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> Getting to know Prof S. A Whole New *COVID* World. The entertainment industry in the midst of a global pandemic and the changes in the job and production landscapes.</p> <p>We will be breaking up into groups (Crews) with whom you will be working throughout the semester. You must come up with a Crew name, inspired by a collective favorite film or TV show.</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> One page (double spaced) – Answer these two questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What makes you unique to a potential employer?</li> <li>2. What are your goals for this class?</li> </ol> <p><b>Assignment 2:</b> Connect with your crew (JB emailing crew assignments). Choose crew leader and crew name. Crew leader to submit name to JB.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM</p>
Week 2 – Aug 27	<p><b>THE WHEEL OF OPPORTUNITY &amp; NETWORKING YOUR WAY THERE</b></p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Part 1:</b> An overview of the Hollywood landscape/infrastructure – job opportunities: s</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Representation companies: talent agencies, management companies, publicity firms, entertainment law firms, business management firms, etc.</li> <li>- Buyers/Financiers: traditional studios (film/tv), networks and digital streaming/OTT companies</li> <li>- Production: PAs, readers, assistants to talent (e.g. actors, directors, writers and producers).</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break.</p> <p>-----</p> <p><b>Part 2:</b> Networking: What is this and how do I do it?</p> <p>Networking (Webster Dictionary): The exchange of information or services among individuals, groups, or institutions; specifically, the cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business.</p> <p>Here’s how – we simply connect the dots with all who have a nexus to the entertainment industry - family members, friends, alumni, on-campus organizations, professional networks and off-campus events. Get outside your comfort zone and play to your strengths.</p> <p>Networking Speakers – TBD</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> Engage in a networking activity – get out of your comfort zone and meet new people outside of your direct network (this is not a graded assignment, but we will be discussing during the next class).</p>

<p><b>Week 3 – Sept 3</b></p>	<p><b>MENTORS: Help Me Help You</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> Networking Discussion. Mentors – What they do and finding a mentor through an organic process. The relationship must be earned. Building and maintaining the mentor/mentee relationship. ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> Speaker Panel - TBD</p>	<p><b>Crew Assignment:</b> One page (double-spaced) essay: Meet with your crew and discuss how you can build a mentor/mentee relationship. What qualities are you looking for in a mentor and how, as a mentee, can you maximize the relationship?  The crew leader will submit the group’s work on Blackboard.  <b>Due Date:</b> Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM.</p>
<p><b>Week 4 – Sept 10</b></p>	<p><b>MINDFULNESS</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> Being present: why it matters and tools for success. ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> Speaker Panel - TBD</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> Complete a 5-minute meditation.</p>
<p><b>Week 5 – Sept 17</b></p>	<p><b>WHAAAATTTT???? ARE THESE JOBS?: The Buyer’s Side and Production Side – Studios/Financiers/Creatives</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> The infrastructure, key executives, creative players, and point of entry jobs. ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> Speaker Panel - TBD</p>	
<p><b>Week 6 – Sept 24</b></p>	<p><b>EQUITY &amp; INCLUSION IN HOLLYWOOD</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> A discussion about the importance of inclusion in Hollywood and the current initiatives increasing DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) onscreen, behind the camera, and in the executive suite. ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> Speaker Panel - TBD</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> One page (double-spaced) essay: Seizing upon the panelists, what was most illuminating to you as it relates to “breaking in” to the entertainment industry?  <b>Due Date:</b> Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM.</p>

<p><b>Week 7 – Oct 1</b></p>	<p><b>LET’S MAKE A DEAL</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> Hollywood is a massive industry with a highly sophisticated level of deal making. Drilling down on revenue streams and deal making – understanding the key deal components. ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> Speaker Panel - TBD</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> Take Home Midterm Exam.</p> <p>Two Parts: - In class elevator pitch preparation - Two-page (double-spaced) essay (Topic – TBD)</p> <p><b>Written Portion:</b> <b>Due Date:</b> Wednesday, Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM.</p> <p><b>In-Class Pitch:</b> <b>Due Date:</b> Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup></p>
<p><b>Week 8 – Oct 8</b></p>	<p><b>MIDTERM EXAM</b> ----- <b>In-class Evaluation</b> – The Elevator Pitch: Each student (a potential hire) will have 30 seconds to pitch themselves to Prof S.</p> <p>Two crews will be scheduled to come in during 30-minute time blocks.</p>	
<p><b>Week 9 – Oct 15</b></p>	<p><b>TIME TO MEET THE TALENT</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> The talent and their representation team. ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> The talent and their representation team.</p>	
<p><b>Week 10 – Oct 22</b></p>	<p><b>THE LANDSCAPE IS A CHANGIN’: Consolidation, Disruption, and Digital/Streamers/OTT Distributors</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> It’s a streaming world now... ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> Speaker Panel – TBD</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> One page (double spaced) discussing one of the premium digital platforms and what interests you most about it.</p> <p><b>Due Date:</b> Wednesday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM.</p>
<p><b>Week 11 – Oct 29</b></p>	<p><b>WHAAAATTTT???? ARE THESE JOBS?: The Representation Side</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> Meet the team: agent, manager, publicist. ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> Speaker Panel – TBD</p>	



<p><b>Week 12 – Nov 5</b></p>	<p><b>RISE UP...</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> Speaker Panel – TBD ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10-minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> Speaker Panel – TBD</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> <b>Part 1:</b> Complete your resume. Please submit on blackboard.  Part 2: Select a prospective employer. Then research the employer and prepare 3 questions that you would ask during your interview.  <b>Due Date:</b> Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM.</p>
<p><b>Week 13 – Nov 12</b></p>	<p><b>IT’S A NEW SET ORDER</b> ----- <b>Part 1:</b> Discussing life on set. Speaker Panel – TBD ----- <b>Halftime:</b> 10 minute break. ----- <b>Part 2:</b> The future of entertainment. Speaker Panel – TBD</p>	<p><b>Assignment:</b> Take Home Exam – Two part final. Details will be given on this day.  <b>Due Date:</b> Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> at 4:00PM.</p>
<p><b>FINAL – Nov 19</b></p>	<p><b>THAT’S A WRAP</b> ----- Final thoughts... you’re on your way!</p>	

## Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### 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” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://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).

### Support Systems:

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

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

*Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710*

Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.

<https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/>

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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 Campus Support & Intervention - (213) 821-4710*

[campussupport.usc.edu](http://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](http://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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)*

[ombuds.usc.edu](http://ombuds.usc.edu)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> <b>FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE IN THE SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX</b></p>
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