



**JOUR 206: Media Center Practicum Live
Production
1 Unit**

Fall 2020 – Tuesdays

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

Section: 21007R/21009R/21011R

Location: Media Center (ANN 102) & Online

Instructor: Justin Pye

Office: ANN 102

Office Hours: By appointment

Contact Info: jjpye@usc.edu

I. Course Description

This course gives journalism majors hands-on experience in broadcast, radio, and digital news. It is usually taught in the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism's state-of-the-art Media Center in Wallis Annenberg Hall, but this semester will begin remote. Students work four hours a week with Annenberg TV News, Annenberg Radio News and annenbergmedia.com 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.

II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment

- Identify elements that make a story newsworthy for different audiences
- Research and verify information for use in news stories on TV, radio and digital platforms including social media
- Write news briefs and stories for radio and TV on deadline and in accordance with professional industry standards under the guidance of student editors and faculty
- Shoot photographs and video and record and edit audio and video for use in news stories on deadline and in accordance with professional industry standards
- Collaborate with other student reporters and editors to cover stories across platforms
- Apply principles of ethics in real-life news situations

III. Description and Assessment of Assignments

Newsrooms around the world have had to quickly adjust to a new normal of remote reporting. Our class work will consist of on-the-job training and experience that mirrors the real world, even in quarantine. Students in this course participate in the production of a daily TV news broadcast, twice-weekly radio broadcast or frequently updated digital platforms including social media. Student reporters will work on tasks as assigned by student editors and with the support of faculty and coaches. Every week students are responsible for bringing in story ideas and writing a hand-off note at the end of their shifts. Failure to submit a hand-off 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 for radio, TV and digital platforms including social media
- Finding sources and conducting interviews
- Shooting video and photos and gathering audio for use in news stories
- Editing video, photos and audio for use in news stories
- Writing news briefs
- Writing for radio and TV broadcasts

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 handover note to be done before you leave the Media Center or virtual newsroom. The student-led news outlets that make up Annenberg Media are counting on you. If you must miss a shift due to documented illness or emergency, you must notify your instructor and student editor(s) 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.

b. Grading Scale and Standards

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 newsroom or as a student manager with Annenberg Media in subsequent semesters. You cannot pass this class without doing hands-on work on site.

V. Assignment Submission Policy

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

VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

You must keep up with the news and follow AP style in your written work.

VII. Laptop Policy

You will have access to Adobe programs for work in the Media Center, along with a free digital subscription to the Los Angeles Times. More information about Media Center policies can be found [here](#). 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 (13 weeks: 8/17/20 – 11/13/20)

Friday, September 4: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Friday, September 4: Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001

Friday, September 4: Last day to drop a class and receive a refund to avoid a mark of "W" on student record and STARS report

Friday, September 4: Last day to purchase or waive tuition refund insurance for fall

Friday, October 2: Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript only. Mark of "W" will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply. [Please drop any course by the end of week three for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

Friday, October 2: Last day to change a Pass/No Pass course to letter grade

Friday, November 6: 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/or guest speaker availability.*

Week 1 — Aug. 18

- Introductions, onboarding and overview. You will be trained and do hand-on exercises to prepare you for the newsroom.

Week 2 — Aug. 25

- Training and hand-on exercises to prepare you for the newsroom.
- 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.

Week 3 — Sept. 1

- Training and practice
- 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 — Sept. 8

The student-led Media Center newsroom is up and running fully (and remotely.) 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 — Sept. 15

Newsroom production continues.

Week 6 — Sept. 22

Newsroom production continues.

Week 7 — Sept. 29

Newsroom production continues.

Week 8 — Oct. 6

Newsroom production continues.

Week 9 — Oct. 13

Newsroom production continues.

Week 10 — Oct. 20

Newsroom production continues.

Week 11 — Oct. 27

Newsroom production continues.

Week 12 — Nov. 3

Newsroom production continues.

Week 13 — Nov. 10

Last week of newsroom production. There is no final for this class, but there will be a wrap party.

X. Policies and Procedures

You must attend every shift to get credit for this class. Religious holidays and documented illness and emergencies are the only exceptions. You must notify your instructor in writing if you will miss your lab session. Missed sessions must be made up within two weeks. You must complete a handoff note in Trello before you leave the Media Center or you will not receive credit for your shift.

Internships

Internships cannot be substituted for work in the Media Center.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

a. Academic Conduct

Plagiarism

Do not plagiarize. It is your responsibility to understand what that means and avoid it. Presenting someone else's words or 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://scampus.usc.edu/b/11-00-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. 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

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 micro-aggressions 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/note takers/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

uscса.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.

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

Justin Pye is a multi-hyphenate producer currently working for NBC News. Formerly, he led editorial for All Def Digital and produced viral content for attn: Most recently, Pye has been producing for BET News.

He is an alum of Morehouse College and the UC Berkeley School of Journalism. Before pursuing his Master's, Pye taught high school English at Worcester Academy in Massachusetts. The well-traveled, nature-lover specializes in character-driven social justice stories and is happiest when using bad grammar with friends and family.