**JOUR 350: Introduction to Sports Media**

**4 Units**

# Fall 2020 – Mondays – 10 a.m.-1:20 p.m.

**Section:** 21179R

**Location:** ANN 404 and Online

# Instructor: Rob Parker

**Office:** ANN 404 and Online

**Office Hours:** Mondays, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

**Contact Info:** [Getrobbednyc@gmail.com](mailto:Getrobbednyc@gmail.com)

# Course Description

Interested in sports media on TV, print, digital or radio? This class will give you insight into all of them. Here students will be able to see which medium could be right for their skill-set as they decide which way to take their next step in a career in sports media. Students will learn how to write and report sports content for the web, TV and radio. Students will learn what makes content compelling and whether must-see or must-read. By semester’s end, a student’s focus in sports media will be clearer.

1. **Student Learning Outcomes**
2. Develop writing and reporting skills in sports media.
3. Create information, thought-provoking and entertaining content across multiple platforms in sports media.
4. **Description and Assessment of Assignments**

There will be weekly written assignments. Most will be either from work done in the classroom or online or based on guest speakers’ experience, or original reporting done by students outside of class. There will also be written quizzes in class, and there will be some deadline writing during class time. There will be a written midterm and final. Both will be based on classroom work and demonstrate the ability to work under pressure situations. A live sports column written on deadline after watching an event in class will serve as the final. There will be a number of guest speakers. Students will cover the speaker and write about them for assignments.

Students will also learn how to debate on TV and deliver smart radio sports-talk. In both cases, there will be in-class instructions. It will count towards weekly assignments.

1. **Grading**
2. **Breakdown of Grade**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assignment** | **% of Grade** |
| Weekly assignments | 50% |
| Hot take quizzes/participation | 10% |
| Midterm | 20% |
| Final | 20% |
| **TOTAL** | **100%** |

1. **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 |

1. **Grading Standards**

The standard will be the same as a major metro newspaper, work good enough to publish.

***Journalism***

All assignments will be edited on a professional basis and you will be judged first on the accuracy, fairness and

completeness 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.

# Assignment Submission Policy

***Late assignments won’t be accepted. It is automatic F and CAN’T be made up.***

1. 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.
2. Assignments must be submitted via email.

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](mailto:dt.city@gmail.com) for more on how

to pitch your work to the campus newspaper.

# Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Current AP Stylebook and The Best of American Sports Writing 2020

# 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.

# 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

# 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.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Topics/Daily Activities | Readings and Homework | Deliverable/Due Dates |
| Week 1  Date: 8/17 | Course and Instructor intro. Role of the media. | Stylebook - read A and  B. American Sportswriting first two  stories | 8/21 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 2  Date: 8/24 | How to cover an event and write a story | Stylebook - read C and  D. American Sportswriting read next  two stories | 8/28 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 3  Date: 8/31 | How to deliver a TV sportscast | Stylebook - read E and  F. American Sportswriting next two  stories | 9/5 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 4  Date: 9/7 | No class: Labor Day |  |  |
| Week 5  Date: 9/14 | How to deliver strong sports-talk radio | Stylebook - read G and  H. American Sportswriting next two  stories | 9/18 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 6  Date: 9/21 | How to debate sports on TV | Stylebook - read I and J. American Sportswriting next two stories | 9/25 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 7  Date: 9/28 | Virtual Field trip: KTLA TV | Stylebook - read K and  L. American Sportswriting next two  stories | 10/2 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 8  Date: 10/5 | Guest speaker: Jaime Maggio KCBS | Stylebook - read M and  N. American Sportswriting next two  stories | 10/9 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 9  Date: 10/12 | How to make social media work for you | Stylebook - read O and  P. American Sportswriting next two  stories | 10/16 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 10  Date: 10/19 | Midterm |  |  |
| Week 11  Date: 10/26 | Virtual Field Trip: Fox Sports Radio | Stylebook - read Q and  R. American Sportswriting next two  stories | 10/30 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 12  Date: 11/2 | Guest speaker: Ryan Hollins, former NBA player | Stylebook - read S and  T. American Sportswriting next two  stories | 11/6 by 1 p.m. |
| Week 13  Date: 11/9 | Writing radio commentary/ Review for final and student evaluations | Stylebook - read U and  V. American Sportswriting next two  stories | 11/13 by 1 p.m. |
| FINAL EXAM PERIOD  Date: 11/23, 8-10 a.m. | Live sports column. You will watch an event on TV and write off of it on deadline. |  |  |

# Policies and Procedures

# Communication

I am available at all times via email (getrobbednyc@gmail.com) and by text (313-948-6100). I will respond within 48 hours. Communication is key.

# 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

1. **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.

# 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.

# About Your Instructor

Rob Parker is a sports analyst for FS1 in Los Angeles. He has a nightly national sports show on Fox Sports Radio. Parker also writes a weekly column for Deadspin.com. Parker, who was born in New York, graduated from Southern Connecticut State University and has a master’s degree from Columbia University.