



JOUR 499: Sports Investigative Reporting **4 units**

Spring 2021 – Mondays – 9 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.

Section: TBD

Location: TBD

Instructor: Gary Cohn

Course Description

Most of our sports writing has been dictated by game coverage and the personalities of sports figures. But many of the today's biggest stories from the world of sports involve events that take place off the field -- from the widespread use of steroids in major league baseball to systemic corruption in professional soccer, from recruiting violations at renowned college basketball programs to the epidemic of concussions in professional football.

The goal of this course is to inspire you and teach the practical reporting, writing and analytical skills needed to do sports investigative stories that have significance well beyond the sports pages. In today's world, sports investigative journalism deserves an in-depth, data-driven investigative approach and compelling multi-media storytelling. And to be truly memorable and have lasting impact, sports investigative journalism needs to be explained not only in terms of who won the game, but in the broader context of our economy, political world, popular culture and society.

This course will also teach you about the special obstacles and dangers in investigating sports in the United States and worldwide and how to successfully navigate those obstacles. Those challenges were rarely faced by our most famous sportswriters from the past, but they are here to stay in our rapidly changing journalism landscape. Lectures, class discussions, guest speakers, hands-on exercises involving interviewing techniques and public records, culminating in an original sports investigative project that we will aim to get published.

Overall Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Generate story ideas for investigative and in-depth stories involving youth sports, high school and college sports and professional sports.
- Conduct in-depth interviews in the world of sports that go beyond the daily scores and personalities to issues involving sports and society and money and power.
- Identify and use documents, databases, the federal Freedom of Information Act and state and local open records laws.
- Write and present in-depth material in a compelling way.

Learning Assessments

The learning objectives will be measured by:

- Detailed student story pitches
- Written and audio interviews
- A report on a significant sports investigative story that includes an interview with the reporter, an analysis of the reporting and writing techniques and a discussion of the obstacles and ethical issues faced
- Analysis of court and public records documents and databases

- Student-led discussions and class participation involving questions of power, economics and ethics surrounding sports
- A midterm that includes essay and short answer questions about the assigned books, cases studies and academic literature
- A final project that includes significant original reporting and research

Description of Assignments

Assignment #1: Suggest and pitch three investigative stories involving sports. Explain why you chose each story, how you would go about reporting each story and why you believe each of these stories would make an original, compelling and important story. Please explain your reasoning and proposed reporting techniques in detail. Your story pitches must include the central themes and story angles to be discussed, the central questions you hope to answer, your target audience, your initial research conducted so far, a summary of previous coverage and how you would advance the story, the general types of interviews needed to tell a balanced story and the types of public documents and databases you plan to use.

Assignment #2: Interview a high school, college or professional athlete, coach, agent, or team executive about issues off the field. The goal of this assignment is to allow you to identify and pursue investigative stories involving sports rather than covering and recapping the latest game. Your write-up should include a summary of what your interviewee told you, numerous exact quotes, how you could use the information in pursuing a sports investigative story and what steps you would take to pursue that story.

Assignment #3: Select in-depth investigative sports story (one that you would aspire to write) and interview the reporter about how he or she got the story idea, gathered the information, and wrote the article. This must be an investigative article or series, but not an editorial or a column. Cite your reasons for selecting the article. In your interview and in your paper, stress how the reporter came up with the story idea and how he gathered the information; public records used; interviewing techniques, the writing process, also discuss any obstacles that came up and how the reporter overcame those obstacles. The interview must be done in person or on the telephone (not by email, though you may use email for follow-up questions). Approximately 1,000 words. This assignment could also include a multi-media component, such as a video or audio clip.

Assignment #4: Use of Court Records – Go to a local courthouse and identify a court case in which a sports team or sports figure is the plaintiff or defendant in a civil case or defendant in a criminal case and that would make the basis for a good investigative story. Pull the court file and write a story proposal, explaining why you chose this case and summarizing some of the leads contained in the court files. Explain how you would use the case, as a starting point, and what other steps you would take to complete this investigative story. Be sure to include the case number and case and be specific when quoting or paraphrasing from court documents. This question is designed to teach you how to identify and use court records in doing investigative stories about sports. Approximately length: 750 words.

Assignment #5: Use of public records: You will have an assignment dealing with sports investigative reporting and the use of public records, including the federal Freedom of Information Act, the California Open Records Act and the public financial records of non-profits (note: the financial records of most college athletic programs are available to reporters and the public under either federal or state open records laws or publicly available financial records, which will be covered in class).

Midterm – The midterm will include short answer and essay questions revolving around the assigned reading

FINAL PROJECT: You will be required to propose report and write one in-depth investigative sports story. This story should be approximately 1,200 words long and must include a significant amount of original reporting. Your project

must also include a multi-media component (interactive web site, video or audio, photographic slide show, etc.). You will be expected to discuss the progress of your project periodically during class and in one-on-one meetings with the instructor. You will be expected to present a draft of your project to the class during our last regular class meeting. You will then have an opportunity to revise your project; the final version will due during finals week.

The goal of the project is to help you learn investigative techniques while pursuing a groundbreaking investigative story involving sports. A further goal is to get your project published. I will be available to meet with you outside of class to discuss your progress and any obstacles you are facing on your final project, or other work. I will also work with you to help you get your project published in a campus or professional publication.

Grading

A. Grading Breakdown

Assignment	% of Grade
Assignment # 1 (Story Ideas)	10
Assignment #2 (interview sports figure and write-up)	10
Assignment #3 (interview investigative sports journalist)	10
Assignment #4 (court records)	10
Assignment #5 (public records)	10
Midterm Exam (Based on assigned reading)	10
Final Project	30
Class participation	10
TOTAL	100%

A note about class participation: You will be expected to regularly participate in class discussions, engage in discussions with your classmates and the instructor and ask insightful questions of our guest speakers.

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

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.

A note about grading: This is a journalism class, and a big part of being a successful sports and investigative journalism is the ability and willingness to ask questions and challenge the instructor and other students. You will be expected to be a regular participant in class discussions, and this will be factored into your grade.

Also, you will be expected to produce at least one publishable paper (probably your final project) during this class. You will be expected to pitch this story to various news organizations to be published, which will help build you credentials as you seek internships and jobs in the future. Students who successfully pitch and publish their final projects, on a campus or professional publication, will receive extra credit that will be used if you are on the borderline between two grades.

Grading Timeline – Assignments will be graded and returned with feedback before the next class. In addition, the instructor will be available to meet with students to discuss their work, provide feedback and explain grades on a regular basis.

Assignment Submission Policy

All your assignments must be sent to me by email (word attachment please) at garycohn@usc.edu before class on the due date. Please make sure to include your name and contact information on all attachments.

You must hand in assignments by deadline. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, assignments that are 1 day to 1 week late will be penalized one full grade (for example, "B" work would receive a "C."). Assignments that are more than one week late will not be accepted and will automatically be given a grade of F.

For all print and text assignments, you need to also bring a paper copy of your assignments to class.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials, including video

Required Text: The Investigative Reporter's Handbook: A Guide to Documents, Databases and Techniques, 5th Edition by Brant Houston and Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc. (new and used paperback editions available on Amazon)

Required Text: Game of Shadows: Barry Bonds, BALCO, and the Steroids Scandal that Rocked Professional Sports by Mark Fainru-Wada and Lance Williams (new and used paperback editions available on Amazon)

Required Text: Billion-Dollar Ball: A Journey Through the Big-Money Culture of College Football by Gilbert M. Gaul (new and used paperback editions available on Amazon)

Other Required and Suggested Reading – We will be studying case studies of excellent investigative journalism most weeks, and you will be required to read the appropriate article or view the appropriate broadcast and come prepared to class with questions. The reading/viewing required each week will be sent to you by email and placed on blackboard.

Cora Cutter and Suevon Lee, an article on ProPublica that provides case studies on the best investigative sports reporting, 2012.

<https://www.propublica.org/article/in-honor-of-the-olympics-the-best-investigative-reporting-on-sports>

Cynthia Gordy Giwa, an article and Podcast on ProPublica about the importance of sports investigative journalism, 2016.

<https://www.propublica.org/podcast/why-the-best-sports-stories-are-beyond-the-field>

Walt Bogdanich and others, a series of articles in the New York Times detailing systemic problems at racetracks, 2012.

<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/04/30/us/breakdown-horses-series.html>

Kurt Streeter, a series of articles in the Los Angeles Times about a girl boxer and her struggling father, Los Angeles Times, 2005

<http://articles.latimes.com/2005/jul/10/local/la-me-boxing10jul10>

J.R. Moehringer, twenty-three reasons why a profile of Pete Carroll does not appear in this space – a magazine story about former USC football coach Pete Carroll's commitment to volunteer work in the poorest areas of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Magazine, 2005

<https://www.lamag.com/longform/23-reasons-why-a-profile-of-pete-carroll-does/>

Joaquin Sapien, an article and Podcast on ProPublica detailing how a journalist exposed a doping scandal at the Winter Olympics, 2017

<https://www.propublica.org/podcast/breakthrough-reporter-uncovered-widespread-russian-meddling-in-the-olympics>

John Branch, a series of articles in the New York Times chronicling the rise and fall of a hockey enforcer, 2011
<https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/04/sports/hockey/derek-boogaard-a-boy-learns-to-brawl.html>

Taylor Branch, an article in The Atlantic about systemic problems throughout college sports, 2011.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/10/the-shame-of-college-sports/308643/>

Katie Thomas, an article in the New York Times detailing problems involving women's college sports and widespread problems involving the gender equality law, Title IX, 2011.
https://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/26/sports/26titleix.html?_r=1&ref=sports

Alan Schwartz, an article in the New York Times about concussions and professional football, 2007.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/18/sports/football/18waters.html>

Sara Ganim and others, a series of article in The Patriot News of Harrisburg, Pa. that disclosed the Penn State scandal involving former football coach Jerry Sandusky, 2011.
<https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/sara-ganim-and-members-patriot-news-staff>

Jeffrey Marx and Michael York, a series of articles in the Lexington (Ky.) Herald Leader that revealed cash payoffs to players on the University of Kentucky basketball team, 1985.
<https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/jeffrey-marx-and-michael-m-york>

Vanessa Grigoriadis, an article in Vanity Fair that disclosed financial abuses by the then-owners on the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team, based largely on publicly-available court records, 2011.
<https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2011/08/mccourt-divorce-201108>

Patrick Hruby, Vice Sports question and answer with Billion-Dollar Ball author Gilbert Gaul
https://sports.vice.com/en_us/article/ez3jyz/vice-sports-qa-billion-dollar-ball-author-gil-gaul

John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, Football, Corruption and Lies: Revisiting 'Badfellas,' the book FIFA tried to ban, Routledge, 2017

John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson, Digging the Dirt and Staying Clean: Retrieving the Investigative Tradition for a Critical Society of Sports,

Brian K. Richardson and Joseph McGlynn, Blowing the Whistle Off the Field of Play: An Empirical Model of Whistle-Blower Experiences in the Intercollegiate Sports Industry, an article in Communication and Sport, 2015

Andrew Jennings, Investigating Corruption in Corporate Sport: The IOC and FIFA" from International Review for the Sociology of Sport, 2011

Billy Witz, California Legislators Vote to Undo NCAA Amateurism, The New York Times, Sept 2019
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/09/sports/college-athlete-pay-california.html>

Films, Video and Television

Marina Zenovich, Fantastic Lies (ESPN 30 for 30) documentary about the false allegations leveled against the Duke University lacrosse team, 2016

<http://www.espn.com/watch/player?id=14923379&lang=en>

Peter Landesman, (director), "Concussion," a feature film about the epidemic of concussions in the National Football League and the doctor who brought it to light, 2015.

Bob Costas, interview with former Penn State football coach Jerry Sandusky, 2011.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmoO5UI0OB4>

Websites (readings will be assigned from certain of these sites).

Center for Investigative Reporting

<https://www.revealnews.org/>

Center for Public Integrity

<https://www.publicintegrity.org/>

Guidestar

<http://www.guidestar.org/Home.aspx>

Investigative Reporters and Editors

<https://www.ire.org/>

ProPublica

<https://www.propublica.org/>

Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press

<https://www.rcfp.org/>

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](#) for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's [Information Technology Services](#) website.

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

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
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<p>Week 1 Date: 1/13</p>	<p>Course overview; What it means to be an investigative journalist reporting on sports; how sports investigative reporting differs from and is like traditional investigative reporting; the challenges, pitfalls and dangers of doing investigative reporting about sports; putting investigative and in-depth sports reporting into context in today's changing journalist landscape</p> <p>Today's biggest sports stories – many of them are investigative rather than game scores; how being a sport-writer has changed and the challenges in covering sports today</p> <p>Fundamentals of sports investigative reporting; choosing the investigative story; the investigative hypothesis; information-gathering techniques; brief introduction to interviewing skills and public records research; discussion of great investigative print and multi-media and what it accomplished.</p>	<p>Read the introduction to John Sugden and Alan Tomlinson's book <i>Football, Corruption and the Lies</i> (to be distributed to students)</p> <p>Read article by Andrew Jennings titled "Investigating Corruption in Corporate Sport."</p> <p>Read pages 1-18 (the investigative process) in the IRE Handbook.</p> <p>Read the Barry Bonds baseball steroids stories (to be emailed to students and placed on backboard)</p> <p>Readings should be completed before the start of the next class, and students should come prepared to ask questions about and discuss the readings).</p>	<p>Story Ideas Assignment (Assignment #1) to be assigned and will be due by email to instructor before the start of the Week 2 class. Students should also bring a hard copy of the assignment to be handed in to the instructor.</p> <p>Students should begin reading the following required text: <i>Game of Shadows: Barry Bonds, BALCO, and the Steroids Scandal that Rocked Professional Sports</i> by Mark Fainaru-Wada and Lance Williams. Students must finish reading this book by Week 8. This book will be covered on the Week 8 midterm.</p>
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Week 2 1/20 NO CLASS MLK Holiday	No Class – MLK Holiday		
Week 3 Date: 1/27	<p>The investigative story; how do you find groundbreaking investigative stories; formulating and testing the investigative hypothesis; Also, finding and pursuing investigating stories while covering a beat. We will discuss how reporters can find and report investigative stories while covering a local sports beat.</p> <p>CASE STUDY: The Barry Bonds Steroid Story</p> <p>CASE STUDY: Reporting on FIFA and corruption – the dangers and pitfalls of investigative reporting on sports</p>	<p>Handouts of stories detailing involving improper payments and perks provided to college athletes will be sent to students by email and must be read before the start of the next class.</p> <p>Read the handout “Loosening Lips” by investigative journalist Eric Nalder. This handout will be sent to students by email and should be read before the start of the next class.</p> <p>Read pages 67-88 in the IRE Handbook (people trails and interviewing).</p> <p>Read article by Brian K. Richardson and Joseph McGlynn, Blowing the Whistle Off the Field of Play (to be distributed to students)</p>	<p>Assignment #1 (story ideas) is due by email to instructor before the start of this class.</p> <p>Assignment #2 (interview a sports figure) to be assigned. It will be due before the start of class on Week 4.</p>

<p>Week 4 Date: 2/3</p>	<p>Interviewing athletes, coaches, team executives, team doctors and trainers, sports agents and fans.</p> <p>Whistleblowers in Sports – differences and similarities from whistleblowers in government and non-sports businesses</p> <p>Case Study: College Sports, Recruiting Violations and Improper Payments to Athletes. Among others, we will discuss a case study involving improper perks and payments to University of Miami football players by a booster, the case study involving Reggie Bush and USC, and the case study involving cash payments to University of Kentucky basketball players.</p>	<p>Read stories by the Patriot News of Harrisburg, Pa. about the scandal involving former football coach Jerry Sandusky before the start of next week's class. This will be emailed to students and is also available at https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/sara-ganim-and-members-patriot-news-staff</p>	<p>Assignment #2 (interview with sports figure) is due before the start of class.</p> <p>Start reading Billion-Dollar Ball by Gil Gaul (required text). Students must finish reading this book by Week 8. This book will be covered on the Week 9 midterm.</p>
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<p>Week 5 Date: 2/10</p>	<p>Interviewing (continued) focusing on interviews involving sensitive subjects and sources who are reluctant to talk with reporters.</p> <p>Case Study: The scandal involving former Penn State coach Jerry Sandusky will be discussed and analyzed. We will also view and discuss a broadcast interview of Sandusky by journalist Bob Costas.</p>	<p>Read pages 178-217 (the judicial system) in the IRE Handbook before the start of next week's class.</p> <p>Read the Vanity Fair article about financial abuses involving the former owners of the Los Angeles Dodgers before our next class. https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2011/08/mccourt-divorce-201108</p> <p>Readings to be assigned relating to the admissions-athletics scandal. These readings should be completed before the start of our next class.</p>	<p>Assignment #3 (interview with investigative sports journalist) will be assigned and is due before the start of class on Week 7.</p>
<p>Week 6 2/17 —No Class — President's Day</p>	<p>No Class – President's Day</p>		

<p>Week 7 Date: 2/24</p>	<p>Public Records – court records</p> <p>CASE STUDY: Varsity Blues and possible guest speaker</p> <p>CASE STUDY: LA Dodgers – An investigation of the team’s finances under the former team owners will be discussed; how a reporter used court records to break this story</p> <p>Public Records – criminal court records, the federal Freedom of Information Act, financial records of nonprofits and other public records, and how to identify and use them in writing about sports</p> <p>Case Study: An investigative story about the University of Washington football team</p> <p>Case Study: The admissions-athletics scandal</p>	<p>Read the articles by Ken Armstrong and Nick Perry re the U of Washington football team – stories will be emailed to students</p> <p>Continue reading Billion-Dollar Ball by Gil Gaul. This will be discussed during our next class.</p> <p>Read Vice interview with Gil Gaul about the reporting and writing of Billion-Dollar Ball https://sports.vice.com/en_us/article/ez3jyz/vice-sports-qa-billion-dollar-ball-author-gil-gaul</p>	<p>Assignment # 3 (reporter interview) is due before the start of class.</p> <p>Assignment # 4 (court records) to be assigned. It will be due before the start of Week #8.</p> <p>Assignment #5 (a public records assignment involving college or high school teams and public financial records) will be assigned. It is due before the start of Week #9.</p>
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Week 8 Date: 3/2	<p>Understanding economics of college sports</p> <p>Review for midterm</p> <p>Case Study: Gil Gaul book</p> <p>Olympics case study sports stadiums</p>		<p>Assignment #4 is due before the start of class.</p>
Week 9 Date: 3/9	<p>Midterm Exam based on class readings, including assigned readings from IRE Handbook, Game of Shadows, Billion-Dollar Ball and handouts that have been distributed to students</p>		<p>Assignment #5 is due before the start of class</p>
SPRING RECESS MARCH 16-20	<p>NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS</p>		
Week 10 Date: 3/23	<p>Ethics accountability and fairness</p> <p>Case study Duke University Lacrosse Story</p> <p>Discussion of student projects</p>	<p>Read NY Times stories about pro football players and concussions before the start of Class on Week 11. Stories will be emailed to students.</p>	<p>Project pitch memo is due before the start of class on Week 10. You must email me a copy of the before the start of class and bring two copies to your conference in week 10.</p> <p>Pitch memo forms will be distributed to students.</p>

<p>Week 11 Date: 3/30</p>	<p>Sports, Athletes and their Health and Investigative Reporting</p> <p>Case Study: The epidemic of concussions in professional football and other sports.</p> <p>Final project scrum: Scrum to discuss your final projects: What have you done so far; what do you still need to do, and what are the major obstacles you are facing.</p>	<p>Read John Branch story in New York Times about hockey enforcer to be sent to you, and Kurt Streeter stories about a girl boxer that ran in the Los Angeles Times. Stories will be emailed to students and should be read before the start of next class.</p>	
<p>Week 12 Date: 4/6</p>	<p>Sports Investigative reporting and narrative storytelling.</p> <p>Case studies: Punched Out about the rise and fall of a hockey enforcer and Kurt Streeter stories about a girl boxer.</p> <p>Final project scrum: Scrum to discuss your final projects: What have you done so far; what do you still need to do, and what are the major obstacles you are facing.</p>	<p>Read Walt Bogdanich NY Times series about death and disarray at thoroughbred race tracks before the start of next class. Stories will be emailed to students.</p> <p>Read investigative stories from NY Times and Sports Illustrated about fantasy sports. Stories will be emailed to students.</p>	

<p>Week 13 Date: 4/13</p>	<p>Investigating horse racing and gaming</p> <p>Case study: fantasy sports; death and disarray at racetrack</p> <p>Final project scrum: Scrum to discuss your final projects: What have you done so far; what do you still need to do, and what are the major obstacles you are facing.</p>		<p>Final project draft: A draft of your final project is due at the beginning of class on Week 15. You must also prepare a class presentation of your final project. You will present your project to the class in Week 15.</p>
<p>Week 14 Date: 4/20</p>	<p>Class discussion followed by individual meetings to discuss your final projects and make recommendations for revisions</p>		
<p>Week 15 Date: 4/27</p>	<p>Summary Discussion: Sports Investigative Reporting – what have you learned? What are the best practices for investigative sports reporting and telling your story in the larger context of the economy, power and politics in today’s world?</p> <p>Student Presentations: Each student will present his or her final project to the class. This will be a draft final project, and students will have the opportunity to revise the projects. The final version will be due during finals week.</p>		<p>Final project draft: A draft of your final project is due at the beginning of class on Week 15</p> <p>Instructor will review the draft and make suggestions for possible revisions – Final project is due on the date of scheduled final exam (TBD)</p>

FINAL EXAMS Date: 5/8, 8-10 a.m.	Summative experience. Final project is due.		Final project is due.
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Policies and Procedures

Policy on attendance -- You will be expected to attend class regularly and be on time for class. If you are sick or have a family or personal emergency, you must send an email (garycohn@usc.edu) or text (310-699-5594). If possible, this notification should be sent prior to the start of class.

Communication – Students are encouraged to contact the instructor outside of class with any questions or to discuss their work and progress. If students cannot meet with the instructor during office hours, students are encouraged to contact the instructor by email to arrange a meeting time. Emails will be answered within 24 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 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

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 Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* (<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 (<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

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.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 Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of 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.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421

studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation 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

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

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.

About Your Instructor

Pulitzer Prize winner **Gary Cohn** is a longtime investigative reporter. Many of his stories have exposed systemic problems and wrongdoing and resulted in significant reforms. A reporter for more than three decades, Cohn has been teaching undergraduate and graduate courses at USC Annenberg for more than ten years. This past summer, he was one of the editors who helped lead Annenberg’s groundbreaking Beacon Project, which was aimed at teaching, training and inspiring the next general of investigative journalists.

Cohn has worked for the Los Angeles Times, the Philadelphia Inquirer, the Baltimore Sun, the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader, The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg News and for columnist Jack Anderson in Washington. He also served for two years as Atwood Professor of Journalism at the University of Alaska at Anchorage.

Cohn won the Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting in 1998 and was a Pulitzer finalist in 1996 and 2001. His work has received numerous other prestigious journalism awards, including two Selden Ring Awards for investigative journalism, an Investigative Reporters & Editors (IRE) Medal, a George Polk Award for environmental reporting and two Overseas Press Club awards.