

## **JOUR 210x: Basics of News Production for Non-Majors 2 Units**

**Fall 2021 – Six hours per week**

**Section:** 21080D

**Location:** Annenberg Media newsroom inside the Media Center on the first floor of Wallis Annenberg Hall

**Instructor:** Christina Bellantoni

**Office:** Second floor inside the Media Center

**Office Hours:** By appointment, and as scheduled during semester

**Contact Info:** christina.bellantoni@usc.edu;

### **Course Description**

This course introduces non-journalism majors to broadcast, radio and reporting and writing online by putting students to work as part of the multiplatform newsroom known as Annenberg Media. The student-led news outlet has live television and radio broadcasts, podcasting, newsletters and coverage of the campus, the surrounding community and the world around us online and on social media. Normally this course would be based out of the Annenberg Media Center in Wallis Annenberg Hall, but all work can be done remotely if the campus has not reopened. Students in this course will still have the opportunity to experience and observe the structure and functions of editorial and production teams for television, radio, or digital journalism, elements of the news production cycle. Students will be required to work for six hours assigned to part of the newsroom each week. There is no formal lecture time for the course. Students will either watch or participate in a series of online trainings depending on the area of the newsroom they select over the first few weeks of the semester. Students will be actively participating in online news meetings and producing works of journalism no later than week five of the semester. The course is credit/no credit.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Identify and use diverse sources in news stories.
- Apply newsroom ethics and standards in a working newsroom.
- Research, report and write news stories under deadline in a collaborative news environment for the Annenberg Media student newsroom online at [uscannenbergmedia.com](http://uscannenbergmedia.com), AND/OR Annenberg Media social media platforms.
- Record, edit and write audio or video news stories for Annenberg Media student newsroom radio or television broadcasts and/or social media platforms.

Each of these learning outcomes will be evaluated through regular feedback sessions with your instructor. You should keep them in mind as you approach any work done in the newsroom.

### **Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Students in this course participate in reporting and writing for [uscannenbergmedia.com](http://uscannenbergmedia.com), production of a daily television and audio content for wide distribution and/or journalism on social media platforms. Class work will consist of on-the-job training and experience that mirrors the real world.

### **Student duties include:**

- Generating and researching story ideas for radio, broadcast and online news outlets.

- Fulfilling different jobs during the production of radio and television newscasts and frequently updated social and digital platforms.
- Participating in the production of news content for digital, broadcast and audio platforms.

You must make a commitment to work **SIX HOURS** each week for Annenberg Media. You may split that shift over several days, but six consecutive hours is preferred. You must sign up for the same weekly shift(s) and you will work at the direction of a student leader in charge of your coverage area with support from your instructors. You will not pass this class unless you attend each shift and put effort into fulfilling your newsroom duties as assigned.

You will also be required to participate in newsroom trainings. A complete schedule will be provided for you during the first week. You will hold regular check-in meetings with your instructor.

### **Required Readings, hardware/software, laptops and supplementary materials**

If you do not already have the Adobe Creative Cloud on your laptop, you will be given access to it for a download for Annenberg Media use. Email [annenbergd@usc.edu](mailto:annenbergd@usc.edu) and cc [christina.bellantoni@usc.edu](mailto:christina.bellantoni@usc.edu) to let them know you need a download. A cell phone that can take video is useful for this course.

Please follow @annenberimedia on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and other social channels. You also may sign up for The Rundown weekly newsletter at [uscannenberimedia.com](http://uscannenberimedia.com).

You 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.

All USC students have access to the AP stylebook via the USC library.  
([https://libproxy.usc.edu/login?url=http://www.apstylebook.com/usc\\_edu/](https://libproxy.usc.edu/login?url=http://www.apstylebook.com/usc_edu/))

Students will be graded on adherence to AP style in assignments, including when writing about race and ethnicity. The updated AP style guidelines include capitalizing Black and deleting the hyphen in terms such as Asian American.

The following style guides will be available on BB:

NLGJA Stylebook on LGBTQ Terminology: <https://www.nlgja.org/stylebook/>

Native American Journalists Association: <https://najanewsroom.com/reporting-guides/>

National Association of Black Journalists: <https://www.nabj.org/page/styleguide>

Asian American Journalists Association: <https://aaja.org/2020/11/30/covering-asia-and-asian-americans/>

The Diversity Style Guide: <https://www.diversitystyleguide.com>

The NAHJ Cultural Competence Handbook: <https://nahj.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NAHJ-Cultural-Competence-Handbook.pdf>

Transjournalist Style Guide: <https://transjournalists.org/style-guide/>

SPJ Diversity Toolbox: <https://www.spj.org/diversity.asp>

Annenberg also has its own style guide that students can access through the app Amy the Stylebot on the Annenberg Media Center's Slack workspace. Annenberg's style guide is being developed with input from students, and whether or not students use our guide, they can provide valuable input here: <http://bit.ly/annenbergediting>

In addition, Annenberg Media's Guide for Equitable Reporting Strategies and Newsroom Style (<https://bit.ly/AnnMediaEquitableReportingGuide>) created by students, has detailed guidelines on thoughtful language and best practices for creating journalism respectful and reflective of a diverse world. Along with other useful resources, it can be found on Blackboard and is incorporated into Amy the Stylebot (mentioned above).

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.

Annenberg is committed to every student's success. There are multiple resources available to assist students with issues that limit their ability to participate fully in class. Please reach out to a professor and/or advisor for help connecting with these resources. They include the Annenberg Student Success Fund, 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, and other scholarships and awards.

### **News Consumption and Knowledge of Current Events**

As journalists, you should keep up with what is happening on campus, in the Los Angeles area, in the United States and around the world. USC provides subscriptions for students, staff and faculty to The New York Times and the Los Angeles Times, as well as the Wall Street Journal.

Through the USC library, you have access to many regional news outlets and a variety of publications that cover specific communities. You should be familiar with publications covering the many communities of Los Angeles such as The Los Angeles Sentinel, The Los Angeles Blade, The Los Angeles Wave, La Opinión, L.A. Taco, The Eastsider, The Armenian Weekly, High Country News, the Asian Journal and others. You should keep up with the Daily Trojan and [uscannenbergmedia.com](http://uscannenbergmedia.com), including USC student-led verticals *Dímelo* and *Black.*, listen to NPR and news radio, watch local and national television news, read news email newsletters and push alerts and follow news organizations social networks, including Twitter, Instagram and TikTok. You're encouraged to sign up for Nieman Lab's newsletter, which publishes brief, readable articles on important issues in the media. Following the news will sharpen your judgment and provide good (and bad) examples of the state of mainstream journalism.

### **Course Notes and Policies**

In the beginning of the semester, students must meet with the instructor to be officially onboarded into the Media Center systems. During that meeting, students will choose an area of the newsroom to work in and a shift day(s) and time(s). The instructor will provide students with a list of required workshops and a schedule for when and where those workshops will be held. Some will be offered in Week 1 but most will be offered or available for video viewing during the hours of the assigned shift in weeks 2 and 3.

Your credit/no credit grade will be determined by your attendance and effort in newsroom production. The instructor will hold individual meetings with students over the course of the semester. She also will ask students to check in via Slack or in person when students begin each weekly shift and share their work.

Some videos and slideshows will be posted to Blackboard, but the best place to review how-to documents and see trainings is <http://resources.uscannenbergmedia.com>.

### **Grading**

#### **a. Breakdown of Grade**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>% of Grade</b>
Daily news production and attendance	80%
Regular check-ins with instructor	10%
Performance	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### c. Grading Standards

Students will be trained on and are expected to abide by the newsrooms ethical guidelines, best practices and coverage rules at all times. Maintaining professionalism and courtesy will be of utmost importance. Should any problems arise within the newsroom's student leadership, students in this course will be expected to raise the issue with the instructors right away.

Should students breach any ethical guidelines, they risk failing the course.

### *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.

### **Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/23/21 – 12/3/21)**

**Link:** <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20213/calendar/>

**Friday, September 10:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, September 10:** Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001

**Friday, September 10:** Last day to purchase or waive tuition refund insurance for fall

**Tuesday, September 14:** Last day to add or drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund or change to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001

**Friday, October 8:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript for Session 001. 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 (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, October 8:** 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, November 12:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

### **Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

	<b>Topics/Daily Activities</b>	<b>Readings and Homework</b>	<b>Deliverable/Due Dates</b>
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Dates: 8/23-8/27</b>	Students must meet with instructor for office hours during their chosen six-hour shift to finalize the newsroom area where they wish to work and receive the training schedule.	Instructor will email a signup link to schedule the meeting.	
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Dates: 8/30-9/3</b>	Students must attend mandatory workshops or watch videos as advised.		
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Dates: 9/6-9/10</b>	Students must attend mandatory workshops or watch videos as advised.		<b>[Labor Day: Monday, September 6]</b>
<b>Week 4</b> <b>Dates: 9/13-9/17</b>	Students can begin producing works of		

	journalism during their six-hour shift.		
<b>Week 5</b> <b>Dates: 9/20-9/24</b>	Students will check in with instructor via office hours. Students will all be producing journalism during their six-hour shift.		
<b>Week 6</b> <b>Dates: 9/27-10/1</b>	Students continue to produce journalism during their six-hour shift.		
<b>Week 7</b> <b>Dates: 10/4-10/8</b>	Students continue to produce journalism during their six-hour shift.		
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Dates: 10/11-10/15</b>			<b>[Fall Recess: Thursday, October 14, and Friday, October 15]</b>
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Dates: 10/18-10/22</b>	Training refreshers and office hours with instructors to be held this week		
<b>Week 10</b> <b>Dates: 10/25-10/29</b>	Students continue to produce journalism during their six-hour shift.		
<b>Week 11</b> <b>Dates: 11/1-11/5</b>	Students continue to produce journalism during their six-hour shift.		
<b>Week 12</b> <b>Dates: 11/8-11/12</b>	Students continue to produce journalism during their six-hour shift.		
<b>Week 13</b> <b>Dates: 11/15-11/19</b>	Students continue to produce journalism during their six-hour shift.	Instructor to schedule final office hours check-in.	
<b>Week 14</b> <b>Dates: 11/22-11/26</b>	Students with Monday shifts continue to produce journalism during their six-hour shift.		<b>[Thanksgiving Recess: Wednesday, November 24, to Sunday, November 28]</b>
<b>Week 15</b> <b>Dates: 11/29-12/3</b>	Students will work their final six-hour shift this week and also be given time to complete the course evaluation.		

<b>FINAL EXAM PERIOD</b> <b>12/6, 6-8 p.m.</b>	Annenberg Media Wrap Party to celebrate the end of the semester. Save the date: 6-8 p.m. on Mon., Dec. 6.		There is no final exam for this course.  <i>Note: Students are encouraged to stay involved with Annenberg Media beyond this course. Make sure to speak with your instructor or a student leader about how to remain part of the newsroom.</i>
---	---	--	---

## 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*

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).

#### *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](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.

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

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](https://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](https://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.symplcity.com/care\\_report](https://usc-advocate.symplcity.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](https://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*

[uscса.usc.edu](https://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](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](https://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](https://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](https://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Annenberg Student Success Fund*

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-and-awards>

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.

**About Your Instructor**

**Christina Bellantoni** is a professor of professional practice and the director of the Annenberg Media Center. She also has been a contributing editor at The 19th News, a nonprofit newsroom that covers gender, politics and policy, since 2021. She joined Annenberg in August 2018 after serving as a member of the masthead at the Los Angeles Times for three years. Over her more than 20 years in journalism, Bellantoni worked as a reporter and editor, behind the camera as a producer and in front of it as an analyst on national television. She has covered local, state and federal government, along with four presidential campaigns and the White House.

She spent 12 years as a journalist in Washington, D.C. She served as editor-in-chief of the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call until moving to Los Angeles in 2015. Before taking over Roll Call, Bellantoni was the political editor at the PBS NewsHour. She also covered politics at Talking Points Memo and the Washington Times. Before moving to D.C., she worked at three newspapers in the Bay Area.