



## **BAEP 475 – Entertainment Entrepreneurship**

Syllabus – Spring 2022

Sec 14405 Monday – 12pm – 1:50pm meets JFF 416

Sec 14406 Monday – 2pm – 3:50pm meets JFF TBD

**Instructor:** Michael Napoliello  
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**Office Hours:** **By appointment**  
**Email:** napoliel@marshall.usc.edu

### **Course Description**

Entrepreneurs thrive in the entertainment industry! In this class, we uncover the entrepreneurial fundamentals key to success in entertainment. We also explore current trends and opportunities, with an emphasis on where **you** fit in and how **you** can develop your personal brand. To achieve these objectives, a combination of methods will be used, including topical lectures, group discussions/exercises, and presentations by dynamic speakers who are *movers and shakers* in the business. You will have the opportunity to learn from real world pros!

### **Learning Objectives**

Upon taking this course, the student will be able to:

1. Recognize and articulate the types of entrepreneurs/corporate entrepreneurs in media and entertainment.
2. Describe the historical nature of the industry, across TV, Cable, and New Media (i.e., key players then and now; key customer; distribution channels).
3. Develop a personal strategy to be able to “break into” the industry of “who you know.”
4. Recognize entrepreneurial opportunities and barriers created by new media.
5. Analyze the trends in new media, across music, gaming, apps, serial, reality, interactive, social content and social influencers.
6. Leverage, for their own ventures, an understanding of the importance of strong content and the evolution of the nature of content.
7. Apply funding and monetization strategies typical of new media ventures for their own ventures in the industry.

### **Required Materials**

Required materials include the following. Students are expected to come prepared to discuss and apply the assigned readings.

- Articles from online and traditional trade publications (e.g., *Billboard*, *Variety*, *Deadline*, *Advertising Age*), to be assigned and reviewed throughout the semester. Familiarity with industry trades, issues, and best practices will be a key takeaway from this class.
- Recommended but not required: *Hit Makers, The Science of Popularity in the age of Distraction* by Derek Thompson. *Smartcuts: How Hackers, Innovators, Mavericks Accelerate Success* by Shane Snow.

## Grading Policies

Grades for this class are expected to average around 3.3.

To achieve an A or A- in this class, you will need to go far beyond the minimum requirements as stated in the syllabus in terms of the quality of your work and your involvement in and contribution to the class. An A is a sign of superior work and, much like the efforts of entrepreneurs, reflects the fact that you stood out from the crowd. All assignments will have complete instructions available in BB and will be discussed in class before they are due.

If you have any questions about your grade during the semester, please make an appointment to see me to discuss your concerns. Do not wait until the end of the semester to do so!

## 475 ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING DETAIL

<b>Assigned</b>	<b>Due</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
	Ongoing	Participation/ Supplemental Reading Discussion	150
1/10	2/7	Personal Brand presentation	150
1/24	2/14	Trace Back Paper	200
2/28	2/28	Graded Pitch Exercise: Quick Pitch (in class assignment)	50
1/31	3/21	Designing the Blockbuster	350
1/31	4/11	Professional Networking Assignment	200
2/14	4/18	The Future of Entertainment: Group Presentation*	600
2/14	TBD - Final	Future of Entertainment: Group Paper upload BB	300
		<b>TOTAL FOR CLASS</b>	<b>2000</b>

\*Grader must be included with assignment

The following assignments must be completed in this course.

- **Personal Brand/Pitch in-class Presentation:** Perfecting the “who you are and what are you working on” pitch. A key success tool. Assignment detailed in class (don’t miss out.) In a 60 second in-class presentation you will summarize: your brand, why it expresses “brand you,” current entrepreneurial projects your working on.
- **Trace Back Paper:**
  - ✓ 1.5 page (max) paper (standard format, please see Submission Policy below).
  - ✓ Choose a major entertainment industry company you are interested in and “trace back” its origin. Provide (1) an overview of the company today; (2) key people and moments in the company’s founding. (3) key milestones/pivots through its history. (4) In a sentence or two, conjecture how its origin might effect its current trajectory.

- **Designing the Blockbuster**
  - ✓ 2-page (max) paper (standard format, please see Submission Policy below). Despite the proliferation of niche entertainment choices and distribution formats, research indicates that having a “blockbuster” is critical to an entertainment company’s long-term survival.
  - ✓ Through in-class examples (such as Adele, Paranormal Activity, Twyla Tharp, League of Legends, and more) we will investigate why the blockbuster is so important and understand the key elements in the making of a blockbuster (such as breakthrough content, unique marketing, audience positioning, strategic timing, etc.).
  - ✓ You will apply this learning in your paper, as well as your own research and independent thinking. Page 1: Identify a notable entertainment blockbuster, and discuss what you think are the key elements to its success. Page 2: Identify a notable (high-profile) project that failed to reach its potential, and outline what you would have done differently to propel the project to blockbuster status.
  
- **Professional Networking Assignment**
  - ✓ “Who you know” is your key to success as an entertainment entrepreneur.
  - ✓ In class, we will study and practice expert networking techniques.
  - ✓ This is an INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT, however, it could be productive to use it in support of your research on the *Future of Entertainment Assignment* by networking with experts in your chosen industry of interest.
  - ✓ You will use the provided TEMPLATE (posted in Blackboard) to keep track of your engagements with your contacts. You should meet a *minimum* of 3 entertainment industry experts for your project.
  
- **The Future of Entertainment (Group Challenge) Paper and Final Presentation:** For this exercise, you will be assigned teams of 3 - 5 (max), to write and submit a 3-page paper in which you:
  - ✓ Identify a particular industry segment you researched (i.e., the music industry).
  - ✓ Highlight particular changes and innovations that are affecting that industry.
  - ✓ Highlight opportunities that will be presented by these changes in the future.
  - ✓ Suggest one key concept (business idea) that can profit from your predicted changes.

Your goal in the presentation is to convince the panel that your research and conclusion reflect best practices in (a) forecasting industry trends; (b) developing new and creative concepts; (c) identifying key steps to bring your product to market; and (d) identifying potential customers. Your presentation will also be graded on its quality, coherence, and professionalism. You will use PowerPoint and may use other props for this presentation. All team members must participate. Presentations should be rehearsed, and they will be strictly timed. Presentations can last no longer than 6 minutes, with a hard stop at 8 minutes. The paper will summarize your presentation in the professional Executive Summary format discussed in class and outlined in the detailed information packet available on BB.

## Assignment Submission

### Standard Paper Format

- All written assignments must be turned in electronically to Blackboard prior to start of class on due date.
- All papers & cases will follow the format:
  - ✓ Your name, USC email, and page numbers on each page
  - ✓ One inch margins all around – 1½ line space
  - ✓ 12 point font size
  - ✓ Stapled if more than 2 pages (not stapled -10%)
  - ✓ Hard Copy turned in before the beginning of class, Grader attached if applicable (no Grader -10%)

### Late Policy

*If you can't make deadlines, you can't be a successful entrepreneur. As a young entrepreneur, I asked a major client I was pitching if I had any chance of winning their business. They said, "If you show up on time and make your pitch, you have a chance. If you don't, you don't."*

- **HARD COPIES** of papers are due **IN CLASS** before the beginning of the class starting time. Students and teams **must also upload assignments to Blackboard** prior to in-class deadline.
- The following deductions apply for late submission of the course work:

Submission between start & end of class:	10% loss of score
Submission between next day and beginning of next class:	25% loss of score
After that:	Score of 0
Failure to submit on Blackboard	2.5% loss of score

- If you must be absent for a class meeting, upload and deliver your hard copy of your work to the office before the class time in order to be considered on time.

## Evaluation of Your Work

### **Papers, Videos, Slides, and Other Submissions**

You may regard each of your submissions as an “exam” in which you apply what you’ve learned according to the assignment. I will do my best to make my expectations for the various assignments clear and to evaluate them as fairly and objectively as I can. If you feel that an error has occurred in the grading of any assignment, you may, within one week of the date the assignment is returned to you, write me a memo in which you request that I re-evaluate the assignment. Attach the original assignment to the memo, in which you explain fully and carefully why you think the assignment should be re-graded. Be aware that the re-evaluation process can result in three types of grade adjustments: positive, none, or negative. (Note: Complaints on the date of a graded assignment’s return to you will not be addressed.)

### **Participation**

The participation and in-class exercises portion of the grade is 100 points and is evaluated in various ways. Students are expected to engage actively in classroom conversations – not just with each other, but also with the instructor. Students are also expected to read all assigned materials carefully and thoughtfully – and to be prepared to discuss those materials.

Class participation tends to fall into the following categories:

- **Outstanding:** Student is highly engaged in and prepared for each class session, contributing insightful questions and thoughts.
- **Excellent:** Student is moderately engaged in class, on a periodic basis, and occasionally contributes insightful questions and thoughts.
- **Average:** Student is somewhat engaged in class, contributing periodic questions and thoughts that might repeat content already in play.
- **Below Average:** Student rarely contributes in class.
- **Non-Contributing:** Student does not contribute in class.

If you are unable to participate for language or other reasons, please consult me early in the semester.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### **Add/Drop Process**

If you fail to attend either of the first two sessions of the semester, without providing advance notification to the instructor, you will be dropped from this course. This policy is in place because this class is over-subscribed, with limited seating; it is imperative that students waiting to get into the class can fill empty seats in a timely manner, without risk of falling behind. (Please note: If you decide to drop, or if you are dropped, you risk not being able to add yourself to another section this semester. You can only add a class after the first week of classes if you receive approval from the instructor.)

In compliance with USC and Marshall’s policies, classes are open enrollment (R-clearance) through the first week of class. All classes are closed (switched to D-clearance) at the end of the first week. This policy minimizes the complexity of the registration process for students by standardizing across classes.

The last day to withdraw from this class, without a mark of “W” on your transcript is February 26, 2016. The last day to withdraw the class, with a mark of “W” on your transcript is April 8, 2016.

### **Retention of Graded Coursework**

Final exams and all other graded work which affected the course grade will be retained for one year after the end of the course **if** the graded work has not been returned to you (i.e., if I returned a graded paper to you, it is your responsibility to file it, not mine).

### **Lloyd Greif Center for Entrepreneurial Studies Confidentiality Policy**

Throughout the Entrepreneur Program's classes and events, students will be exposed to proprietary information from other students, guest lecturers, and faculty. It is the policy of the Entrepreneur Program that all such information is to be treated as confidential.

By enrolling in and taking part in the Entrepreneur Program's classes and activities, students agree not to disclose this information to any third parties without specific written permission from students, guest lecturers, or faculty, as applicable. Students further agree not to utilize any such proprietary information for their own personal commercial advantage or for the commercial advantage of any third party.

In addition, students agree that any legal or consulting advice provided without direct fee and in an academic setting will not be relied upon without the enlisted opinion of an outside attorney or consultant without affiliation to the Program.

Any breach of this policy may subject a student to academic integrity proceedings as described in the University of Southern California University Governance Policies and procedures as outlined in *SCampus* and to any remedies that may be available at law.

The Entrepreneur program, the Marshall School of Business, and the University of Southern California disclaim any responsibility for the protection of intellectual property of students, guest lecturers or faculty who are involved in Entrepreneur Program classes or events. Receipt of this policy and registration in our classes are evidence that you understand this policy and will abide by it.

### **Technology Policy**

Laptop, tablet, and Internet usage are not permitted during academic or professional sessions unless otherwise stated by the professor. Use of other personal communication devices such as mobile phones is considered unprofessional and is not permitted during academic or professional sessions. ANY web-enabled devices (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) must be completely turned off during class time. You might also be asked to deposit your devices in a designated area in the classroom. Videotaping of faculty lectures is not permitted due to copyright infringement regulations. Audiotaping may be permitted ONLY if approved by the professor. Use of any recorded material is reserved exclusively for USC Marshall students. [See Class Notes Policy, below, for further details.]

### **Academic Conduct**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own (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" <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>.

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at:

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>. Failure to adhere to the academic conduct standards set forth by these guidelines and our programs will not be tolerated by the USC Marshall community and can lead to dismissal.

**Please be advised that your assignments may be randomly submitted to “TurnItIn” through the Blackboard system, which will generate an originality report on your paper.**

Your original thought, in addition to carefully cited sources, will ensure that you don’t run into academic integrity issues that may affect your grade or your status at USC. Any material cited verbatim from its source should be in quotes and contain a reference to a full citation for that source. Paraphrased work should also clearly cite the source material.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* (<http://equity.usc.edu/>) or to the *Department of Public Safety* (<http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us/>). This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* (<http://engemannshc.usc.edu/cwm/>) provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage (<https://sarc.usc.edu/reporting-options/>) describes reporting options and other resources.

### **Class Notes Policy**

Notes or recordings made by students based on a university class or lecture may only be made for purposes of individual or group study, or for other non-commercial purposes that reasonably arise from the student’s membership in the class or attendance at the university. This restriction also applies to any information distributed, disseminated or in any way displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email or otherwise on the Internet, or via any other medium. Actions in violation of this policy constitute a violation of the Student Conduct Code, and may subject an individual or entity to university discipline and/or legal proceedings. Again, it is a violation of USC’s Academic Integrity Policies to share course materials with others without permission from the instructor.

**No recording and copyright notice.** No student may record any lecture, class discussion or meeting with me without my prior express written permission. The word “record” or the act of recording includes, but is not limited to, any and all means by which sound or visual images can be stored, duplicated or retransmitted whether by an electro-mechanical, analog, digital, wire, electronic or other device or any other means of signal encoding. I reserve all rights, including copyright, to my lectures, course syllabi and related materials, including summaries, PowerPoints, prior exams, answer keys, and all supplementary course materials available to the students enrolled in my class whether posted on Blackboard or otherwise. They may not be reproduced, distributed, copied, or disseminated in any media or in any form, including but not limited to all course note-sharing websites. s.

### **Support Systems**

Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* (<http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>), which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* ([www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability)) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps with the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* (<http://emergency.usc.edu/>) will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

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

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

Student Support & Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC – <https://diversity.usc.edu/>

Tabs for Events, Programs and Training, Task Force (including representatives for each school), Chronology, Participate, Resources for Students

### **Students with Disabilities**

USC is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist individuals with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this course and require accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Services and Programs ([www.usc.edu/disability](http://www.usc.edu/disability)). DSP provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to your TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS (Grace Ford Salvatori Hall) 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776. Email: [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

### **Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, the *USC Emergency Information* web site (<http://emergency.usc.edu>) will provide safety and other information, including electronic means by which instructors will conduct class using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

Please make sure you can access this course in Blackboard and retrieve the course syllabus and other course materials electronically. You should check Blackboard regularly for announcements and new materials. In the event of an emergency, the ability to access Blackboard will be crucial. USC's Blackboard learning management system and support information is available at [blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu).

***IMPORTANT! RECEIPT OF THIS SYLLABUS AND REGISTRATION IN THIS COURSE WILL SERVE AS EVIDENCE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE.***



## Course Calendar

This schedule may change due to changes in guests' schedules, and additional readings may be distributed during the semester.

	Topics, Readings and Homework	Deliverables Due
<b>Week 1</b> 1/10	<u>Where we'll go and how to thrive in 475!</u> TOPIC 1: Fundamentals of Entertainment Entrepreneurship TOPIC 2: How to ace 475! (Syllabus & Text Intro) ASSIGNMENT: (1) Personal Brand	
<b>Week 2</b> 1/17	Martin Luther King Day	
<b>Week 3</b> 1/24	<u>Entrepreneurial first steps.</u> TOPIC: Key "Start" Concepts (for your project, career) TOPIC 2: Professional Emails & LinkedINs SPEAKER: Coca Xie, founder, China Entertainment ASSIGNMENT: (1) Trace Back	
<b>Week 4</b> 1/31	<u>The importance of a "hit" products/brands/franchises.</u> TOPIC 1: Designing a "Blockbuster" ASSIGNMENT: (1) Professional Networking Assignment (2) Designing the Blockbuster	
<b>Week 5</b> 2/7	<u>Presentations in class.</u> TOPIC 1: Key "start" concepts (focusing on customer, bootstrapping, discussion)	<b>DUE: Personal Brand Presentations</b>
<b>Week 6</b> 2/14	<u>Building credibility and the future of entertainment.</u> SPEAKER: Thoughts on Mission and starting up, Christopher Sutton, founder and producer, Psycho Films. ASSIGNMENT: The Future of Entertainment (team assignment)	<b>DUE: Trace Back Paper</b>
<b>Week 7</b> 2/21	Presidents' Day: No Class	
<b>Week 8</b> 2/28	<u>Life's a pitch.</u> TOPIC 1: Trace Back discussion TOPIC 1: Improving your Pitch and your project's "pitchability" ASSIGNMENT: Graded pitch exercise	<b>DUE: In-class Assignment: Quick Pitch</b>
<b>Week 9</b> 3/7	<u>The Future of TV: How technology &amp; MA evolves opportunity.</u> TOPIC 1: TV (Opportunities at the dawn of the multi-screen era) TOPIC 2: FOE tips and best practices, The Simple/Different Rule SPEAKER: Anthony Tringali, Radar Pictures	
<b>Week 10</b> 3/14	Spring Break: No Class	

<b>Week 11</b> 3/21	<u>So You Wanna Be a Popstar.</u> TOPIC 1: Music & Labels in the Digital Age SPEAKER: TBD	<b>DUE: Designing the Blockbuster</b>
<b>Week 12</b> 3/28	<b><i>Team meetings to discuss the PROGRESS of your FOE project. Come to class prepared to discuss. Meetings take place in our assigned classroom. Attend only during your assigned time.</i></b>	
<b>Week 13</b> 4/4	<u>Public Relations</u> TOPIC 1: Using the media to build your brand TOPIC 2: FOE Review	
<b>Week 14</b> 4/11	Legal Issues, FOE stuff TOPIC 1: "Sue 'em" (LLCs, IP, and other legal issues facing entertainment entrepreneurs) TOPIC 2: DBB Quick Review SPEAKER: Katherine Imp, entertainment attorney	<b>DUE: Professional Networking Assignment</b>
<b>Week 15</b> 4/18	Final Team Presentations	<b>The Future of Entertainment Group Presentations</b>
<b>Week 16</b> 4/25	YOU: Your ONE Favorite "Trade Secret" from the Semester  COURSE Survey  MECHANIC MIKE'S own favorite Trade Secrets...	
<b>FINAL</b> TBD	Future of Entertainment Group Papers uploaded to BB.	<b>DUE: FOE Exec Summary</b>

***Now... Start Something Entertaining!***