



**JOUR 448 Government and Public Affairs  
Reporting  
4 units**

**Spring 2022 – Thursdays – 12-3:20 p.m.**

**Section:** 21210D

**Location:** ASC 240

**Instructor:** Christina Bellantoni

**Office:** ANN 205B

**Office Hours:** M-T-F, by appointment

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**Pronouns:** she/her

### **Course Description**

This class aims to help you understand national politics in a midterm election year by both covering some of the most pivotal events in the race as a journalist and evaluating how the media has in the past and continues to influence campaigns.

We'll do this through the lens of the upcoming congressional midterm elections and the state-by-state redistricting process as well as through the 2018, 2010, 2006 and 1994 contests which shaped today's political landscape and which your instructor covered closely (other than 1994). We'll follow the process as California's congressional district maps are released by a citizen commission tasked with eliminating one of the state's 53 districts due to population loss, and those of Texas are challenged by the political and judicial process.

You will consume a heavy volume and wide variety of political reporting. You also will create your own works of journalism throughout this class. You will be challenged to talk with sources and cover topics that make you uncomfortable and to include sources that are reflective of the diverse world we cover in all that you do for this class.

Finally, this course is unique in that you will directly experience politics and practitioners of campaigns via experiential field trips. The dates and locations of these trips are subject to change and will proceed in strict accordance with public health and university guidelines.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Explain the process of a congressional midterm election, from the drawing of district lines through the decennial redistricting process to the primaries, some of which will play out in real time over the course of the semester.
- Analyze the changes in congressional district maps of California and Texas and evaluate the effects of those changes.
- Write news stories that adhere to professional standards about the effects of redistricting on people living in those districts and explain how a particular political race, issue, or person relates to the national political climate.
- Interpret voter polling at the local, state and national level.
- Evaluate how journalists cover campaigns, from factual reporting to writing about commodity news events and election results.

- Define the concept of objectivity in journalism and compare and contrast its application by professional journalists and in your own work.
- Identify how issues of race, gender and socioeconomic status affect the election process including access to voting, microtargeting of particular demographics and campaign rhetoric.

## Description and Assessment of Assignments

The majority of the reading for JOUR448 will be done as preparation for our class discussions, guests and exercises which will involve writing on deadline.

Each week we will discuss and interpret the week's campaign news, and evaluate how media coverage of the events influenced the broader public, and analyze the perspectives represented in that coverage, which spans all platforms. You will be expected to come to class with a story you read that you would like your peers to discuss, and with at least a general awareness of what happened over the last seven days in national politics.

Some of our coverage will be done as in-class exercises, on both an individual level and on teams. You will complete writing assignments during our class time, and concentrate the majority of your out-of-class time reporting on and writing your substantial works of journalism.

These assignments will be shaped by reporting in the field, attending events, interviewing subjects and coming to your own conclusions about what is important to your audience, voters and everyday citizens. Students will be advised and encouraged, with consultation and help from the instructor, to work outside the classroom and the campus to see, feel and touch government and its works.

The two substantial assignments are:

A written profile (between 750 to 1,200 words) of changes proposed to or made to a congressional district or districts. **The goal of this piece is to help your reader understand a complicated process and what it might mean for them.** You must get instructor approval on your subject. You must interview humans living in the district and include competing points of view. Your news story must include at least five primary or secondary sources. See assignment sheet for more detailed criteria and grading rubric. Due March 10

A written feature story (between 1,200 to 2,000 words) about any element of the congressional midterms with at least five primary or secondary sources **clearly explaining a race or issue, profiling an individual or demonstrating why a congressional district is relevant to the national political climate.** This could be developed via local reporting in California or on one of the trips students will visit over the course of the semester. It will require substantial reporting. It could be a deeply reported look at a particular issue, an investigation, a data-driven analysis, an examination of a particular part of the election process, or a profile, to name just a few options you may consider. This is not a research paper, and it will not contain your political opinion. It must contain new information you have learned through your reporting process and remain relevant beyond the results of the election in any given state. You must get instructor approval on your topic and will keep your instructor apprised of your progress. First draft due April 21. Final story due May 12.

To help keep you on track, you will submit a weekly 250-word update and drafts of each substantial assignment. The first will propose a topic, and will include a backup. Your instructor will provide feedback and suggestions to advance the reporting and writing each week. On occasion we will discuss these weekly reports among your peers in class. We'll also hold class sessions focused on improving writing by the use of context, history, data, anecdotes, observation during field reporting and the critical thinking of each student.

I will expect you to read and watch everything I assign — and some of those assignments will come via email no later than the Tuesday before our Thursday class sessions. Active participation in the class is critical. There will be occasional quizzes if I get the sense that students aren't reading the assigned material.

I will be available to help you work through drafts of your writing assignments, and I will serve as your editor. Your grade for these assignments will be based on your depth of research and reporting, your effort, your inclusion of a diversity of sources and your ability to craft a compelling story that someone would want to read. Among the criteria will be the question "Is this publishable?" and my goal will be to help you make sure that answer is "Yes."

### **Course Notes and Policies**

JOUR307 is the prerequisite for journalism majors. To have that waived you must work with the instructor to provide both a recommendation and a work sample that signals you're ready for an upper-division reporting class. This class has an experiential component substantially funded by the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. Students will have the opportunity to join the instructor on reporting trips that are planned for Texas and Washington D.C. and are subject to change. There will be a travel info session to go over logistics, safety protocols and contingency plans.

Before the semester begins, the instructor will provide recommended reading, listening and film viewing as preparation for the course. There will be an extensive amount of required reading that will be discussed in detail each week.

It will help if you begin the class having taken at least one previous course in American history or political science. I also ask that you bring with you a strong media diet and an open mind. There will be no tolerance for microaggressions of any kind, racism, bigotry, a bad attitude or unwillingness to learn.

This class has an experiential element, which means students will have the opportunity to leave campus and meet the campaign where it's being waged. Traveling is not required for the class, but if you do take the opportunity to do so, the basic travel costs will be fully covered by Annenberg.

On days this class meets, you should always dress as if you'll be interviewing a candidate for political office. This is not a dress code but rather an awareness that you might encounter a guest or source. What you normally wear should be fine but be cognizant of who you might meet and that as a reporter you might have a spontaneous assignment. That means it's wise to have a sweater handy, or shoes that are comfortable should you need to walk a long way.

The classroom will serve as an active newsroom, and you'll support your colleagues as you cover the campaign together. There will be team projects and group exercises. No laptops in class. If you've missed a class, you'll need to come get the overview during office hours to get full credit.

As your professor and editor for this class, I am available to you outside of structured classroom time. I will hold office hours Monday, Tuesday or Friday but you must email me to set up an appointment. If you know you are going to miss class, you need to let me know the day before. If you don't get a response from me during the week within 24 hours, feel free to text. On the weekend, text if you don't get a response within 48 hours.

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

There are a handful of political books with chapters that will be required readings for this class. You should be able to find them at USC's or any public library. Each is available through platforms such as Audible, which allows you to listen to a book with a temporary free subscription. Paperback copies are available on Amazon. I will post digital copies to Blackboard wherever possible. I also have a number of additional political and campaign books in my office available for checkout.

You also will be watching videos, listening to podcasts and reading articles online, most of which will be sent to you via email. Make sure you have activated the free digital subscriptions to the Los Angeles Times and The New York Times. If you have questions about how to do so, read this syllabus closely.

At least 80% of the readings will be digital stories or PDFs of magazines from a wide range of journalists and scholars. There also will be a handful of book chapters sent to you from books you may have interest in reading or listening to in full over the break. Those books are listed below.

**Among the books with chapters you will be assigned to read or listen to via audio book:**

Decision Points, George W. Bush (the chapter on immigration reform)  
Votes of Confidence: A Young Person's Guide to American Elections, Jeff Fleischer  
Pelosi, Molly Ball  
A Promised Land, Barack Obama (the chapter on the erosion of Democratic norms and racism)  
The 1619 Project, Nikole Hannah-Jones  
The Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns, Sasha Issenberg  
The Hill to Die On: The Battle for Congress and the Future of Trump's America, Anna Palmer and Jake Sherman

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, 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.

I will be providing you with a list of specific journalists to follow on social media whose work will help you arrive to each of our class sessions prepared.

### Grading

#### a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
In-class individual assignments	10	10%
Weekly status reports and draft of final story	15	15%
Homework assignments	15	15%
Profile (due March 10)	20	20%
Final story (due May 11)	30	30%
Participation (Includes in-class group assignments and peer review)	10	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 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 of the written work you do in this course is expected to be your own. I encourage you to discuss matters relating to this course with others, but the journalism you submit must be your own ideas and your own words. If

you are having trouble, schedule an appointment during office hours. Please familiarize yourself with USC's policy on academic integrity. <https://sjacs.usc.edu/students/academic-integrity/>

There will be a Google sheets rubric for each assignment that I will share and review with you in individual feedback sessions. Some of the grading criteria will be simple syntax, grammar and spelling checklists, while others will be more subjective: Is this something I would want to read as a consumer of political journalism.

### ***Journalism***

Our curriculum is structured to prepare students to be successful in a professional news organization with the highest standards. Students will be evaluated first on accuracy and truthfulness in their stories. Good journalism prioritizes transparency, context and inclusivity. All stories should be written in AP style unless Annenberg style conflicts, in which case students can follow Annenberg style.

The following standards apply to news assignments.

"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. Sources are varied, diverse and offer a complete view of the topic.

"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. Sources are mostly varied, diverse and offer a complete view of the topic.

"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. Sources are repetitive or incomplete.

"D" stories require excessive rewriting, have numerous errors and should not have been submitted. Camera work is unsatisfactory or fails to show important elements. Sources are repetitive or incomplete.

"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.

For assignments other than conventional news reporting, quality of research and clarity of expression are the most important criteria. In research papers, good research should be presented through good writing, and good writing should be backed up by good research. Clarity of expression includes thoughtful organization of the material,

insight into the subject matter and writing free from factual, grammatical and spelling errors. Research should draw on a diverse range of sources.

Students are encouraged to submit their work for consideration to Annenberg Media or the Daily Trojan, or pitch it to mainstream media outlets with instructor’s assistance. Visit <http://bit.ly/SubmitAnnenbergMedia> for more information about that student news outlet’s 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. If you would like to submit your work for publication with Annenberg Media, I will connect you with newsroom editors to make sure you have access to the content management system.

**d. Grading Timeline**

I will work to grade your assignments within two weeks. I’ll provide detailed edits and feedback and review that with you during office hours.

**Assignment Submission Policy**

Assignments should be submitted via Google docs, shared with [christina.bellantoni@usc.edu](mailto:christina.bellantoni@usc.edu) with full edit access and the text also must be pasted into Blackboard via the TurnItIn system. Late assignments will be marked down by a full letter grade.

**Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/10/2022 – 4/29/2022; Final Exam Period: 5/4-11/2022)**

**Link:** <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20221/calendar/>

**Last day to add:** Friday, January 28, 2022

**Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund:** Friday, January 28, 2022

**Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit:** Friday, January 28, 2022 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

**Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund or change to Audit:** Tuesday, February 1

**Last day to withdraw without a “W” on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade:** Friday, February 25, 2022 [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.]

**Last day to drop with a mark of "W":** Friday, April 8, 2022

**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
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Date: 1/13</b>	Review syllabus. Welcome to the newsroom. Get to know yourself, and your peers.  Come to class having read the list of articles I send to you, including “The	At least 30 minutes of readings to be emailed by Jan. 11.  In-class writing assignment.	We will begin at 12:30 to allow for students to attend Media Center Open House at noon to sign up for the Politics Desk or others areas of interest and promptly head to the ASC building for class.

	<p>redistricting wars have begun. Who's winning so far" and "New gerrymander weapon."</p> <p>Why the Census matters. Gerrymandering, voting rights battles, and the courts.</p>		
<p><b>Week 2</b> <b>Date: 1/20</b></p>	<p>History lesson: Follow the national GOP from the Contract with America to the insurrection.</p> <p>Whose party? A primer on national Democrats.</p> <p>California and Texas, case studies in contrast.</p> <p>Nitty gritty of congressional district maps.</p> <p>Briefing on which lawmakers to watch.</p>	<p>At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday, including the immigration reform chapter of "Decision Points."</p> <p>In-class exercise.</p>	<p>First weekly status report with proposal for congressional district profile subject due Jan. 27. All status reports may be filed in a Google doc with the most recent on top so you can keep track of my feedback and comments. They may be conversational, but will be expected to be free of typos and clearly written.</p>
<p><b>Week 3</b> <b>Date: 1/27</b></p>	<p>The landscape: Why every election is a "change" election, what's happened so far and why it matters, and plan to watch Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin in November.</p> <p>Campaign and Congress who's who.</p> <p>Newsroom discussion about</p>	<p>At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday. You also should have completed "Votes of Confidence: A Young Person's Guide to American Elections" by now.</p> <p>Possible in-class exercise.</p>	<p>Weekly status report due Feb. 3.</p>



	<p>congressional district profile subjects.</p> <p>AP style on political terms and lawmakers.</p> <p>In-class guest.</p>		
<p><b>Week 4</b> <b>Date: 2/3</b></p>	<p>Most diverse Congress ever: identity politics and how demographic change in America has shaped the last 20 years. When the minority is the majority, how long does it take Washington to catch up?</p> <p>Pack journalism and how to differentiate yourself while covering the same campaign events as everyone else.</p> <p>Research tips: How to prepare for a political reporting trip.</p> <p>Improve your writing by the use of context, history, data, anecdotes, observation during field reporting and critical thinking.</p>	<p>At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday, including selections from "Pelosi."</p> <p>In-class exercise.</p>	<p>Weekly status report due Feb. 10.</p>
<p><b>Week 5</b> <b>Date: 2/10</b></p>	<p>The process: How we vote. Who votes. Voting rights battles, Texas SB1, and can democracy withstand this moment?</p> <p>All politics is national: how the battles are playing</p>	<p>At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday, including the chapter on racism from "A Promised Land" and "The 1619 Project."</p> <p>In-class exercise.</p>	<p>Weekly status report due Feb. 17.</p> <p>Homework due Thursday Feb. 17: Identify an interesting Texas congressional district primary that you will track on Election Day next month.</p>

	<p>out at every level, especially on school boards.</p> <p>How to report on state legislation in California. Where to get information and who to talk with to learn more.</p> <p>Evaluating the issues that matter. What drives people to show up?</p> <p>Political writing bootcamp, part 1, on great ledes and why context is king.</p>		
<p><b>Week 6</b> <b>Date: 2/17</b></p>	<p>How the media shapes a campaign. An honest evaluation of what the press gets wrong, shallow reporting and the rise of comedy-based news.</p> <p>Examining how your own experiences shape how you report and write.</p> <p>Class guest via recording.</p>	<p>At least 30 minutes of readings to be emailed by Monday.</p>	<p><b>Class will be held asynchronously</b> as half of the students will be headed to a reporting field trip.</p> <p>Homework due Thursday Feb. 24 by noon for the students who are not traveling on the field trip: Write a 500-word news story about a piece of legislation introduced in either California this session. You must quote from the legislation text, the lawmaker who is the lead author and someone who has a different perspective.</p>
<p><b>Week 7</b> <b>Date: 2/24</b></p>	<p>Trip debrief.</p> <p>What motivates voters? How are they persuaded?</p> <p>How do you track election night information? Where can you get reliable data?</p>	<p>At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday, including a selection from "The Victory Lab."</p> <p>In-class exercise.</p>	<p>Homework due Thursday March 3 by noon: Write a 100-word news brief about the results of the primary in the Texas congressional district you selected.</p> <p>Weekly status report also due March 3: Must include proposed lede and story outline.</p>

	How to write a news brief about an election result.		
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Date: 3/3</b>	Texas primary  Peer review of news briefs.  California candidates.  Political writing bootcamp, part 2, on how to fact-check and self-edit.	At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday.  Come to class with a list of two interesting people running for office in the state of California. We will use the names for an in-class exercise.	Your profile of the congressional district is due by noon on Thursday March 10. Submit via Google docs and Blackboard.
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Date: 3/10</b>	Present your profiles to the class.  State of the maps: California's process and what campaigns are doing.  Class discussion about California legislation.  In-class guest.	At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday.  Possible in-class exercise.	Sign up for office hours feedback sessions.  Homework due Thursday March 24 by noon for the students who are not traveling on the field trip: Write a 500-word news story about a piece of legislation introduced in either California this session. You must quote from the legislation text, the lawmaker who is the lead author and someone who has a different perspective.
<b>Spring Break</b> <b>Date: 3/14-3/18</b>	<b>No Class</b>		Half of the students will be taking part in a reporting field trip.  You will have a weekly status report with a proposal for your feature story due on Thursday March 24.
<b>Week 10</b> <b>Date: 3/24</b>	Trip debrief  Round robin session on feature story proposals.  The elephant in the room: 2024 and why everything that happens this year matters for what will happen in the presidential race.	At least 30 minutes of readings to be emailed by Monday.	Weekly status report due March 31.

<p><b>Week 11</b> <b>Date: 3/31</b></p>	<p>Shaping a narrative. Is it too early to tell what's going to happen in the congressional midterms?</p> <p>Which voices are you listening to in your reporting?</p> <p>Finding great sources (and getting them to actually talk with you).</p>	<p>At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday including "David Shor is telling Democrats what they don't want to hear."</p> <p>In-class writing assignment.</p>	<p>Weekly status report due April 7.</p>
<p><b>Week 12</b> <b>Date: 4/7</b></p>	<p>Polling. How to interpret the data at the local, state and national level.</p> <p>What's an exit poll?</p> <p>Political writing bootcamp, part 3, on avoiding numbers soup.</p>	<p>At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday.</p> <p>In-class exercise.</p>	<p>Weekly status report due April 14. Must include proposed lede and story outline.</p>
<p><b>Week 13</b> <b>Date: 4/14</b></p>	<p>Political pacing and campaign strategy. How to interpret what's on the calendar ahead, from party conventions to televised debates. How to interpret events large and small.</p> <p>Peer review of feature story lede and story outline.</p>	<p>At least 1 hour of readings to be emailed by Monday.</p>	<p><b>Draft of final story due by noon on Thursday, April 21. Submit via Google docs.</b></p>
<p><b>Week 14</b> <b>Date: 4/21</b></p>	<p>The future of democracy: why ideas that once seemed wacky like ranked-choice voting are gaining interest.</p> <p>Peer review of drafts.</p>	<p>At least 30 minutes of readings to be emailed by Monday, including "We went to the 'happiest place on Earth' and asked people to describe the election in one word."</p>	<p>Sign up for office hours to go over your drafts.</p> <p>Homework due Thursday April 28 by noon: Talk to three random voters following assignment sheet prompt and write 250 words on each.</p>

	In-class guest.	Possible in-class exercise.	
<b>Week 15</b> <b>Date: 4/28</b>	Peer review of voter briefs.  You've covered redistricting and the start of the congressional midterms. Now what?  I've asked presidents questions. AMA  Complete course evaluation.		
<b>FINAL CLASS</b> <b>May 11, 2-4 p.m.</b>	<b>Final story due by 2 p.m. on Wednesday, May 11. Submit via Google docs and Blackboard. There will be a final class session.</b>		

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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 Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776*

[osas.usc.edu/](http://osas.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](http://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](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.