**JOUR 499 Special Topics: Advanced**

**Newsroom Practicum: Esports**

**2 Units**

**Spring 2022 – Mondays – 6-7:40 p.m.**

**Section:** 21371R

**Location:** ANN 102

**Instructor: Rishi Chadha**

**Office:** ANN 102

**Office Hours:** Mondays, 5:30-6 p.m.

**Contact Info:** [rchadha@usc.edu](mailto:rchadha@usc.edu); (818) 252-9283

**Course Description**

This course is designed to give students expertise in a specific domain, allow them to critically evaluate the existing news and information about that topic, and produce quality journalism within this particular area of focus. It is taught by an experienced professional in the field. Students will learn the history and context of this “beat,” meet industry leaders, study best (and worst) practices, and produce content across multiple platforms. The class will consist of readings, lectures and work tied to a desk or beat in the Annenberg Media newsroom located in the Media Center at Wallis Annenberg Hall.

Advanced Newsroom Practicum: esports combines a study of the history, economics and role of esports with hands-on reporting on the topic. Through readings, analysis and guest speakers, students will develop expertise and critical appreciation about esports while producing weekly content in the form of articles, Twitch streams and social media posts through the Annenberg Media esports desk in the state-of-the-art Media Center at Wallis Annenberg Hall. Students will also develop original projects related to esports.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

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

* Identify and describe the role of key people, events and concepts in esports
* Analyze current coverage of esports and assess the degree to which they are accurate, complete and fair
* Report, produce and write news stories for web, TV, audio and social platforms that meet professional standards of publication.
* Create a plan for reaching new and/or underserved audiences within esports

**Course Notes**

All work will be reviewed and edited by the instructor. Work that is published on Annenberg Media platforms will also be edited by Annenberg Media student leaders serving as producers or editors.

**Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

Please have access to the following programs & websites:

* Discord
* Google Hangouts
* Twittch.TV

**Supplementary Reading**

“Good Luck Have Fun: The Rise of esports,” Roland Li

“How I Learned to Stop Hating & Love esports,” Jeffrey Wilson

Virtual(ly) athletes: where esports fit within the definition of “Sport”.

Jenny, S. E., Manning, R. D., Keiper, M. C., & Olrich, T. W. (2017). Quest, 69(1), 1-18.

The psychology of esports: A systematic literature review. Bányai, F., Griffiths, M. D., Király, O., & Demetrovics, Z. (2019). Journal of gambling studies, 35(2), 351-365.

“The esports Playbook: Maximizing Your Investment Through Understanding the Fans, “N. Pike and S. Master

“Professional Competitive Gaming: How It will Impact Developers Over the Next Five Years,” Piter van den Huevel

“Seven Commandments of Esports Communications,” The Story Mob

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Classes will consist of lecture and/or guest speakers as well contributing to the Annenberg Media esports desk.

Key Assignments & Projects for the Semester

* Students will complete four articles/other web content for the esports desk – the due dates for each article will be based on your assigned cohort
* Student will research, produce and edit three Twitch Streams on topics agreed upon by the class and the instructor – the due dates for each article will be based on your assigned cohort
* Students will participate in class though prepared questions for guest speakers, class discussion and quizzes
* Students will present a final project proposal for a new entity within esports utilizing research and characteristics of the industry covered in the class.

This may include one of the following:

A plan for creating esports coverage within a news outlet that **doesn’t** currently cover the topic;

A new method of delivering news and information about esports within an outlet that DOES cover esports;

A new esports team, game, or tournament,

An in-depth multimedia report about an undercovered aspect of esports

The proposal must be approved in advance by the instructor and showcase a sufficient strategy to sustain it based on evidence-backed research.

**Grading Breakdown of Grade**

| Assignment | % of Grade |
| --- | --- |
| Annenberg Media articles/content (4 articles total) | 40% |
| Annenberg esports Twitch streams (3 Streams total) | 30% |
| Participation | 10% |
| Final Project | 20% |
| **TOTAL** | **100%** |

**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 |

**Grading Standards**

***Journalism***

All assignments will be edited on a professional basis and you will be judged first on the accuracy, fairness and completeness of your stories. You will then be evaluated for broadcast style, editing, production value, originality and the ability to meet deadlines.

**“A” stories** are accurate, clear, comprehensive stories that are well written and require only minor copyediting (i.e., they would be aired or published). Video work must also be shot and edited creatively, be well paced and include good sound bites and natural sound that add flavor, color or emotion to the story.

**“B” stories** require more than minor editing and have a few style or spelling errors or one significant error of omission. For video, there may be minor flaws in the composition of some shots or in the editing. Good use of available sound bites is required.

**“C” stories** need considerable editing or rewriting and/or have many spelling, style or omission errors. Camera work and editing techniques in video stories are mediocre or unimaginative, but passable. Sound bites add little or no color - only information that could be better told in the reporter’s narration.

**“D” stories** require excessive rewriting, have numerous errors and should not have been submitted. Camera work is unsatisfactory or fails to show important elements.

**“F” stories** have failed to meet the major criteria of the assignment, are late, have numerous errors or both. Your copy should not contain any errors in spelling, style, grammar and facts. Any misspelled or mispronounced proper noun will result in an automatic “F” on that assignment. Any factual error will also result in an automatic “F” on the assignment. Accuracy is the first law of journalism. The following are some other circumstances that would warrant a grade of “F” and potential USC/Annenberg disciplinary action:

• Fabricating a story or making up quotes or information.

• Plagiarizing a script/article, part of a script/article or information from any source.

• Staging video or telling interview subjects what to say.

• Using video shot by someone else and presenting it as original work.

• Shooting video in one location and presenting it as another location.

• Using the camcorder to intentionally intimidate, provoke or incite a person or a group of people to elicit more “dramatic” video.

• Promising, paying or giving someone something in exchange for doing an interview either on or off camera.

• Missing a deadline.

**Grading Timeline**

*Assignments will be graded within 2 weeks from submission unless otherwise mentioned*

**Assignment Submission Policy**

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F.

B. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard or Google Drive

Students are encouraged to submit their work for consideration to Annenberg Media or the Daily Trojan, or pitch it to mainstream media outlets. Visit <http://bit.ly/SubmitAnnenbergMedia> for more information about that submission and review process and email Daily Trojan news editors at [dt.city@gmail.com](mailto:dt.city@gmail.com) for more on how to pitch your work to the campus newspaper.

**Laptop Policy**

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [**Annenberg Digital Lounge**](http://www.annenbergdl.org/) for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s [Information Technology Services](http://itservices.usc.edu/wireless/support/) website.

**Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (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/Preparation | Deliverable/Due Dates |
| Week 1  Date: 1/10 | History of esports – Is it a sport and why does that matter? |  |  |
| Week 2  Date: 1/17 | No Class – MLK Holiday |  |  |
| Week 3  Date: 1/24 | History of esports, part 2  Team, League, & Franchising Models in esports |  |  |
| Week 4  Date: 1/31 | Diversity & Inclusion in esports | Prepare questions for Guest Panel | Cohort 1 Articles Due |
| Week 5  Date: 2/7 | esports Media & Journalism | Prepare questions for guest speaker | Cohort 2 Articles Due  Cohort 1 Live Stream Due |
| Week 6  Date: 2/14 | Social Media in esports |  | Cohort 1 Articles Due  Cohort 2 Live Stream Due |
| Week 7  Date: 2/21 | No Class – President’s Day |  |  |
| Week 8  Date: 2/28 | Social Media in esports | Prepare questions for guest speaker | Cohort 2 Articles Due  Cohort 1 Live Stream Due |
| Week 9  Date: 3/7 | Licensing & Content Distribution in esports |  | Cohort 1 Articles Due  Cohort 2 Live Stream Due |
| Spring Break  Date: 3/14 | No Class |  |  |
| Week 10  Date: 3/21 | Licensing & Content Distribution in esports |  | Cohort 2 Articles Due  Cohort 1 Live Stream Due |
| Week 11  Date: 3/28 | esports Economics | Prepare questions for guest speaker | Cohort 1 Articles Due  Cohort 2 Live Stream Due |
| Week 12  Date: 4/4 | esports Economics |  | Cohort 2 Articles Due |
| Week 13  Date: 4/11 | Review |  |  |
| Week 14  Date: 4/18 | Final Presentation run through and feedback |  |  |
| Week 15  Date: 4/25 | Course Evaluations + Final presentations in class |  |  |
| FINAL EXAM PERIOD  Date: 5/9, 7-9 p.m. | Final presentations in class + Summative Review |  |  |

**Policies and Procedures**

**Communication**

Students are encouraged to contact me to set up time via Discord or email in the event they can’t make office hours. I am happy to set time throughout the week.

**Internships**

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must by unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism or public relations class.

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**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](https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

*USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity*

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism’s policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

“Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an ‘F’ on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators.”

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

**b. Support Systems**

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling/)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

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

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](https://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault/)

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

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298*

[equity.usc.edu](https://equity.usc.edu/), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*

[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\_report](https://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776*

[dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu/)

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710*

[campussupport.usc.edu](https://campussupport.usc.edu/)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](https://diversity.usc.edu/)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

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

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu/)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Annenberg Student Success Fund*

<https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

**About Your Instructor**

As the Global Head of Gaming Partnerships, Rishi brings exceptional content from global gaming leagues, esports franchises, publishers & developers, and gamers to fans in real time, while driving reach and revenue for these strategic partners and Twitter. Prior to joining Twitter in 2017, he spent time at Mobcrush, where he grew the mobile games live streaming platform to over 1 million monthly active users within 30 days of launch. As the vice president of content partnerships at Major League Gaming, he helped launch the company’s live streaming platform, MLG.tv, and led strategic partnerships with top publishers, including Valve, to create programs like the first North American CS:GO major, MLG Columbus. Prior to Major League Gaming, Rishi focused his career on elevating the visibility of the gaming community at notable organizations such as Machinima and Gunnar Optiks. Rishi is a graduate of the University of California, San Diego, where he received a BA in Economics. Follow him on Twitter at @RdotChadha.