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**JOUR 490/590: Directed Research**

**National Reckoning on Greek Life**

**2 Units**

**Spring 2022**

**Section:** 21430D/21669D

**Location:** Media Center

**Instructor: Alan Mittelstaedt**

**Office:** Media Center

**Contact Info:** Slack, Cell: 626 372-2453

[amittels@usc.edu](mailto:amittels@usc.edu)

**Student: Name**

**Student ID:** Ten-digit USC ID number

**Major:** Program of study

**Contact Info:** Email and phone number

**Course Description**

## The group of 4-6 students will examine this fall’s nationwide uproar over reports of sexual assaults and druggings on college and university campuses. Students will investigate the allegations and the responses by campus officials, student leaders and law enforcement agencies. Students will capture the national movement pushing for solutions. Students will produce a national project and publish their work at uscannenbergmedia.com. This directed research course is open to all students.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Students will engage in investigative techniques and focus national attention on a cultural and criminal problem that has defied solutions for decades on campuses nationwide. Along the way, students will:

* Develop strategies for making private and public institutions accountable on matters of grave public concern
* Refine research techniques for collecting key information
* Illuminate possible solutions for the deep cultural problem
* Synthesize complex information into readable and viewable stories for mainstream audiences
* Master understanding of the law pertaining to sexual violence
* Restore transparency to needlessly confidential disciplinary processes

**Description of Assignment**

**Students will contribute stories, data and multimedia to a team project examining the national movement taking shape at two dozen universities and colleges nationwide:**

Students will work together to produce one project national in scope. Assignments will include one or more of these angles:profiles of leaders on all sides of the reform debate, evaluation of the performance of officials at key universities, investigation of police/prosecutor practices across U.S. in pursuing campus sexual assault cases; and examination of how campuses could make public now-secret discipline.

Each student will produce two, 800-word text stories or the equivalent. Students may produce a video or documentary in place of one of the text stories. This will be a multimedia project and include interactives showing key findings at targeted universities and colleges.

**Weekly beat memo:** A short memo noting who the student interviewed, what documents and data were obtained, what new information the student found out, and the student’s reporting plan for the coming week, will be due at the start of class each week.

**Grading**

**a. Breakdown of Grade**

| Assignment | Points | % of Grade |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Class participation/communication outside class | 10 | 10% |
| Story 1 for our national project | 40 | 40% |
| Story 2 for our national project | 40 | 40% |
| Weekly Beat memo | 10 | 10% |
| **TOTAL** | **100** | **100%** |

**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 |

Students must earn a grade of C- or better in JOUR 490 to receive major credit. Students must earn a grade of B or better in JOUR 590 to receive “Credit” (CR) towards the major.

**c. Grading Standards**

***Journalism***

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

**“A” stories** are accurate, clear, comprehensive stories that are well written and require only minor copyediting. 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.

**Assignment Submission Policy**

A folder for each student will be created on Quip. a file management system. Stories will be created on Google docs, with the links placed in a Quip folder.

**Required Readings and Bibliography of Sources**

Students will read, watch and listen to national, regional and local news stories to keep current on developments facing fraternities nationwide.

**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 Virtual Commons](http://vc.uscannenberg.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)**

**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**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Research or Activity** | **Deliverable/Due Dates** |  |
| **Week 1**  **Jan. 12** | Discuss scope of our national project  Decide which schools to include in project  Make initial assignments for first story  <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/01/education/fraternities-rape-sexual-assault.html>  <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/18/nyregion/manhattan-da-rape-cases-dropped.html>  <https://www.kcrg.com/2021/10/26/lawsuit-filed-over-rape-allegations-fiji-house-university-iowa/>  <https://ope.ed.gov/campussafety/#/>  https://fraternallaw.com/news | Beat note due Jan 19  First pitch due in two weeks |  |
| **Week 2**  **Jan. 19** | Continue making assignments  Finetune scope of project  Discuss legal issues  <https://www.rainn.org/articles/title-ix> | Beat note due Jan. 26  Story pitch 1 due Jan. 26 |  |
| **Week 3**  **Jan. 26** | Discuss our findings  Rough outline of project  Review pitches for Story 1 | Beat note due Feb. 2  Revised pitch for Story 1 due Feb. 2 |  |
| **Week 4**  **Feb. 2** | Discuss our findings  Discuss infographics  Refine project outline  Review revised pitches Story 1 | Beat note due Feb. 9  Final pitch of Story 1 due Feb. 9 |  |
| **Week 5**  **Feb. 9** | Discuss our findings  Begin mapping out interactive element  Review final pitch of Story 1 | Beat note due Feb. 16  Draft Story 1 due Feb. 16 |  |
| **Week 6**  **Feb. 16** | Discuss our findings  Review drafts of story 1 | Beat note due Feb. 23  Continued work on Story 1 due Feb 23 |  |
| **Week 7**  **Feb. 23** | Discuss our findings  Review drafts of Story 1  Identify elements for interactives | Beat note due March 2  Continued work on Story 1 due March 2 |  |
| **Week 8**  **March 2** | Discuss our findings  Review drafts of Story 1 | Beat note due March 9  Final drafts of Story 1 due March |  |
| **Week 9**  **March 9** | Discuss our findings  Review Story 1 | Beat note due March 2  Pitch Story 2 due March 23 |  |
| **Spring Break**  **March 16** | **NO CLASS** |  |  |
| **Week 11**  **March 23** | Discuss our findings  Review pitches Story 2  Begin mapping out project and design | Beat note due March 30  Draft of Story 2 due March 30 |  |
| **Week 11**  **March 30** | Discuss our findings  Review draft of Story 2 | Beat note due April 6  Continued work on Story 2 due April 6 |  |
| **Week 12**  **April 6** | Discuss our findings  Review Story 2  Identify multimedia elements for final project | Beat note due April 13  Continued work on Story 2 |  |
| **Week 13**  **April 13** | Discuss our findings  Review Story 2 | Beat note due April 20  Final draft of Story 2 due April 20 |  |
| **Week 14**  **April 20** | Discuss our findings  Design and review final project | Beat note due April 27 |  |
| **Week 15**  **April 27** | Discuss our findings  Review final project  Submit project for publication |  |  |

**Policies and Procedures**

**Additional Policies**

**Communication**

**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*

[osas.usc.edu/](https://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 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**

**Alan Mittelstaedt** started as an adjunct instructor in 2003 and joined the full-time faculty in Fall 2009 to help manage Annenberg Digital News, which produced Neon Tommy, the forerunner of uscannenbergmedia.com, where he now is a faculty advisor. During the previous decade, he was news editor at Los Angeles’ alt-weeklies, including seven years at the L.A. Weekly, where he wrote a political column and oversaw six hard-nosed reporters. His mainstream newspaper jobs include city editor at the Portland (Maine) Press Herald and at the Pasadena Star-News, and investigative reporter and editor at the San Bernardino County Sun, where he was named Employee of the Year despite questioning many decisions of his Gannett bosses. At 15, he published his first article called “Deschooling Society: The Evils of Compulsory Education,” and handed out 1,000 copies at his rural Virginia high school over the protests of his principal, who threatened to suspend him.