



**JOUR 206: Reporting and Writing
Practicum (Community Reporting)
1 unit**

**Spring 2023 – Fridays – 9 a.m.- 12:50 p.m./12-
3:50 p.m.**

Section: 21027R/21029R

Location: ANN 102

Instructor: Esmeralda Fabián Romero

Office: ANN 102

Office Hours: Weekdays, by appointment only

Contact Info: efabianr@usc.edu , 562-445-1052 (cell)

Pronouns: She/her

Course Description

This course gives journalism majors hands-on experience in writing digital news for publication on uscannenbergmedia.com. During this weekly lab, students work four consecutive hours for the USC and/or South Los Angeles desks of Annenberg Media, reporting, writing, and distributing stories assigned by student editors with guidance from experienced faculty and coaches. This course runs concurrently with JOUR 207 Reporting and Writing I and JOUR 307 Reporting and Writing II. The practicum is credit/no credit.

At USC Annenberg, we produce journalistic content that reflects anti-racist practices, and addresses social and racial inequities. We are committed to producing content that reflects inclusiveness and diversity.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Identify elements that make a story newsworthy for different audiences
- Identify and use diverse sources in news stories in order to create accurate, complete and relevant news and information
- Research and verify information for use in news stories on digital platforms and social media
- Write news briefs and stories on deadline and in accordance with professional industry standards under the guidance of student editors and faculty and in collaboration with other student reporters and editor
- Create content for digital and social platforms on deadline and in accordance with professional industry standards and in collaboration with other student reporters and editors
- Apply principles of ethics in real-life news situations
- Students will be able to describe how systemic biases (race, gender, etc.) operate in journalism and identify past and current examples

Concurrent Enrollment: JOUR 207 Reporting and Writing I or JOUR 307 Reporting and Writing II.

***Note: All undergraduate journalism majors take two semesters of JOUR 206, one in Live Production and one in Community Reporting, concurrent with JOUR 207 and JOUR 307. These can be taken in either sequence.**

Description and Assessment of Assignments

This class is about hands-on learning. It is designed to give students practical experience in a newsroom. Student work is published on uscannenbergmedia.com and Annenberg Media social media platforms. Class work consists of on-the-job training and experience that mirrors the real world.

At the start of the semester, students will participate in mandatory newsroom trainings. Beginning in week three or four, students will act as general assignment reporters in an active newsroom. ***There will be additional trainings that students must complete throughout the semester in order to receive a passing grade for this class.***

Course Notes and Policies

The practicum is credit/no credit.

Students are expected to attend all their scheduled shifts. To receive credit for the lab shift, students must arrive on time, aware of the day's news and prepared to give their full attention to your newsroom duties. Please don't schedule or conduct interviews or work on assignments for other classes during the lab shift.

Reporting practices will follow public health guidelines and may change throughout the semester. The student-led news outlets that make up Annenberg Media count on student journalists.

If you must miss a shift because of documented illness or emergency, please let your instructor and student editors know via the newsroom Slack channel. You'll need to make up the session within two weeks (religious holidays are exempt, as are some other limited circumstances.) If you miss any sessions at the beginning of the semester, please reach out to your instructor to make them up as soon as possible, so you have completed all required training. If you're having difficulty fulfilling your shifts at any time or for any reason, please reach out to your instructor for support.

Students are expected to check regularly their USC email/Blackboard, and Slack. Most of the communication within the newsroom, including instructor and editors happens through Annenberg Media Slack channel.

Students who need to meet with the instructor should arrange a meeting time on weekdays with 24-hour advance notice.

Learning how to become a good journalist means understanding and questioning your own biases and assumptions and considering the "fault lines" present in most stories. As a reporter, you will strive for a diverse range of sources and voices in your stories, and your instructors will help support those values. Students should complete the Source Diversity Tracking assignment throughout the semester by asking their sources to provide the newsroom with demographic information to ensure our coverage is reflective of the communities we cover.

This lab shift involves robust discussion about story ideas and peer review and editing. We are committed to a culture of respect at Annenberg Media. If you have concerns about interactions with student editors, reporters, or faculty, or want to express other concerns about the Media Center, you can use [this form](#) to provide anonymous feedback. It will be reviewed by the Director of the Media Center. If you prefer to raise issues to others at Annenberg who are NOT affiliated with the Media Center, you can fill out [this form](#).

Required Readings, hardware/software, laptops and supplementary materials

There are no required textbooks in this class, but please bookmark the following Media Center guides:

There are no required textbooks in this class, but please bookmark the following Media Center guides:

- [USC Annenberg Media Resources](#) — links to schedules, tools, guidelines, etc.

- [Annenberg Media Guide to Equitable Reporting and Newsroom Style](#) which covers Annenberg Media’s standards and best practices for writing and reporting in a respectful and conscious way.
- [11 Style Rules to Know Now](#) Review of AP style.
- [Media Center Ethics Guidelines](#) — a guide to practices and the workplace environment.

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/) and you can also use Stylebot in the Annenberg Media Slack account for AP style questions.

Annenberg Media uses AP style in assignments, including when writing about race and ethnicity. The new AP style guidelines include capitalizing Black and deleting the hyphen in terms such as Asian American. Please consult the Annenberg Media Guide to Equitable Reporting and Newsroom Style for more discussion on accurate and respectful language.

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 who are having issues with equipment or technology that limit their ability to participate fully in class. Please reach out to your instructor and/or advisor if this is the case. We can help connect you with resources.

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, ElevASIAN 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.

Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	% of Grade
Weekly handoff notes	90%
Participation/ Story pitches	10%
TOTAL	100%

b. Grading Scale

Letter grades and corresponding point value ranges.

Letter grade and corresponding numerical point range		
95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+ (D plus)

90% to 94%: A- (A minus)	77% to 79%: C+ (C plus)	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+ (B plus)	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D- (D minus)
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C- (C minus)	0% to 59%: F

c. Grading Standards

This is a credit/no credit course. You will not receive a letter grade for this class but will be assessed on your effort and output. The aim is to produce publishable work, which could help you if you are seeking a job in a newsroom or as a student manager with Annenberg Media in subsequent semesters. **You cannot pass this class without attending the lab sessions, completing all required trainings and doing the hands-on work during your lab sessions.**

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. 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 for more on how to pitch work to the campus newspaper.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

(15 weeks: 1/9/2023 – 4/28/2023; Final Exam Period: 5/3-10/2023)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20231/calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, January 27, 2023

Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund: Friday, January 27, 2023

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Saturday, January 28, 2023 [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, January 31, 2023

Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, February 24, 2023 [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 7, 2023

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

A weekly schedule of the topics, readings, and deliverables for the course.

Important note to students: Students are required to attend all shifts beginning the first week of classes. Many workshops will be presented during your shift; some will require you to view a recorded presentation BEFORE you arrive. *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.*

**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
Week 1 Date: 1/13	Newsroom training	As advised	
Week 2 Date: 1/20	Newsroom training	As advised	
Week 3 Date: 1/27	Newsroom training	As advised	
Week 4 Date: 2/3	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 5 Date: 2/10	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 6 Date: 2/17	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	

Week 7 Date: 2/24	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 8 Date: 3/3	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 9 Date: 3/10	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Spring Break Date: 3/13-3/17	No class: Spring Break		
Week 10 Date: 3/24	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 11 Date: 3/31	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 12 Date: 4/7	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 13 Date: 4/14	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 14 Date: 4/21	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised	
Week 15 Date: 4/28	Newsroom general assignment reporting as advised	As advised. There is no final for this class	

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 Academic Conduct

The USC Student Handbook (https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC_StudentCode_August2022.pdf)

Academic Integrity

USC's Unifying Value of integrity is a foundational principle that inspires the community to match its values to its actions. Academic integrity is ultimately the sole guarantor of the legitimacy of one's education, and therefore, is vitally important not just for oneself, but for the entire USC community. The value of all USC degrees is negatively impacted by violations of academic integrity. In the classroom, general principles of academic integrity 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. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles.

Academic Integrity violations (academic dishonesty) include, but are not limited to: Plagiarism and Cheating

- The submission of material authored by another person but represented as the student's own work, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.
- Re-using any portion of one's own work (essay, term paper, project, or other assignment) previously submitted without citation of such and without permission of the instructor(s) involved.
- Improper acknowledgment of sources in essays or papers, including drafts. Also, all students involved in collaborative work (as permitted by the instructor) are expected to proofread the work and are responsible for all particulars of the final draft.
- Acquisition of academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or other assignments, from any source and the subsequent presentation of those materials as the student's own work, or providing academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or assignments that another student submits as their own work.

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity

https://catalogue.usc.edu/preview_entity.php?catoid=16&ent_oid=3459

"Since its founding, the 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."

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.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

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

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

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273- 8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

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.

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

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

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

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411

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

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101

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

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenbergscholarships.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-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.

Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund

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

Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

About Your Instructor

Esmeralda Fabián Romero is a bilingual journalist with extensive expertise covering public education, currently working as a contributor for PBS SoCal, LA School Report/The 74 Million, and Los Angeles Times Español, among other online publications. Fabián Romero is also leading a partnership between [USC Annenberg and The 74 Million](#), launched in January 2022 to develop new education journalists. Fabián Romero was selected as a fellow by the prestigious Loyola Law School as a Journalist Law School Fellow in 2014. She has been awarded by the California Teachers Association for Media Excellence in 2016. She is a member of the Education Writers Association and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. She was awarded with a certification by USC Annenberg on 'Managing Complexity in Diverse Organizations' in the Spring 2022.