

**SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS**  
**CTPR 404 - Practicum in Podcast Production**

**SYLLABUS**



**Semester:** Spring 2024

**Location:** Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts

**Instructor:** Jaime Roque, [jaimeroq@usc.edu](mailto:jaimeroq@usc.edu)

**SA:** Johnny Bennett, [jgbennett@usc.edu](mailto:jgbennett@usc.edu)

**Tech Coordinators:** Vince Gonzales, [vgonzales@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:vgonzales@cinema.usc.edu) ,  
Sergeo Santana-Gomez, [sgomezasantana@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:sgomezasantana@cinema.usc.edu)

**Course Coordinator:** Harrison Merkt, [merkt@usc.edu](mailto:merkt@usc.edu)

**Office Hours:** Zoom by request via email

**Class Meeting time:** Thursdays 4:00-6:30

**Units:** 2

**This class is open to all students from any school or department in the university.** Students enrolling in CTPR 404 do not require television production experience. All the skills needed to successfully complete this course are taught in class.

**INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE**

This course introduces students to each component of podcast production and the essential skills required to develop and produce an original podcast episode with creative and technical intent.

Students work in teams to develop ideas and present a pitch, then research, write outlines or scripts, recruit guests and present their work for feedback in class. Following instruction on equipment in the Trojan Vision studio facilities, they serve as crew members for their team to record and post produce their shows for distribution.

The finished podcast episodes are promoted and archived as a production of Trojan Vision, the USC campus television station, and released to stream on the station's YouTube channel. Through the semester, guest speakers offer students a window into professional podcast production, trending shows, marketing, sponsorship, and the future of the industry.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the technical components of recording in a studio setting.
- Learn how to recruit guests and prepare for interviews with research and multi-draft question development.
- Produce essentials for podcasting with scheduling and formal guest correspondence.
- Write essentials for podcasting from question development to transcript editing to VO and ADR.
- Develop best practices for editing using Davinci Resolve, Adobe Premiere, or Final Cut Pro X (data management, workflow, peer-based feedback).
- Marketing materials, distribution, and promotion in podcasting.

## HOW DO STUDENTS REGISTER FOR A CLASS?

Each 404 section introduces students to a different format of podcasting. This semester, we offer:

- A panel-based, unscripted video podcast featuring guests representing different points of view on a current subject of interest to students. (18519).
- An interview-driven scripted audio podcast featuring multiple interviewees contributing to a fully realized story. (18520)

For students who wish to register for a 4-Unit option (both sections in one semester), email your request to the Trojan Vision Program Manager, Harrison Merkt [merkt@usc.edu](mailto:merkt@usc.edu).

## PREREQUISITES

This class is open to students from any school or division of the university. Students are not required to have any podcast, audio or video experience. A laptop or mobile device with a Wi Fi/Internet connection is required. Access to recording and editing software needed for assignments will be provided. [Davinci Resolve Free Version](#) and Computer and or [hard drive with at least 1 Tb of disk space](#).

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Grades are based on the timely submission and quality of assignments, preparation for class, engagement in class discussions, individual initiative, professional behavior and team collaboration.

### **Video Podcast Assignment: 50 %**

- Episode one sheet- Week 2
- Pitch Deck- Week 3
- Episode Outline- Week 3
- Pre Production/Production Planning Sheet- Week 4
- Episode Art Work- Week 14
- Podcast Trailer- Week 15
- Video Social Media Asset- Week 15
- Rough Cut with Producer Notes- One week after recording
- V1 cut with edits/notes- Two weeks after recording
- Final Cut-Week 15

### **Additional Assignments: (30%)**

- “This College Life” 5- 10 minute audio only assignment OR attend Jan 27, 2024 [live podcast recording at Getty Museum](#)- (10%) Week 15
- Podcast Review Assignment- (5%) Week 2
- Video Editing Assignment- (5%) Week 4
- Final Summation Essay- (10%) Week 15

### **Attendance: (20%)**

3 absences equal 10% drop in grade.

## **WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO ADJUSTMENT)**

*This schedule is based on classes beginning the week of January 11th, 2024 and ending the week of April 25th, 2024.*

### **Week 1: January 11th, 2024**

- Introductions: Students and staff
- Review Syllabus and expectations
- Discuss format of your podcast
- Discuss assignments and deliverables
- Introduce Google Class Folder
- Tour Trojan Facilities/Podcasting spaces
- Discuss production days/sign-up sheets
- Meet groups/Discuss roles and responsibilities
- Equipment Demo
- Introduce Podcast one sheet

### **Assignment due next week:**

- Podcast one sheet
- Podcast review assignment

### **Week 2: January 18th, 2024**

- History of Podcast/ Our podcast “Look and Feel”
- Building your show-Episode outline and development
- Pitch Deck
- Your Podcast Guest
- Pre-Production and Production Day
- Set-up studio and practice time

Assignment due next week:

- Pitch Deck
- Episode Outline

Week 3: January 25th, 2024

- Pitch Fest
- Your Podcast Intro/Outro
- Revisiting Roles- What does your role do?
- Pre-Production/Production Planning
- Set Design
- Intro Video Editing Assignment
- Practice setting up studio

Assignments due next week:

- Video Editing Assignment
- Set Design/pre production/planning Doc

Week 4: February 1st, 2024

- Post Production Archiving
- Demo Post Production Workflow
- Audio/Video Software
- Podcast Soundesign
- Frame.io
- Practice setting up the studio
- Introducing P.A.(Production Assistant) work

Assignments due next week:

- Prepare for Production and PA work

Week 5: February 8th, 2024

- PRODUCTION DAY

Assignments due next week:

- Prepare for Production and PA work
- Rough Cut

Week 6: February 15th, 2024

- PRODUCTION DAY

Assignments due next week:

- Prepare for Production and PA work
- Rough Cut
- V1

Week 7: February 22nd, 2024

- PRODUCTION DAY

Assignments due next week:

- Prepare for Production and PA work
- Rough Cut
- V1

Week 8: February 29th, 2024

- PRODUCTION DAY

Assignments due next week:

- Prepare for Production and PA work
- Rough Cut
- V1

Week 9: March 7th, 2024

- PRODUCTION DAY

Assignments due next week:

- Prepare for Production and PA work
- Rough Cut
- V1

March 10th-March 17th- SPRING BREAK

Week 10: March 21st, 2024

- PRODUCTION DAY

Assignments due next week:

- Prepare for Production and PA work
- Rough Cut
- V1

Week 11: March 28th, 2024

- PRODUCTION DAY

Assignments due next week:

- Prepare for Production and PA work
- Rough Cut
- V1

Week 12: April 4th, 2024

- PRODUCTION DAY

Assignments due next week:

- Rough Cut
- V1

Week 13: April 11th, 2024

- Creating Your Podcast Trailer
- Creating Social Media Assets
- Critical Feedback for Podcast Cuts
- Final Summation Essay
- Episode Artwork
- Work and Editing in Class

Assignments due next week:

- Episode Artwork
- V1

#### Week 14: April 18th, 2024

- Critical feedback for deliverables
- In class editing sessions
- Final Deliverables revisited
- Work on backlogged production

#### Assignments due next week:

- Final Summation Essay and Final Video Podcast (upload to Google Drive)
- Social Media Assets
- Podcast Trailer
- “This College Life” or Getty Assignment

#### Week 15: April 25th, 2024

- Listening Party!
- Podcast Show Week. Completed podcasts published. Assignment due April 25<sup>th</sup> by 3pm.
- Submit Final Summation Essay to Google Drive by April 26th, 2024 at 11:59 pm.

## **Reading, Listening and Viewing Assignments:**

Students read chapters from books, articles, watch videos and listen to podcasts that provide context, samples and background for in-class instruction and practice.

### **Books**

- - [Radio: An Illustrated Guide by This American Life \(required\)](#)
- - [Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination](#), by Susan Douglas (Suggested but not required)
- - [Podcast Solutions: The Complete Guide to Audio and Video Podcasting](#), by Michael Geoghegan and Dan Klass (Suggested but not required)

### **Articles**

- - [An Oral History of the Podcast by Richard Benson](#) Esquire, September 11th, 2019
- [Inside the Podcast Brain: Why Do Audio Stories Captivate?](#) The Atlantic, April, 2015
- [‘Serial,’ Podcasting’s First Breakout Hit, Sets Stage for More](#), New York Times, Nov. 23, 2014
- [Podcasting is the New Personal Essay](#), Columbia Journalism Review, December 12, 2017

### **Newsletter**

- - Follow [Hot Pod](#), and [We Edit Podcasts](#), provides analysis, insight and commentary on the growing podcast industry.

### **Podcast Listening, self-directed. Here are a few aggregators.**

- [NPR Podcast Directory](#)
- [PRX](#)
- [Joe Frank](#)
- [KCRW Podcast](#)
- [Gimlet Media](#)

- [Golden Age of Radio](#)
- [War of the Worlds 1938 Live Broadcast](#)

## **SUMMATION ESSAY:**

The students assess where they started in January (expectations) how they progressed through the semester, (where they are now). What shifted their knowledge, skills, perceptions along the way. We suggest students deliver this assignment in their chosen media - podcast, video, PowerPoint.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Students are expected to be **on time** and prepared for each class. This course is performance oriented, and attendance is extremely important. **Two absences** will result in a grade being lowered by one full letter (example: A becomes B). **A third absence** will result in a grade being lowered by one additional, full letter grade (B becomes C). A student's grade will be lowered by one full letter for each additional absence. **Students must contact the instructor in advance if they are going to be absent.**

**Tardiness:** A student is deemed late 7 minutes after the class is scheduled to start. One late arrival may not affect your grade. Two late arrivals equate to one full unexcused absence. (IE: A becomes A-). Three late arrivals may result in your grade being dropped by two portions (IE: A- becomes B). Four late arrivals may result in your grade being dropped three portions (one full point: B becomes C). Lateness of more than 30 minutes will count as an absence.

**Timely attendance is mandatory and failure to attend all class sections from beginning to end may affect grades.**

- Exemptions will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, and must be supported by a written accommodation request from the USC Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS).
- Students who become ill and need to self-isolate will be supported in their efforts to stay current with classwork and assignments. Faculty are no longer required to provide an option for students to zoom into class. However, Faculty may choose to use zoom at their discretion in an effort to help students stay current in their course work.

**Students must contact the professor or SA 24 hours prior to class start time if they need to miss class for any reason.**

## **CELL PHONE AND ONLINE CLASS POLICIES:**

Cell phones, laptops, tablets and other personal devices may not be used during class unless they are necessary for class exercises. Out of respect to students, SAs and instructors, please bring a courteous and professional attitude to all classes.



## **Academic Integrity:**

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form). This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the USC Student Handbook. All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct.

## **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy:**

In this course, you are allowed to use artificial intelligence (AI)-powered programs to help you with assignments that indicate the permitted use of AI. You should also be aware that AI text generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses; thus, they are not yet prepared to produce text that meets the standards of this course. To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Please review the instructions in each assignment for more details on how and when to use AI Generators for your submissions.

## **Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies:**

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

# STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS:

## **Academic Conduct:**

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).

## **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.

*Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710*

Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.

<https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/>

*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 Disability Services and Programs - (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 & Intervention - (213) 821-4710*

[campussupport.usc.edu](http://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](http://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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call* [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

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

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

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.

**FOOD AND DRINKS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX.**

**THIS SYLLABUS DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT RESTRICTIONS OR REQUIREMENTS THAT MAY BE IN PLACE DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS.**