Course ID and Title: CNTV-419 | INSIDE THE BUSINESS OF FILM & TELEVISION
Units:
SUMMER 2023 : Tuesday & Thursday 5pm-9pm (June 25th to August 2rd)
Location: [Physical address and/or course-related URLs, etc.]

Instructor: Kim Sherman
Office: Zoom
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4320827026
Meeting ID: 432 082 7026
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 1pm – 2pm PT
Contact Info: kimsherm@usc.edu

Teaching Assistant: Sherean Jones
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Course Description

This course was designed to help students understand the role of the producer at every stage of life for a film or television, game, or podcast project: while also helping students recognize and develop their personal point of view, as both artist and businessperson.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to personally identify strategic creative projects, build a professional prospectus and corresponding pitch materials, identify necessary bespoke creative elements for their project, and deliver an effective presentation of their materials. Students should also demonstrate effective constructive-criticism techniques, and develop a healthy relationship with industry news and topics.

Course Notes

Class will be most effective for all involved through active participation in discussion of readings, watch lists, presentations, critiques, and preparing questions for guest speakers. For this reason, students will be graded on participation in class, as well as completion of mandatory assignments.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Link information for the USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program. Link information for software support and availability. USC Technology Support Links Zoom information for students, Blackboard help for students, Software available to USC Campus.]

Students will have recommended film watch assignments, so please reach out if you are having trouble accessing any of the required films.
Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
All Readings will be taken from contemporary articles, so students become familiar with trade publications and industry support networks.

Optional Readings and Supplementary Materials
Dear Producer Newsletter, IndieWire , Filmmaker Magazine, Deadline, Hollywood Reporter, Variety, Screen Daily, Unspooled Podcast, IndieWire: Screen Talk Podcast, NPR, NPR Pop-Culture Happy Hour, Join Letterboxd, Sundance Collab

Description and Assessment of Assignments
This course is designed to help students with step-by-step preparation of a final pitch deck and prospectus, so that they understand the basic building blocks of the business side of their chosen art forms. Students will be graded on their visual presentation, public speaking presentation, engagement through critique and feedback sessions, as well as their individual progress from Midterm proposal to final presentation.

ASSIGNMENTS: (See Calendar for Due Dates)

1. **Personal Bio and Career Path** (Daily Assignment) - Include why you are taking this class, your personal path to USC, and 3 Major Career Goals – Short Term, Mid Term, and Long Term
2. **Pitch Project Longline and Synopsis** (Daily Assignment) Can be a personal idea, an adaptation of a book or other non-film IP, a documentary, or an updated adaptation of a public domain film – consider non-film projects as well – podcast, video game, etc.
3. **Pitch Project Budget Comps** (Daily Assignment) Find existing film or other works that are similar in audience to your own, their project budget, and their total gross earnings.
4. **Pitch Project Table of Contents** (Daily Assignment)- Students will turn in, in outline form, the proposed table of contents for their pitch project. All projects must contain an original cover page with design elements, a logline and synopsis, description of unique creative execution, a bio each for any proposed collaborators, a personal or company artistic statement, budget comps, and marketing and distribution plan. Lay out the ideas and give a brief description of each page and how it will be used to motivate others to participate in your project.
5. **Company or Personal Artist Statemen**t (Daily Assignment) – Describe who you are as an artist, and why this project needs to be made now and by you. Can be a statement for a company you hope to start, and can be told in a "company mission" format.
6. **Midterm Pitch Critiques** (Daily Assignment) – For critiques and in-class discussions, we will break into "mini-studios' which can act as study groups to help support students pitch ideas as they progress. These same groups will be responsible for giving constructive feedback during midterm reviews.
7. **Demonstration of Personal Research into the work of Guest Speakers** (Participation) – Our readings and film views will not always match the Guest
8. **Speaker of the wee**k. Students are expected to work independently to familiarize themselves with the work of the Guest Speakers and to be able to engage in a Q&A that demonstrates their research.
9. **Assigned Readings** (Participation) (See Calendar) – Students are expected to participate in in-class discussions about assigned readings and films, and demonstrate a personal point of view about the readings.
10. **Assigned Films Watch** (Participation) (See Calendar) - Students are expected to participate in in-class discussions about assigned readings and films, and demonstrate a personal point of view about the readings.
11. **Midterm Pitch Proposal** (MIDTERM)– Students will practice their in-progress pitches to their "mini-studio" groups.
12. **Final Presentation of Pitch Project** (FINAL)– Students will "Pitch" their projects in front of the class. In Person Project Pitch's should not be less than 6 minutes in length and no more than 10 minutes. They should be accompanied by a visual pitch deck presentation.
13. **Participation in Q&A's and Class Discussions** (Participation) – See below for more about in-class participation expectations.

Participation
Participation is a valuable part of this class. Students will be graded on demonstration of preparation for Guest Speakers, for their participation in critiques, and for their ability to demonstrate individual thought around assigned readings and films.

Grading Breakdown
[Including the above detailed assignments, how will students be graded overall? Participation should not exceed 15% of the total grade. Where it does, the syllabus must provide an added explanation. No portion of the grade may be awarded for class attendance, but non-attendance can be the basis for lowering the grade, when clearly stated on the syllabus. The sum of percentages must total 100%.]

Table 1 Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Participation	20	20%
Daily Assignments	20	20%
Midterm	25	25%
Final	35	35%
TOTAL	100	100%

Grading Scale
Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

Table 2 Course Grading Scale

Letter grade	Corresponding numerical point range
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	71-79
D	59-70
F	58 and below

Assignment Submission Policy
Students should email assignments to Kim Sherman, with Sherean Jones copied. Assignments are due 1 hour prior to the class they are assigned. Assignments handed in after the start of the assigned class will not be accepted.

Course Specific Policies
This class relies on students feeling safe amongst their peers, and as such, we will work to reinforce constructive criticism practices. Feedback on our discussions and projects is always welcome, but must not turn to personal attacks, yelling, violence, or intimidation. Students who cannot demonstrate respect for their classmates or healthy discussion will not pass this class, and anyone shown to intimidate or use violence will be asked to leave.

Attendance
Please email Kim Sherman (With Sherean Jones copied) if you cannot attend class due to illness, emergency, etc., and inquire on make-up assignments for any missed participation points due to absence.

Classroom norms
Difference of opinion and open conversation are encouraged in this class. However, personal attacks, hate-speech, yelling, violence, and intimidation are prohibited. Please keep critiques to questions of ideas. Please participate. Please be on time. Cell phones are prohibited during class time for anything other than class work, except in an emergency.

Zoom etiquette
If a student is unable to keep their camera on during the synchronous Zoom session, please contact Kim Sherman and Sherean Jones prior to appointment/class.

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 universityand 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.

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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).

Course Evaluations
Course evaluation occurs at the end of the semester university-wide. It is an important review of students' experience in the class.

Course Schedule

	Topics/Daily Activities	Preparation	Deliverables
TUESDAY - JUNE 25	INTROS: EXPLORING WHERE ART AND COMMERCE INTERSECT/ BASIC ELEMENTS OF A PITCH	Be prepared with your story as an artist, what was your path to USC and where are you hoping to go through your career (be prepared with 3 lifetime career goals), your top 4 favorite films of all time (tell us why you love these films), and a potential project idea to build a pitch around.	Personal Bio and Tentative Career Ideas Due Decide "Mini-Studio" Groups
THURSDAY- JUNE 27	KEY COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS / KNOWING YOUR AUDIENCE WHEN PITCHING	Find 4 budgets and earnings for 4 existing projects that are comparable to your individual pitch projects. READ: Mike Mills' Director's Statement for the feature film BEGINNERS (2010) WATCH: BEGINNERS – dir. Mike Mills (2011)	Hand in Logline and Synopsis for Pitch Projects Budget Comps Due

TUESDAY - JULY 2	ZOOM CLASS: DEVELOPING PERSONAL STYLE / SPEAKING TO YOUR PERSONAL STRENGTHS IN A PITCH	READ: "HOW SUSAN SONTAG TAUGHT ME TO THINK" (Article) READ: How AFTERSUN Made "Underpressure" Its own WATCH: AFTERSUN – dir. Charlotte Wells (2022)	Hand in Table of Contents for Pitch Projects Company or Artist Statement Due
THURSDAY - JULY 4	HOLIDAY: NO CLASS	READ: The Art Of Criticism (Psychology Today Article); Psychology Today – Clifford N. Lazarus, Ph.D (2011) READ: Janicza Bravo knew she had to make "Zola". Here's How She Made it Happen. (Article) WATCH: ALL THE BEAUTY AND THE BLOODSHED dir. Laura Poitras (2022) WATCH: THE BOY AND THE HERON dir. Hayao Miyazaki (2023)	NO CLASS
TUESDAY - JULY 9	KEY DISTRIBUTION MODELS / WHERE DO YOU WANT YOUR PROJECT TO LIVE	READ: HOWARD GERTLER on Producing ALL THE BEAUTY AND THE BLOODSHED (Article – Dear Producer) READ: Inside the Strange and Prickly World of Ad-Supported Indie Film Distribution (Article) WATCH: EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE dir. The Daniels (2022)	MIDTERM PITCH PROPOSALS DUE

THURSDAY - JULY 11	COLLABORATION VS. CREATIVE CONTROL / KNOWING THE STAKEHOLDERS AND HOW TO MANAGE EXPECTATIONS	Prepare 3 points of Constructive Criticism for each project in your Mini-Studio Group, using the 'sandwich technique'. READ: "Everything, Everywhere, All at Once" Producer Jonathan Wang Unlocks the Secret of The Daniels' Success READ: "Letterboxd started as a cinephile's best-kept secret. Now studios want in" WATCH: I SAW THE TV GLOW dir. Jane Schoenbrun (2024)	MIDTERM PITCH CRITQUES DUE
TUESDAY - JULY 16	DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A DISTINCT REPUTATION ACROSS PROJECTS. - THE IMPORTANCE OF DETAIL IN PRESENTATION	Prepare a list of 3 aspirational/valuable collaborators for your Pitch Project READ: "Find your Tribe" – Barry Jenkins and Adele Romanski (Article) WATCH: TRUE DETECTIVE, Seas. 4 Ep. 1 (2023)	Key Collaborator Lists Due Team Bios Due
THURSDAY - JULY 18	KEY COMPONENTS THAT INCREASE THE LIFESPAN OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	Prepare a 1 page Marketing and Distribution Plan for your Pitch Project (include audience, key outlets for reaching desired audience, market/region, target budget, and target distribution partner) READ: "LAST YEAR WE HAD BARBENHEIMER. THIS YEAR IT'S THE SUMMER OF SEQUELS." (Article) WATCH: PAST LIVES dir. Celine Song (2023)	Pitch Deck Images Due for Review, including Cover Design.

TUESDAY - JULY 23	HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR ART BEFORE AND AFTER THE PREMIERE / MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION PLANS	READ: Do Something Daily: A Conversation with CHESTER ALGERNAL GORDON (Article) WATCH: JUDAS AND THE BLACK MESSIAH – dir. Shaka King (2021)	Pitch Deck Marketing and Distribution Pages Due
THURSDAY - JULY 25	BUILDING WHAT YOU DON'T SEE / COMMUNITY IN ART	READ: Ava DuVerney's Array, JetBlue Partner on In-Flight Pop-Up Channel Spotlighting Indies from Underrespresented Artists WATCH: ORIGINS dr. Ava DuVerney (2023)	Prepare a list of 5 communities that can benefit from your Pitch Project (Through visibility, financially, celebration, or even refreshing a genre)
TUESDAY - JULY 30	FINAL: PRESENTATION	Practice Delivering Pitch Presentation	FINAL PITCH PRESENTATIONS (Cont.)
THURSDAY - AUGUST 1	FINAL: PRESENTATION	Practice Delivering Pitch Presentation	FINAL PITCH PRESENTATIONS

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:
The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, comprises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, 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. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity 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.

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

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.