



## **PR 499: Practicum for PR Media Center**

### **Production**

**1 unit**

**Fall 2024 – Set shift of 3 hours/week**

**Mondays and Thursdays between 10 a.m.-2 p.m.;**

**Wednesdays between 11 a.m.-1 p.m.**

**Section:** 21445R

**Location:** ANN 102 [Media Center on the first floor of Wallis Annenberg Hall]

**Instructor:** Lacey Vorrasi-Banis

**Office:** Media Center and Zoom

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays 11-1

**Contact Info:** lbanis@usc.edu

**Pronouns:** she/her

### **Course Description**

This course is a hands-on learning lab for students to practice public relations, promotion, internal communications and marketing concepts through public-facing work for the multiplatform Annenberg Media, a student news outlet housed in the Annenberg Media Center. Annenberg Media airs live television and radio broadcasts Monday through Thursday and covers campus, local and global news online and on social media.

Students in this course will have the opportunity to create original content and also to amplify existing content created by the editorial and production teams for television or digital journalism, all while adhering to news production cycle. Depending on whether they are taking the course for 1 or 2 units, students will be required to work for 3 or 6 hours assigned to part of the Media Center either once or twice per week. There will be several weeks of formal lecture but once production begins, students will begin actively participating under the guidance of their instructor. The course is credit/no credit.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify news stories across platforms worthy of amplification on social platforms or via press release.
- Apply professional ethics and standards to content creation and marketing.
- Create posts for X, Instagram, TikTok and other platforms on deadline.
- Apply AP and Annenberg Media style in all written work.
- Write and/or design internal communications that could be in the form of posters, Slack messages or newsletters.
- Create campaigns for Annenberg Media growth that may include signup drives or recruitment events.
- Respond to breaking news events for posting on social media channels, which could include evaluating photos, quotes or even user-generated content for newsroom standards.

Each of these learning outcomes will be evaluated through regular feedback sessions with your instructor. You should keep them in mind as you approach any work done in the Media Center.

Recommended preparation: Review the @annenbergmedia social channels.

## Description and Assessment of Assignments

Students in this course become part of the engagement and social media desk at Annenberg Media, getting on-the-job training for a real audience of the USC community. Working with their instructor and the students in paid leadership roles, they will engage in hands-on learning working alongside journalists in a way that mirrors the professional world.

### Student duties include:

- Reviewing material from [uscannenbergmedia.com](http://uscannenbergmedia.com), the daily ATVN television show streamed on YouTube, the daily ARN radio broadcast on YouTube, and any other social channels with student work.
- Fulfilling different jobs during the production of social media content.
- Collaborating with teams based on the news of the day.

You must make a commitment to work the same three or six hours each week in the Media Center. Six consecutive hours is preferred and will make for the best experience. You will not pass this class unless you attend each shift and put effort into fulfilling your Annenberg Media duties as assigned.

You will also be required to participate in trainings and complete an assessment quiz based on those trainings. A complete schedule will be provided for you during the first week of class. Your instructor will guide you along the way.

## Course Notes and Policies

Students must attend a series of lectures and workshops, and be officially onboarded into the Media Center systems. These trainings will be followed by a quiz to assess your understanding of Annenberg Media best practices. The best place to familiarize yourself with these the Resources site. <http://resources.uscannenbergmedia.com>.

Your credit/no credit grade will be determined by your passing of the quiz, along with attendance and effort in production. The instructor will be available in group or individual sessions over the course of the semester.

## Required Readings, hardware/software, laptops and supplementary materials

If you do not already have the Adobe Creative Cloud on your laptop, you will be given access to it for a download for Annenberg Media use. Email [annenbergdl@usc.edu](mailto:annenbergdl@usc.edu) and cc [christina.bellantoni@usc.edu](mailto:christina.bellantoni@usc.edu) and your instructor to let them know you need a download. A cell phone that can take video is useful for this course.

Please follow @annenbergmedia on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and other social channels.

You are required to keep up on the news by reading a variety of news outlets, listening to local and national radio or podcasts, and watching local and national news.

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/](https://libproxy.usc.edu/login?url=http://www.apstylebook.com/usc_edu/).)

Students will be graded on adherence to AP style in assignments, including when writing about race and ethnicity. The updated AP style guidelines include capitalizing Black and deleting the hyphen in terms such as Asian American.

The following style guides will be available on BB:

NLGA Stylebook on LGBTQ Terminology: <https://www.nlgja.org/stylebook/>

National Center on Disability and Journalism: <https://ncdj.org/style-guide/>

Native American Journalists Association: <https://najanewsroom.com/reporting-guides/>  
National Association of Black Journalists: <https://www.nabj.org/page/styleguide>  
Asian American Journalists Association: <https://www.aaja.org/news-and-resources/guidances/>  
The Diversity Style Guide: <https://www.diversitystyleguide.com>  
The NAHJ Cultural Competence Handbook: <https://nahj.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/NAHJ-Cultural-Competence-Handbook.pdf>  
Transjournalist Style Guide: <https://styleguide.transjournalists.org/>  
Diversity Toolbox: <https://www.spj.org/diversity.asp>

Annenberg also has its own style guide that students can access through the app Amy the Stylebot on the Annenberg Media Center's Slack workspace. Annenberg's style guide is being developed with input from students, and whether or not students use our guide, they can provide valuable input here: <http://bit.ly/annenbergediting>

In addition, Annenberg Media's Guide for Equitable Reporting Strategies and Newsroom Style (<https://bit.ly/AnnMediaEquitableReportingGuide>) created by students, has detailed guidelines on thoughtful language and best practices for creating journalism respectful and reflective of a diverse world. Along with other useful resources, it can be found on Blackboard and is incorporated into Amy the Stylebot (mentioned above).

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 with issues that limit their ability to participate fully in class. Please reach out to a professor and/or advisor for help connecting with these resources. They include the Annenberg Student Success Fund, 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, and other scholarships and awards.

## **News Consumption and Knowledge of Current Events**

Anyone participating in the class 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](http://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. Grading Breakdown**

Description of assessments and corresponding points and percentage of grade.

Assignment	% of Grade
Daily production and attendance	75%
Quiz assessing understanding and completion of training modules	25%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### c. Grading Standards

Students will be trained on and are expected to abide by the Annenberg Media ethical guidelines, best practices and coverage rules at all times. Maintaining professionalism and courtesy will be of utmost importance. Should any problems arise within the newsroom's student leadership, students in this course will be expected to raise the issue with the instructors right away.

Should students breach any ethical guidelines, they risk failing the course.

Just like in Journalism course work, all efforts will be judged on its accuracy, fairness and completeness. Good journalism prioritizes transparency, context and inclusivity. All work should be written in AP style unless Annenberg style conflicts, in which case students can follow Annenberg style.

You will also be evaluated for editing, production value, originality and the ability to meet deadlines.

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.

### 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](#) for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's [Information Technology Services](#) website.

### Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

**(15 weeks: 8/26/2024 – 12/6/2024; Final Exam Period: 12/11-18/2024)**

**Link:** <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20243/calendar/>

**Last day to add:** Friday, September 13, 2024

**Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund:** Friday, September 13, 2024

**Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit:** Friday, September 13, 2024 [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, September 17, 2024

**Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade:** Friday, October 11, 2024 [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, November 15, 2024

### Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

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

Week/Date	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Dates: 8/26-8/30</b>		Review stories on the uscannenbergmedia website, the @AnnenbergMedia Instagram feed and work posted on the @AnnenbergMedia YouTube page.	
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Dates: 9/2-9/6</b>	Students must attend mandatory workshops during their shift time or watch videos as advised.		<b>[Labor Day:</b> Monday, September 2]
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Dates: 9/9-9/13</b>	Students must attend mandatory workshops during their shift time or watch videos as advised.		Quiz must be taken by <b>Sept. 13</b>
<b>Week 4</b> <b>Dates: 9/16-9/20</b>	Students can begin producing content during their shifts.		
<b>Week 5</b> <b>Dates: 9/23-9/27</b>	Students will work for the social media desk or another area of the Media Center as assigned.		
<b>Week 6</b> <b>Dates: 9/30-10/4</b>	Students will work for the social media desk or another area of the Media Center as assigned.		
<b>Week 7</b> <b>Dates: 10/7-10/11</b>	Students will work for the social media desk or another area of the Media Center as assigned.		<b>[Fall Recess:</b> October 10-11]
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Dates: 10/14-10/18</b>	Students will work for the social media desk or another area of the Media Center as assigned.		
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Dates: 10/21-10/25</b>	There will be training sessions instead of production this week. During your shift time this week you will meet with one-on-one with your instructor.		

<b>Week 10</b> <b>Dates: 10/28-11/1</b>	Students will work for the social media desk or another area of the Media Center as assigned.		
<b>Week 11</b> <b>Dates: 11/4-11/8</b>	Students will work for the social media desk or another area of the Media Center as assigned.		
<b>Week 12</b> <b>Dates: 11/11-11/15</b>	Students will work for the social media desk or another area of the Media Center as assigned.		<b>[Veterans Day:</b> Friday, November 11]
<b>Week 13</b> <b>Dates: 11/18-11/22</b>	Students will work for the social media desk or another area of the Media Center as assigned.		
<b>Week 14</b> <b>Dates: 11/25-11/29</b>	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b> Media Center is closed, there will be no production this week.		
<b>Week 15</b> <b>Dates: 12/2-12/6</b>	Students will work their final shifts this week and also be given time to complete the course evaluation.		
<b>Final Exam Period</b> <b>Dates: 12/11-12/18</b>	You're invited to the Annenberg Media Wrap Party to celebrate the end of the semester with food and merriment. Save the date for <b>Mon., Dec. 9 from 3-5 p.m.</b>	<i>Note: Students are encouraged to stay involved with Annenberg Media beyond this course. Make sure to speak with your instructor or a student leader about how to remain part of the Media Center.</i>	<i>There is no final exam for this course.</i>

## Policies and Procedures

### Additional Policies

All work done for **Annenberg Media** must adhere to the ethics and policies students will be trained on the first few weeks of the semester. They are outlined at [resources.uscannenbergmedia.com](http://resources.uscannenbergmedia.com).

### Course Evaluations

Course evaluation occurs at the end of the semester university-wide. It is an important review of students' experience in the class. The process and intent of the end-of-semester evaluation should be provided. In addition, a mid-semester evaluation is recommended practice for early course correction.

### 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).

## **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 public relations or journalism 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](https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC_StudentCode_August2022.pdf))

### **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](#).

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity

[https://catalogue.usc.edu/preview\\_entity.php?catoid=16&ent\\_oid=3459](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.

### **Generative AI Policy**

**AI usage NOT permitted for reporting assignments, but there are some newsroom tools available for research.**

Since reporting original material and using analytical and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course and assessed by works of journalism, all assignments should be prepared by the student individually. Students *may not* have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of a *reporting assignment*. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated tools is prohibited in this course, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

The Annenberg Media newsroom *may* use artificial intelligence (AI)-powered programs for *specific projects that will be communicated newsroomwide* — and that material could be available to students for research. 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 for reporting assignments in 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.

### **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](https://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-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://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-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**

Lacey Vorrasi-Banis began her career in journalism, racking up bylines and gracing mastheads of media juggernauts like Time and Entertainment Weekly. She's worked as a reporter, writer and editor, covering everything from network upfronts and film releases to NASCAR and parenting.

A staunch DEI advocate, Vorrasi-Banis has moderated panels on Asian AAPI representation in Hollywood, and has found herself on the other side of the mic while being interviewed as a media expert on diversity and representation.

After relocating to Los Angeles from New York, Vorrasi-Banis used her proven journalism and storytelling experience to shift gears into marketing as a copywriter and digital communications specialist for various local nonprofits and businesses. She's been the social media coach in the Annenberg Media Center since Fall 2023, advising students on best practices for Annenberg Media's award-nominated social content.