

# Spring 2008

## **JOURNALISM 210X BASICS OF BROADCAST NEWSROOM PRODUCTION FOR NON-JOURNALISM MAJORS ONLY 2 UNITS**

Instructor: Stacy Scholder, ATVN Associate Director  
with help from Serena Cha, ATVN Director,  
ATVN Executive Producers and the newsroom  
and studio staff

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday. I am here all day Monday through Thursday, but often busy meeting with students. The best time to find me is mid to late-morning in my office adjacent to the ATVN Newsroom (ASC G-24A). If I am too busy to talk at that moment, we can schedule an appointment.

Note: The deadline to drop a course is April 11. After that you will receive a mark of "W."

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course introduces non-journalism majors to television news. It is taught in conjunction with the production of Annenberg TV News, USC's student-run nightly news operation.

The goal of the course is to:

- Develop news judgment and production skills
- Learn how to meet deadlines
- Practice teamwork

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will provide hands-on training in the production of a daily TV newscast. You will observe and perform the following:

- Generate ideas and production improvements
- Learn about newscast elements
- Participate in assembling and broadcasting the nightly newscast

Class work will consist of on-the-job training and experience that mirrors the real world. In any news operation, everyone must work as a team and be able to depend on each other. If you do not show up or arrive late, it lets down the entire team who will come to count on you as an integral part of the news staff.

You must make a commitment to work a weekly **four-hour** shift in the Annenberg TV Newsroom. You must sign up for the same weekly shift throughout the semester.

## **NEWS KNOWLEDGE**

You are required to keep up on the news by reading the Los Angeles Times seven days a week and watching local TV news.

You may also be required to take specific workshops for the position you are assigned (for instance, workshops to learn iNews software, ADOBE Photoshop, camcorder operation, linear editing and/or Avid editing). There are a variety of newsroom positions available: assignment editor, writer, graphics artist, reporter, editor, etc. The position to which you are assigned depends on your experience and your availability. Please talk to Stacy Scholder at the ATVN Open House to finalize your schedule.

NOTE: Anchoring (news, weather or sports) cannot be counted toward your four-hour-a-week requirement. ATVN anchoring is a separate activity with its own time requirements. If you audition to be on air and are selected to anchor, please discuss your schedule with Stacy Scholder as soon as possible.

You may need to drop this course if you cannot satisfy the four-hour-a-week requirement or if you cannot attend the required workshops.

### **YOU MUST:**

Subscribe to the ATVN email list to receive important written critiques of the newscasts.

Send an email to [listproc@usc.edu](mailto:listproc@usc.edu)

Leave the subject BLANK

In the text, write: subscribe ATVN-L [your email address] [your full name]

Example: subscribe ATVN -L [johndoe@usc.edu](mailto:johndoe@usc.edu) John Doe

## **CHECK-IN PROCEDURE -- NEWSROOM**

1. When you start your shift (PLEASE ARRIVE ON TIME), you must sign in with the Executive Producer. If you forget to sign in, there is no guarantee your attendance for that day will count.
2. You must also check in with the producer of the day to get your assignment(s).
3. Before you leave for the day, you must once again check with the producer to see if he or she has any questions about your work.

## CHECK-IN PROCEDURE -- STUDIO

Sign in on the sign-in sheet at 5 pm when you arrive. Please be on time.

## SICK POLICY

If you cannot come in, or will be late, you must call in the night before. If it is an emergency, call in the morning (Assignment Desk 740-3847).

You must speak **directly** to the EP or the Producer-of-the-day.

**DO NOT JUST LEAVE A MESSAGE ON VOICE MAIL.**

If you cannot work your scheduled shift, or if you have to miss part of your shift, you must have a valid reason, such as illness or an emergency. Poor planning on your part (studying for exams, homework for other classes, internships, jobs, travel, etc.) is not a valid excuse for missing your shift. **If you must miss your shift, you must make up your missed hours within two weeks of your absence.**

To report your absence and schedule your make-up hours, contact your EP:

### *Executive Producers:*

Monday:                **Katherine Riese**  
(425) 922-4197 (c)  
[riese@usc.edu](mailto:riese@usc.edu)

Tuesday:              **Calli Fisher**  
(775) 771-1874 (c)  
[cmfisher@usc.edu](mailto:cmfisher@usc.edu)

Wednesday:          **Patrick Becker**  
(310) 387-9767 (c)  
[pbecker@usc.edu](mailto:pbecker@usc.edu)

Thursday:             **Shawn Chitnis**  
(425) 266-7525 (c)  
[schitnis@usc.edu](mailto:schitnis@usc.edu)

Please get to know the Executive Producer for your day.

## **COURSE MEETINGS**

There are no regular course sessions, but **YOU MUST ATTEND YOUR WEEKLY SHIFT IN THE ATVN newsroom.** Additionally, you may be asked to meet periodically with the advisor to discuss your work in the newsroom. If you have any problems or questions, please talk to Stacy Scholder.

## **GRADES**

Your pass/fail will be determined as follows—

- Daily news production and attendance 90 percent

Since attendance is the major factor in whether you pass or fail the course, it is imperative that you complete all of your shifts and that you arrive **ON TIME.** Tardiness and unexcused absences will jeopardize your grade.

- Performance 10 percent

You will be judged on the skills you have acquired throughout the semester and the improvement you have shown by the final newscast.

## **WHAT YOU MAY EXPERIENCE AND OBSERVE IN THIS COURSE:**

The structure of the newsroom  
How the production team functions  
Communication and decision-making  
Elements of a newscast  
What makes a good television story  
How to choose b-roll and sound bites  
How to match words with pictures  
Story selection and development  
What makes a good newscast  
Matters of sensitivity and taste  
Accuracy  
Fairness  
Meeting deadlines  
The importance of details  
Triple-checking the facts and presentation  
Learning from mistakes  
Speaking up to prevent errors in content or technique  
Your responsibility as part of a news operation  
Leadership at any level

## **SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

Plagiarism is defined as taking ideas or writings from another and passing them off as one's own; in journalism, this includes appropriating the reporting of another without clear attribution. The following is the School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity as published in the University catalog:

“Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will immediately receive a failing grade in the course and will be dismissed as a major from the School of Journalism. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.”

## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to your professor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. The office is located in the Student Union room 301. The phone number is (213) 740-0776

**WELCOME TO ANNENBERG TV NEWS!**