

School of Journalism – M.A. in Specialized Journalism (the Arts)
Graduate Application Guidelines and Instructions for Summer 2012

Program Description

The M.A. degree program in Specialized Journalism (the Arts) is designed to provide a highly customized course of study that builds upon the subjects and area expertise you already have in the arts. Our primary objective is to equip you with the discipline and thought processes journalists need in the internet era through entrepreneurial practice and multimedia storytelling assignments. We believe the arts journalism profession can claim a future only if it supports and engenders creativity. To this end we offer extensive writing opportunities, traditional news values, history immersions, and site visits that use Los Angeles as a living arts and culture lab. In combination with digital journalism training, these develop the journalist's authority, social responsibility and capacity to communicate in meaningful and possibly new ways.

The program is intended for 1) professional arts journalists who work in any medium, 2) recent college graduates holding bachelor degrees in journalism or in one of the arts, and 3) experienced arts practitioners. A partnership with the five USC arts schools, the program is interdisciplinary by nature and founded on the principle that no art form exists in isolation. You can explore topics in depth from art economics and policy to current events and ideas that are shaping popular culture to critical studies in film and music of all sorts -- in short everything that contributes to a well-rounded and fully competent cultural reporter. Each student must produce a master's thesis that is a professional work of journalism suitable for online, print or broadcast media.

The required curriculum is designed to be completed in nine and a half months (August to mid-May) and is comprised of two parts:

- Within the School of Journalism: 18 units of advanced coursework including a master's professional project, exclusive seminars on research methods and decision making, and journalism courses in arts and culture reporting, criticism and commentary.
- Outside the School of Journalism: 16 units of graduate level electives in a learner-centered program taken across USC's arts schools, including the School of Architecture, School of Cinematic Arts, School of Theatre, Roski School of Fine Arts, and Thornton School of Music. The elective course work must be taken from faculty-recommended lists in at least two arts schools, with at least 8 units from one school.

Application Filing Period

Admission to the M.A. in Specialized Journalism (the Arts) is limited to the summer term. Applications received by Jan. 31 will be reviewed for scholarship consideration; applications received Feb. 1 – Apr. 30 will be reviewed for admission consideration only. Admission decisions will be made on a rolling basis. Early applications are highly encouraged for best consideration in the selection of USC Annenberg Graduate Fellowships.

Application Process

- 1) Go to www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/apply/ and complete the online USC Graduate Admission Application. Provide the names and email addresses of two recommenders on the application. Upload the following materials to your application:
 - Statement of Purpose
 - Writing Sample
 - Portfolio of Professional Work
 - Professional Résumé
- 2) Pay the application fee with a credit card.
- 3) After submitting your online application, mail the following materials to University of Southern California, Office of Graduate Admission, 3601 South Flower St., Room 112, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0915:
 - Official transcripts from all colleges/ universities attended, including from study abroad programs
 - Confidential statement of financial support (international applicants only)
- 5) Request to have your admission test scores reported electronically to USC:
 - Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test (code 4852)
 - TOEFL scores (international applicants only)

Statement of Purpose

The M.A. in Specialized Journalism (the Arts) has been designed for professional and aspiring journalists who seek to become leaders in the arts and communication through a rigorous study of reporting techniques and at least two of the arts in graduate-level courses. While a strong emphasis is placed on your writing skills, the program also prepares you to think about communication, about the arts in the internet age and to be an active part of invention and experimentation in a changing cultural landscape. Imagine the role you will play in the arts ecosystem that is loosely defined by the relationship of artist to arts institution to director or curator to marketing department to collector to audience. Where will you fit in, and how do you foresee the future of arts journalism? In this spirit write a Statement of Purpose -- of no more than 1,500 words (single-spaced or double-spaced) -- that addresses the reasons you wish to pursue the specialized journalism degree.

Portfolio of Professional Work

Submit a portfolio that illustrates the depth and range of your work.

For professional journalists, please submit 1) a bibliography of up to ten – and no fewer than three -- published, broadcast or online works in journalism and 2) samples of recent work in journalism that are the equivalent of five reviews or two longer feature or magazine stories from one or multiple platforms. Work considered recent has been written within the past two years. Upload the bibliography to the online USC Graduate Admission application. Plan to include live links to current work within the bibliography. If live links are unavailable, please upload the samples as attachments. Any additional materials may be mailed to USC Annenberg Admissions.

For experienced arts practitioners and recent graduates holding bachelor's degrees in journalism or the arts, please submit five recent examples of your writing, each being no less than 550 words and no more than 1,100. Written work unrelated to the arts is acceptable, but there should be no more than two of these. Work considered recent has been published within the past two years. Blogs are considered published work. Indicate the viewership of the blog and the frequency with which you post. Academic papers will also be considered. Upload the samples as attachments to the online USC Graduate Admission Application. Plan to include live links to samples when available. Other materials may be mailed to USC Annenberg Admissions.

Print platforms – Submit the texts of newspaper or magazine articles with the name of the publication and the date published. Submit the texts of academic papers with the name of the course and the date submitted or published. If additional material related to the article, such as sidebars, graphics, photo galleries or blogs, was published online, please provide either URLs to live links or screenshots in a common bitmap image.

Online platforms – Submit texts of the major elements of individual postings. In addition, please provide either URLs to live links or, if the links are no longer active, screenshots in a common bitmap image format, if available.

Broadcast platforms – Submit transcripts of television or radio stories, if available. Also, please provide URLs for all stories accessible online or send disks with digital recordings in a readily accessible format by mail to USC Annenberg Admissions. Please be sure to clearly identify your material with your name and USC ID. These materials, however, will not be returned.

Professional Résumé

Submit a current resume listing positions held, including internships, nature of work and dates of employment. Include academic and professional awards, honors, association memberships, teaching experience, subject matter expertise, language(s) other than English, and your familiarity with any research or communications technologies, e.g. Web design, television production, video editing, podcasting, spreadsheets, etc.

Letters of Recommendation

Professional references are expected. If you are a recent college/university graduate, submit one academic reference and one professional reference. If you provide recommenders' email addresses on the online application, they will receive online recommendation forms. Encourage them to write a letter of recommendation in addition to filling out the recommendation form.

Admission Testing

All applicants must submit Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores and the minimum required score is 1,000 (verbal + quantitative section combined on the old examination). ***The minimum score required on the new GRE General Test will be available after November 2011.***

In addition, international applicants must demonstrate English language proficiency. USC will waive the English proficiency requirement for international applicants who hold a recognized Bachelor's degree from the following countries: United States, United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, or Canada (except Quebec). Students who have studied in other countries are not exempted from the English proficiency requirement, even if English was the medium of instruction. If the English proficiency requirement is not waived, applicants must submit TOEFL scores; the minimum recommended score is 114-115 (IBT). For more details pertinent to international students, refer to <http://www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/international/application.html>.

Plan to complete all admission testing at least one month prior to the close of the application filing period.

Fellowships

The USC Annenberg Graduate Fellowship Program will provide financial support to highly qualified admitted students who demonstrate exceptional potential for significant contributions in their field. Awarded on a competitive basis, fellows will receive full tuition remission, health and dental benefits, and a stipend. Fellows will be drawn from the pool of incoming graduate students at USC Annenberg, USC School of Cinematic Arts and USC Viterbi School of Engineering. To foster intellectual community and synergies across the participating programs, an annual forum will be offered. Visit www.usc.edu/schools/GraduateSchool/current_fellowships.html for more information.

Financial Aid

In addition to the USC Annenberg Graduate Fellowship Program, there are limited department scholarships which are awarded competitively to domestic and international applicants based on the completed graduate admission application. However, the vast majority of the incoming graduate class is self-funded. Plan to seek and apply for outside scholarships; begin researching opportunities at www.fastweb.com. Visit the USC Financial Aid Web site at www.usc.edu/admission/fa/applying_receiving/graduates/ for information about need-based federal financial aid.

International applicants must provide proof of ability to pay tuition and living expenses before an I-20 is released. For more information, refer to the USC Graduate & International Admission Web site at www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/international/application.html.

Estimated Cost of Attendance 2011-2012

\$ 2,840	2-unit summer seminar	\$ 1,828	Personal and miscellaneous
\$ 42,162	Tuition and fees (15 – 18 units fall and spring semesters)	\$600	Mandatory Fees
\$ 15,800	Room and board	<u>\$ 2,295</u>	<u>Transportation</u>
\$ 1,344	Books and supplies	\$ 66,904	Total
\$35	USC Orientation Fee for your first semester		

Prospective Graduate Student Campus Visits & Information

Graduate information sessions are held on campus throughout the academic year. The Annual Prospective Graduate Student Visit Day program will be held on November 11, 2011. For other dates, including events in your local area, visit www.annenberg.usc.edu/Prospective/VistandSched.aspx. For answers to your specific questions, contact USC Annenberg Admissions at specjour@usc.edu.