

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

Program Description

The M.A. degree program in Specialized Journalism is designed to provide you with a highly customized course of study in a field of your choosing as well as an opportunity to develop an array of advanced reporting and leadership skills broadly applicable to a career in journalism. The required curriculum is designed to be completed in nine months (August to 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 advanced journalism courses in several topic areas including science, religion, sports, entertainment & society and business.
- Outside the School of Journalism: 16 units of elective coursework that you choose from USC's highly regarded academic units, including the School of Policy, Planning and Development, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, School of Communication, School of Cinematic Arts and Rossier School of Education. Specialized Journalism faculty and staff will assist you in selecting electives most appropriate to your fields of study and abilities.

Application Filing Period

Admission to the M.A. in Specialized Journalism 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)
- 4) Request to have your admission test scores reported electronically to USC:
 - Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test (code 4852)
 - TOEFL scores (international applicants only)

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.

Statement of Purpose

The M.A. in Specialized Journalism is designed for journalists who believe they can enhance and elevate their work by developing expertise in a specific subject area. In your Statement of Purpose, discuss the reasons why you wish to pursue the specialized journalism graduate degree. Describe the field of study you intend to pursue and explain how you expect to apply the knowledge gained to your future work. This statement should be no more than 2,000 words (single or double spaced) and should be representative of your best writing.

Portfolio of Professional Work

Submit a portfolio that illustrates the depth and range of your work. Please submit 1) a bibliography of up to 20 published, broadcast, or online works in journalism and 2) samples of work in journalism that are the equivalent of either six news stories or three longer feature or magazine stories from one or multiple platforms. 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.

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, spreadsheets, etc. Indicate your proficiency level for each skill and area of expertise (E = expert, C = competent, F = familiar).

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.

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.

Questions

For answers to your specific questions, contact USC Annenberg Admissions at specjour@usc.edu.

USC Annenberg Admissions, 3502 Watt Way, Suite 140, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0281

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