

MASTER OF ARTS IN SPECIALIZED JOURNALISM 2009-10

Information for Prospective Students

In response to a rapidly evolving industry, the [USC Annenberg School for Communication](#) now offers a unique nine-month M.A. program in specialized journalism. Top applicants will be eligible to be nominated for the prestigious [USC Annenberg Graduate Fellowship](#) which provides full tuition support and a stipend for living expenses.

The new [master's degree program in specialized journalism](#) offers students a highly customized course of study in a specific field of their choosing as well as an opportunity to develop advanced reporting and leadership skills broadly applicable to a career in journalism. The intent is to provide journalists with access to the extraordinary array of scholarship available at a great research university during a relatively short but intense period of study and professional development. Engagement with the rapid evolution of communications technology is emphasized throughout.

The program is primarily designed for experienced journalists and aspiring reporters with proven skills in journalism or an area of specialization. A separate area of emphasis in arts journalism welcomes recent graduates of arts academies and practicing artists. Individuals working in all forms of media and journalistic platforms are invited to apply. International journalists will find an exceptional opportunity to explore the social and political realities of the United States today.

USC Annenberg offers this new degree out of a conviction that quality journalism today requires subject-matter expertise, advanced reporting skills, and knowledge of how new communications technologies are changing the ways that people learn, think and behave. The M.A. in Specialized Journalism offers students a chance to move forward on all three fronts by putting the resources of a great university at their disposal:

- Within the [School of Journalism](#): Students are offered an array of courses that develop the abilities necessary to compete in a challenging media environment. These include multimedia skills, the new entrepreneurship of web-based journalism, advanced reporting methods in topic areas such as urban ecology, science, education, demography and religion. And, for those specializing in arts journalism there is a two-semester master class on criticism with Pulitzer Prize winner [Tim Page](#).

- Across USC: Students will choose two electives per semester from graduate-level classes offered by USC's other highly regarded academic units, including the [Rossier School of Education](#), the [School of Policy, Planning and Development](#), the [School of Religion](#), the [School of International Relations](#), the [School of Communication](#), the [Viterbi School of Engineering](#) and the many departments of the [College of Letters, Arts and Sciences](#). Students will also have the opportunity to take electives in the schools of [music](#), [cinema](#), [architecture](#), [theatre](#) and the [fine arts](#). Students specializing in arts journalism will take all their electives in the five arts schools.

- › **Apply between Jan 2 and March 2, 2009**
- › **Full fellowships available**
- › **Classes begin Aug. 10, 2009**
- › **Graduation is May 14, 2010**
- › **Coursework highly customized to individual interests**
- › **Separate area of emphasis for arts journalism offered in collaboration with USC's five arts schools.**

Some of the electives taken by Specialized Journalism students this year:

- Migration and Diasporas in International Politics
- Environmental Politics
- Health Service Delivery in the US
- Urban Demography and Growth
- Thought and Life of Islam
- Campaign Communication
- Sustainable Cities
- Feminist Theory and Communication
- Poetry and Prose into Drama
- Programming for Interactivity
- Terrorism, Democracy and the News Media
- Globalization, Communication and Society
- Great Houses of Los Angeles
- Leadership and the Future of Reporting in the Digital Age
- Latino Politics
- Economics of the Communications Industries
- Television Documentary Production
- Molecular and Cellular Neurobiology
- Film, Television and Cultural Studies
- Visual Cognition

Produce journalism while studying

Professional projects can be developed in any medium that is feasible, and students are encouraged to think of the projects as works of journalism to be published, broadcast or otherwise disseminated. The intent is for students to graduate from the program with both learning that advances their long-term professional goals and completed work products that are immediately applicable to their careers.

In addition to the coursework, the program will feature a variety of group activities including a series of lunch meetings with leading journalists, scholars and policy makers.

Students will have opportunities to engage the work of [14 major research centers and professional education programs](#) based at USC Annenberg. Whether the subject is the latest trends in Internet usage, the newest forms of online journalism, the impact of globalization on the media or developments in communications law and policy, these programs offer industry leaders answers to the most probing questions of the day. And across USC beyond the Annenberg School, there is a packed [daily schedule](#) of performances, conferences, speakers, exhibits and workshops.

A chance to become an Annenberg Fellow

[USC recently underscored its commitment](#) to the fields of communications and digital media with the new Annenberg Fellowships awarded to a select group of [about 100 scholars and practitioners each year](#). The Annenberg Fellows are chosen for their potential to produce bold new ideas and innovative professional works. They are drawn from a variety of academic

programs in the Annenberg School for Communication, the [School of Cinematic Arts](#) and the [Viterbi School of Engineering](#). All applicants accepted for admission to the M.A. in Specialized Journalism program will be considered for nomination to the Annenberg Fellowship which will provide full tuition remission, health and dental benefits and a \$20,000 stipend for living expenses. Selection is highly competitive, and early application is encouraged for best consideration.

In addition to the Annenberg Fellowships, other forms of financial aid, including need-based aid, is available.

A Core Faculty with Deep and Varied Expertise

- [Roberto Suro](#): program director, founder of the Pew Hispanic Center, staffer at The Washington Post and The New York Times
- [Sasha Anawalt](#): director of arts journalism, chief dance critic the Los Angeles Herald, LA Weekly and KCRW-FM
- [Bill Celis](#): education reporter at The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal
- [K.C. Cole](#): science writer and columnist for the Los Angeles Times, seven non-fiction books
- [Tim Page](#): Pulitzer Prize winning music critic for The Washington Post
- [Michael Parks](#): Pulitzer Prize winning foreign correspondent and editor of the Los Angeles Times
- [Larry Pryor](#): environment writer, and online editor at the Los Angeles Times
- [Diane Winston](#): religion reporter Baltimore Sun and Dallas Times Herald, now holds the Knight Chair in Media and Religion

Coursework and the calendar

Coursework in the specialized journalism program will begin on August 10, 2009 with a two-week sequence of seminars on changes in news media business models and the evolving social functions of the news media and workshops with hands-on training in multi-media skills.

During the fall semester students will take two courses in the School of Journalism. One focuses on the new reporting and story-telling tools available on digital platforms. The other is a seminar on journalism in a specialized field. In the coming academic year the seminar topics will include religion, education, urban ecology, demography, science and the arts. In addition, students will take two graduate-level elective courses from across the university appropriate to their field of specialization, and they will begin research on their master's professional project.

In the spring semester, students will enroll in a journalism seminar focused on the reporting and analysis of decision making. They will also have the option to develop a directed research course working closely with a faculty member on a specific topic. Or, they can enroll in a rich selection of seminars in the fields of communication or journalism. Students will also enroll in two other elective courses and will complete their master's professional project.

Altogether two-thirds of the coursework will be customized to student's specific interests, and that opportunity sets this program apart from others leading to a master's degree in journalism.

How to apply

Applications will be accepted from Jan. 2 to March 2, 2009. All students are encouraged to take the Graduate Record Examinations, secure recommendations and transcripts and complete the application as early in the application period as possible. Please note there is a separate application for students applying to the program in arts journalism.

For details about the graduate admission application process visit:

<http://annenberg.usc.edu/Prospective/Masters/Specialized.aspx>

To get more information on the program please send queries to: specjour@usc.edu