# MCJ 123: Fresno State Focus Crew

## INTrODUCTION TO COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR

| Syllabus for Fresno State Focus Crew (MCJ 123) | |
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| **Semester: Spring 2021** | **Media, Communications & Journalism California State University, Fresno** |
| **Course Name: MCJ 123: Fresno State Focus Crew** | **Instructor Name: Dr. Carey Higgins-Dobney** |
| **Units: 3 units, repeatable up to 6 units** | **Office Location: Zoom this term. Usually SA 140C** |
| **Time: Monday/Wednesday 2-4:50pm** | **E-Mail: redacted for online posting** |
| **Location: SA 172** | **Telephone: redacted for online posting** |
| **Website:** [**https://fresnostate.instructure.com/courses/34561**](https://fresnostate.instructure.com/courses/34561) | **Office Hours: Mon/Wed 10:30am - 1pm** |

**Health Screening:** Students who come to campus for face-to-face classes will be required to complete a daily health screening which will include temperature checks. If you have experienced COVID-19 symptoms and/or have tested positive within the past 10 days; or if you have had close contact (less than 6 feet for longer than 15 minutes while unmasked) with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patient within the past 14 days, you are not allowed to come to campus.  Please complete the campus[online reporting form](https://fresnostate.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3faIAsuC8CzuFjD?Q_FormSessionID=FS_UFJ902LXgDJbKeZ).  A campus official will reply to provide guidance and information.

**Safety Measures:**Consistent with the Governor’s order and updated state public-health guidelines, face masks or cloth face coverings are required to be worn in public spaces on-campus and during in-person classes to reduce possible exposure to COVID-19 and prevent the spread of the virus. Physical distancing must be practiced by maintaining 6 feet of distance between individuals. Good hygiene of hand washing for a minimum of 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer is required. Please avoid touching your face with unclean hands. Disposable face masks will be provided to anyone who arrives to campus without one.

Please see university website for the most updated information: [www.fresnostate.edu/coronavirus](http://www.fresnostate.edu/coronavirus)

**Course description**: Advanced Production crew for Fresno State Focus newscasts; as newscast director, technical director, floor director, graphics operator, and audio engineer.

**Prerequisites for the course:** None.

## Required COURSE Materials

There are **no required course materials** for this class.

Necessary production equipment will be provided.

Access to Canvas, Slack, Rundown Creator, and email are required.

## Course Specifics

**Course goals**: At the end of this course, students will know how to work in a professional broadcast/digital newsroom setting. They will be familiar with the functions of studio and control room equipment, and have taken a turn in each position either in practice or on air.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Student Learning Outcome 1.4: Describe mass media business, professional and regulatory practices.

Student Learning Outcome 3.1: Create media content that addresses a communication goal.

Student Learning Outcome 3.2: Prepare professional quality communication materials targeted at a specific audience.

**Course requirements/assignments:** This class is a studio and control room boot camp and workshop for broadcast news production. Students are required to be on time, learn how to use the equipment, keep up with deadlines, and learn the rhythm of news production. This will prepare them for working in a professional television news facility. Students will cross-train on multiple studio and control room positions throughout the term.

There are live newscasts each Wednesday at 4pm, promotions and practices on Mondays, multiple rehearsals, and 4 short reflections.

### **Grading policy:**

Television production requires a wide range of skills. Your grade will be determined based on a number of factors, listed below and explained in more detail in Canvas.

There will be cross-training. **I do not expect you to be an expert at all equipment**; I do not expect perfection; **I do expect FORWARD PROGRESS** on your overall production skills. This means I anticipate you will leave this class at the end of term with sharper skills than when you came in on day 1.

**Mistakes will be made**. That is part of live tv. **How you recover** will greatly impact your success in this class. **I WILL HELP WITH ALL OF THIS!** This is what I did professionally for over 20 years. Yes, you will probably hear some war stories. ☺

We will **work together** **as a team**. If you cannot do so, your live production and professionalism grades will drop. **But I expect you will all do well.**

## POINTS:

* Bootcamp/Learning the equipment up through newscast #2: 25% (250 points)
* Live production/ongoing improvement post show #2: 25% (250 points)
* Professionalism: 200 points (20%)
* Reflections (4): 250 points (25%)
  + Reflections 1, 2, and 3: 50 points each (5% each, 15% total)
  + Final reflection: 100 points (10%)
* Website bio: 50 points (5%)

**Total: 1000 points (100%)**

Criteria for each item will be posted in Canvas.

If you are not living up to expectations, you will know.

**Extra credit:** If you take behind-the-scenes pictures of the inner workings of Fresno State Focus (during convenient, non-interruptive times) and post them to Twitter, you can receive 1 point per post up to 10 points. You must copy me (@DirectorCarey) and use @FSFocusTV in the tweet.

**Grades:**

900 – 1000 Points = A

This is Excellent work. Performance of the student has demonstrated the highest level of competence, showing sustained superiority in meeting all stated course objectives and responsibilities and exhibiting a very high degree of intellectual initiative. Forward progress of student’s abilities has been demonstrated throughout the course.

800 – 899 Points = B

This is Very Good work. Performance of the student has demonstrated a high level of competence, showing sustained superiority in meeting all stated course objectives and responsibilities and exhibiting a high degree of intellectual initiative. Forward progress in student abilities has been demonstrated throughout much of the course.

700 - 799 Points = C

This is Satisfactory work. Performance of the student has demonstrated a satisfactory level of competence, showing an adequate level of understanding of course objectives, responsibilities, and comprehension of course intent. Forward progress of student abilities may be inconsistent throughout the course.

600 – 699 Points = D

This is Unsatisfactory work. Performance of the student has been unsatisfactory, showing inadequacy in meeting basic course objectives, responsibilities, and comprehension of course content. There is a lack in forward progress in student abilities in the course.

599 Points or less = F

This is Failing work. Performance of the student fails to meet course objectives. Work at this level does not meet requirements for credit toward a degree.

Let’s rock this term!

**Attendance and Lateness Policy**

Students are expected to be present during class periods and actively participate in class discussions, exercises and activities. Television production relies heavily on group project participation; if one person is absent, it impacts the entire team. Students who are late to class, or leave early without permission, will be marked late for that day. Lateness and/or consistent unexcused absences will impact your professionalism grade.

**THAT SAID: IF YOU ARE SICK, PLEASE LET ME KNOW AND STAY HOME. Please follow all campus COVID procedures and take care of yourselves.**

Please avoid scheduling appointments during this class.

**Unplanned absences**

Unplanned student absences should be authorized when you have a short-term serious and compelling medical condition or when a death or serious illness in the immediate family (i.e., parent, spouse, sibling or child) prevents you from attending class. You are responsible for contacting the instructor as soon as possible after the missed class period and for providing documentation of the reason for the absence upon returning to class. Absences will be excused in accordance with APM 232 (http://www.fresnostate.edu/mapp/documents/apm/232.pdf).

Students participating in a mandatory university activity during a class meeting must provide written notification from the coach, instructor or advisor explaining their absence. Special circumstances such as a funeral, jury duty, military service or medical procedure may make a student eligible to be excused by the professor.

**Students must attend the Final Examination Meeting.**

**Missed or Late Work Policy**

Many of your projects will be worked on during class. Any assignment turned in after the deadline will be penalized one letter grade. Each day after the deadline that your assignment is late, the penalty will be an additional letter grade. Work more than three days late will not receive credit. No late work will be accepted after the last day of classes.

For example, if an assignment was due on a Tuesday and you turn it in on a Thursday, that’s two days late. PLEASE BACK UP YOUR WORK! And keep in mind on group projects, late work can AFFECT ALL GROUP MEMBERS.

Late work may only be made up for documented excused absences. If your absence is authorized and make-up work is allowed, missed papers, tests, projects, and/or homework assignments should be made up within a week following the excused absence.

## Course Policies & Safety Issues

**Course policies:** Television news production is a team effort. While you are expected to be proficient at your individual studio or control room assignment, the newscast will not be successful without team cooperation.

**Safety:** When operating anything in the studio, **you must wear closed-toe shoes**. If there’s even a slight chance you will be running camera, make sure to have a pair of closed-toe shoes with you or leave a pair in the studio to have on hand when needed.

**AS YOU ARE PRODUCTION PERSONNEL, ASSUME YOU WILL NEED CLOSED-TOE SHOES EVERY TIME YOU ENTER THE STUDIO.**

If your outfit will get in the way of you smoothly running your production station, that clothing is not appropriate for this class.This includes large sleeves and dangling jewelry which can get caught on equipment.

**NOTE: THE CONTROL ROOM AND STUDIO ARE CHILLY. PLAN ACCORDINGLY.**

**Adding and Dropping Classes:** Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about the adding/dropping of classes, academic renewals, etc. Students can find more information on adding and dropping at <http://www.fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/classschedule/registration/add-drop.html>.

If there are questions or concerns that you have about this course that you and I are not able to resolve, please feel free to contact the Chair of the department to discuss the matter: Professor Betsy Hays, Media, Communications & Journalism Department, [bhays@csufresno.edu](mailto:bhays@csufresno.edu), 559-278-2087.

## Tentative Course Schedule

**Semester**

**(Monday, Wednesday Courses)**

|  | **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading Assignment** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Mon., Jan. 25 | First day of class. **ZOOM at 2:45pm.**  Introductions & virtual studio tour |  | |
| 2 | Wed., Jan. 27 | **ZOOM**  Virtual studio tutorials. | Reflection: What do you hope to learn during Fresno State Focus crew? How do you plan to contribute? What positions do you think you’ll be good at? What intrigues you? Due at the start of next class on Canvas. | |
| 3 | Mon., Feb. 1 | **ZOOM**  Virtual studio tutorials. |  | |
| 4 | Wed., Feb. 3 | **ZOOM**  Virtual studio tutorials. |  | |
| 5 | Mon., Feb. 8 | **FIRST DAY IN PERSON**  Meet in Speech Arts 172.  Technical boot camp. |  | |
| 6 | Wed., Feb. 10 | Technical boot camp. | Website bio due in Canvas at the start of next class. | |
|  | Mon., Feb. 15 | **HOLIDAY – President’s Day**  **NO CLASS** |  | |
| 7 | Wed., Feb. 17 | Technical boot camp. | Website bio is due at the start of next class.  Dress for website photos on Monday. | |
| 8 | Mon., Feb. 22 | Technical boot camp.  Website photos in studio. |  | |
| 9 | Wed., Feb. 24 | Technical boot camp/rehearsal |  | |
| 10 | Mon., Mar. 1 | Technical boot camp/promos/rehearsal. | Breathe! | |
| 11 | Wed., Mar. 3 | **ANTICIPATED FIRST LIVE NEWSCAST – WAHOO!** | Keep breathing!  Reflection: What did you think of your first live experience? What can we do differently to make it go more smoothly? What skills do you need to work on? What surprised you?  KEEP IN MIND THIS IS A PANDEMIC-IZED PRODUCTION. Things will be weird. TV people like weird. ☺  Due at start of next class on Canvas. | |
| 12 | Mon., Mar. 8 | Newscast prep/Promos/Honing skills/Cross training |  | |
| 13 | Wed., Mar. 10 | **SECOND NEWSCAST** | Keep breathing! ☺ | |
| 14 | Mon., Mar. 15 | Newscast prep/Promos/Honing skills/Cross training |  | |
| 15 | Wed., Mar. 17 | **THIRD NEWSCAST** | More of that breathing thing… | |
| 16 | Mon., Mar. 22 | Newscast prep/Promos/Honing skills/Cross training |  | |
| 17 | Wed., Mar. 24 | **FOURTH NEWSCAST** | Big exhale. Spring break time! | |
|  | Mon., Mar. 29 | **Spring Break**  **NO CLASS** | Nothing. I’m not that mean! | |
|  | Wed., Mar. 31 | **HOLIDAY – Cesar Chavez Day**  **NO CLASS** |  | |
| 18 | Mon., Apr. 5 | Newscast prep/Promos/Honing skills/Cross training |  | |
| 19 | Wed., Apr. 7 | **FIFTH NEWSCAST** | Reflection: More than halfway through already! How’s that breathing going? How are you progressing, both as an individual and as part of the crew team? What skills do you need/want to still work on before the end of term? What can I do to help you progress not only in this class, but as you continue through the program and out into the professional world? Due at start of next class on Canvas. | |
| 20 | Mon., Apr. 12 | Newscast prep/Promos/Honing skills/Cross training |  | |
| 21 | Wed., Apr. 14 | **SIXTH NEWSCAST** |  | |
| 22 | Mon., Apr. 19 | Newscast prep/Promos/Honing skills/Cross training |  | |
| 23 | Wed., Apr. 21 | **SEVENTH NEWSCAST** |  | |
| 24 | Mon., Apr. 26 | Newscast prep/Promos/Honing skills/Cross training |  | |
| 25 | Wed., Apr. 28 | **EIGHTH NEWSCAST** |  | |
| 26 | Mon., May 3 | Newscast prep/Promos/Honing skills/Cross training |  | |
| 27 | Wed., May 5 | **FINAL NEWSCAST** | Reflection: Congratulations! Your term with Fresno State Focus crew – Pandemic Edition is in the books! What have you learned about the live production experience throughout this term? What would you like to see be done differently? What would you still like to learn? Have your expectations/ideas of what newscast production is like changed? Due at start of final exam period on Canvas. | |
| **Finals week** | | | **Days** | **Dates** | |
| Final Exam Preparation & Faculty Consultation Days: | | | Thursday and Friday | May 6 – 7 | |
| Final Semester Examinations | | | Monday – Thursday | May 10 – 13 | |
| Final Exam in this course  **Wednesday, May 12, 1:15pm**  Final reflection due. Yup, that’s it!  We’ll meet with editorial and look at their reels. For those of you who are broadcast majors, this will be you in a future term!  If you would like to prepare a portfolio website, I will provide the parameters that we look for. You are not required to do so for this class. | | |  | May 12 | |

“*The course schedule is subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.”*

## University Policies and services

**Students with Disabilities:** Upon identifying themselves to the instructor and the university, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation. For more information, contact Services to Students with Disabilities in the Henry Madden Library, Room 1202 (278-2811).

**Honor Code:** “Members of the Fresno State academic community adhere to principles of academic integrity and mutual respect while engaged in university work and related activities.” You should:

1. understand or seek clarification about expectations for academic integrity in this course (including no cheating, plagiarism and inappropriate collaboration)
2. neither give nor receive unauthorized aid on examinations or other course work that is used by the instructor as the basis of grading.
3. take responsibility to monitor academic dishonesty in any form and to report it to the instructor or other appropriate official for action.

Instructors may require students to sign a statement at the end of all exams and assignments that “I have done my own work and have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this work.” If you are going to use this statement, include it here.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** Cheating is the actual or attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive acts for the purpose of improving one's grade or obtaining course credit; such acts also include assisting another student to do so. Typically, such acts occur in relation to examinations. However, it is the intent of this definition that the term 'cheating' not be limited to examination situations only, but that it include any and all actions by a student that are intended to gain an unearned academic advantage by fraudulent or deceptive means. Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of others by misrepresenting the material (i.e., their intellectual property) so used as one's own work. Penalties for cheating and plagiarism range from a 0 or F on a particular assignment, through an F for the course, to expulsion from the university. For more information on the University's policy regarding cheating and plagiarism, refer to the Class Schedule (Legal Notices on Cheating and Plagiarism) or the University Catalog (Policies and Regulations).

**Computers:** "At California State University, Fresno, computers and communications links to remote resources are recognized as being integral to the education and research experience. Every student is required to have his/her own computer or have other personal access to a workstation (including a modem and a printer) with all the recommended software. In the curriculum and class assignments, students are presumed to have 24-hour access to a computer workstation and the necessary communication links to the University's information resources."

**Disruptive Classroom Behavior:**"The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share of themselves without losing their identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct which disrupts the learning process shall not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class."

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**For free tutoring on campus, contact the** [**Learning Center**](http://www.fresnostate.edu/learningcenter) (<http://fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/lrc>) in the Collection Level (basement level) of the Henry Madden Library. You can reach them by phone at 559.278.3052.

**Our campus has developed** [**SupportNet**](http://fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/lrc/supportnet/) (<http://fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/lrc/supportnet>) to connect students with specific campus resources promoting academic success. Students may be referred to it if you believe they need the services provided by SupportNet to succeed in your course.

## Subject to Change Statement

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

Information on student rights, responsibilities, academic honesty, etc., can be found on the Fresno State Student Handbook web page. The web page is located at: <http://www.fresnostate.edu/studentaffairs/division/general/studenthandbook/>.