

Fall 2017, 2 Units

Day/Time: Tuesday, 5:00 - 6:20

p.m. Classroom: ASC 204 Instructor: Gordon Stables [stables@usc.edu](mailto:stables@usc.edu)  
213-740-2759

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:00 – 4:00 pm; ASC 303

Teaching Assistant: Chloe Piepho

[piepho@usc.edu](mailto:piepho@usc.edu)

### Course Description:

For students interested in journalism, public relations, and communication, the USC Annenberg School is a fascinating place to study, work – and play. The world is experiencing dramatic transformations at all levels of society, with rapid changes in communication technology, social patterns, demographics, laws and regulations, and global markets. All of these shifts are changing the norms, expectations, economic models for the way people engage each other, in a range of platforms and settings.

As an introduction to those fields – and to the Annenberg School – this course will describe and give examples of exactly how these fields are changing, what remains at their core, and what the new conditions mean for professionals in those industries and for our lives as citizens. In short, what does it mean today to be a journalist, public relations professional, or a communication expert? This class will provide students with a basic understanding of all three of the Annenberg School's undergraduate majors and of how they differ and intersect.

### Student Objectives:

By the conclusion of the course, students will be:

- 1) Introduced to a survey and critical examination of theories and practices that help explain the evolution of the news media and communication fields.
- 2) Familiar with what it means to be a professional journalist, public relations, or communication professional.
- 3) Exposed to changes in technology, audiences, laws and regulations, and what is sometimes called “convergence.” Understanding these changes, and acquiring the skills necessary to succeed in the new media ecology, is essential for any student of journalism, communication, or public relations, and we hope that by mastering them our students will have a practical and intellectual edge in whatever field they pursue.
- 4) Engage in a dialogue around key themes that will inform all our discussions, including diversity and the globalization of ownership, audiences, and programming; media literacy and critical thinking; and the importance of good writing and creating a clear, effective, and engaging narrative.
- 5) Familiar with what it means to be an Annenberg citizen, including an overview of the diverse skills and disciplines taught at the Annenberg School, the ways in which they intersect, and how you can benefit from combining them. You will see the “Annenberg advantage” in action, which comes from connecting the dots and combining an understanding of communication, journalism, and public relations. Our goal is to underline the importance of the enterprising, hardworking, public service-oriented and gutsy spirit that we hope to instill in as many Annenberg students as possible. We also hope to remain mindful of the wishes of Ambassador Walter Annenberg, who said that educating students “to be of service to all people is the enduring mission of this school.”

**Assignments** (and their weighted percentage toward the final grade):

**Autobiographical Essay** (15%) Students will write a 2-3 page essay (approximately 750 words) describing: 1) their background and interests; 2) the reasons they are interested in their specific major (journalism, PR, or communication; or in the case of non-majors, why they are interested in media and communication); 3) what they hope to learn from the class; 4) where they get their news and why; and 5) where they hope to be in 10 years. Due at the end of Week 2.

**Blog Posts** (40%) Over the course of the semester students must post on Blackboard four journal-type entries on topics covered by the class. You can write about your reactions to the instructor's lectures, the reading assignments, and/or the discussions in class. Entries need not be more than 2-3 pages (approximately 750 words), but they should reflect a thoughtful engagement with a topic from class. It is your responsibility to post them to the Discussion Forum under Tools on Blackboard. (We may sometimes discuss some of the most through provoking posts in class.) Each post is due by the start of class on the day in question.

**Participation** (15%) This class relies on students' attendance and participation in both hours of the class, for the lecture and the guest presentations. Any unexcused absences or regular tardiness will affect this portion of your grade and will bring down your overall grade. If for any reason you need to miss part or all of the class, please notify your instructors via email. Approved athletic competitions and other university obligations will count as excused absences with excuse form requests submitted to your instructors at least 48 hours prior to missing class. Medical excuses must be verified by a note from a health care professional.

**Final Course Essay** (30%) The final essay topic will ask students to do some original research and to apply the material covered in the class. The work will review interviews in the class, topics covered and additional perspectives on these fields. The paper is due during the final exam date during the final exam period.

## **Academic Calendar**

**Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/21/17 – 12/1/17)**

**Friday, September 8:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, September 8:** Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

**Tuesday, September 12:** Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 001

**Friday, October 6:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript for Session 001. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, October 6:** Last day to change pass/no pass to letter grade for Session 001. [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

**Friday, November 10:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

## Schedule of Classes

This is a working schedule. The formal class schedule will be posted on blackboard and regularly updated, based on the schedule of course guests. All updates will be marked on blackboard and shared via blackboard messages.

The schedule, topics, and guest speakers are subject to change. Please check Blackboard at least twice a week.

1	August 22	Course Introduction	
2	August 29	Intro to Communication	Autobiographical Essay due
3	September 5	Intro to Journalism	
4	September 12	Debate Event	Blog post 1 due
5	September 19	Intro to Public Relations	
6	September 26	Communication and Social Change	
7	October 3	Political Communication - Tom	
8	October 10	Communication and Culture	Blog post #2 due
9	October 17	Contemporary Journalism	
10	October 24	Advanced Public Relations	
11	October 31	Communication Management	
12	November 7	Contemporary Journalism #2	Blog post #3 due
13	November 14	Media and Entrepreneurship	
14	November 21	Sports Media and Sports Media Industries	
15	November 28	Future Trends / Course conclusion	Blog post #4 due

## Course Policies:

**Academic Integrity** - The Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism is committed to upholding the University's academic integrity code. It is USC policy to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the academic integrity code can result in the student's expulsion from your major or minor. The University presumes that you are familiar with its standards and policies; should you be found to have committed a violation, ignorance of these standards and policies will not be accepted as an excuse. You should be familiar with the following resources:

- "Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism" addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations and citations in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's Writing Program (by Student Judicial Affairs) <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tig.pdf>
- "Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty" addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration (by Student Judicial Affairs) <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tio.pdf>
- The "2017-18 SCampus" (the student handbook) contains the university's Student Conduct Code and other student-related policies. <http://www.usc.edu/scampus>.
- The USC Code of Ethics is also linked to every blackboard course menu in at the bottom of the left side navigation bar.

**Attendance** – Students are expected to attend each day and have completed the reading due for that day. Attendance will be taken each day. Discussion sections attendance and participation will be directly factored in your class participation evaluation. Any absences for medical or university excused reasons should be coordinated with the instructor at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Late & Unfinished Work** – Students must complete all assignments in order to earn a grade in the course. Any material turned in late will be reduced one letter grade per calendar day late.

**Grievance Procedure** - Occasionally, students are dissatisfied with evaluation of their work or some other dimension of a course. For concerns with specific grades, students should first provide a written argument in support of their position to the appropriate grading assistant. All grade appeals on specific assignments must be made within one week of the return of the assignment. The GA will then review that petition and evaluate its merits. Dr. Stables will consider grade appeals only after this process has been completed. You may, of course, approach any of the instructors with any general concerns.

**Special Assistance** - Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure that the letter is delivered as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in 120 Grace Ford Salvatori Hall (GFS) (3601 Watt Way). DSP is open from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and can be reached at (213) 740-0776 or at [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu)

**Course Materials Blackboard:** Reading, viewing, and listening material for each week will be posted to Blackboard ([blackboard.usc.edu](http://blackboard.usc.edu)). These readings will include an essay from your instructor, articles about current events, and PDFs of certain academic articles. We expect you to keep abreast of whatever material we distribute in class or post on Blackboard.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Each assignment will receive a numerical grade. Students should understand that the following scale is used to govern grades, with the understanding that pluses and minuses are qualifications on the general scale.

- ‘A’ work signifies excellence in both design and implementation of work. This material can be considered outstanding and should be understood as far superior to the average effort. Simply completing the assignment prompt does not automatically constitute A quality work.
- ‘B’ work signifies above average work. Strong effort is involved and visible through clear organizational planning and attention to detail.
- ‘C’ work signifies average and adequate work. This grade is earned when material completes the minimum threshold of an assignment, even though conceptual, organizational or writing problems may exist.
- ‘D’ work signifies below average work. This is usually the product of either a substantial problem adhering to the nature of the assignment or a substantially problematic effort.
- ‘F’ work signifies an unacceptable level of work. This is usually the product of an incomplete assignment or a fundamental failure to engage the nature of the assignment.

Final course grades are assigned on the following scale

94-100 % = A	90-93 % = A-	87-89 % = B+	84-86 % = B	80-83 % = B-	77-79 % = C+
74-76 % = C	70-73 % = C-	67-69 % = D+	64-66 % = D	60-63 % = D-	59 % & below = F

## **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

### **a. Academic Conduct**

#### *Plagiarism*

Presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words - is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct (<http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>).

#### *USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity*

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

"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 plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an 'F' on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators."

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

### **b. Support Systems**

#### *Equity and Diversity*

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* (<http://equity.usc.edu/>) or to the *Department of Public Safety* (<http://dps.usc.edu/contact/report/>). This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community - such as a friend, classmate, adviser, or faculty member - can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The *Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services* (<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>) provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage (<https://sarc.usc.edu/>) describes reporting options and other resources.

#### *Support with Scholarly Writing*

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your adviser or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* (<http://ali.usc.edu/>) which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs* (<http://dsp.usc.edu/>) provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.

Students requesting test-related accommodations will need to share and discuss their DSP recommended accommodation letter/s with their faculty and/or appropriate departmental contact person at least three weeks before the date the accommodations will be needed. Additional time may be needed for final exams. Reasonable exceptions will be considered during the first three weeks of the semester as well as for temporary injuries and for students recently diagnosed. Please note that a reasonable period of time is still required for DSP to review documentation and to make a determination whether a requested accommodation will be appropriate.

### *Stress Management*

Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at (213) 740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge.

### *Emergency Information*

If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* (<http://emergency.usc.edu/>) will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.