USC Annenberg

PR 501: Advocacy Communications
4 Units

Fall 2019 – Tuesdays – 2-5:20 p.m.
Section: 21456D
Location: ASC 328

Instructor: Terri D. Austin
Office: ASC Lobby or Classroom
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Contact Info: terriaus@usc.edu

I. Course Description
This course will study and evaluate communication campaigns by civil society actors to influence public policy and public opinion with a focus on messaging and efforts to shape news coverage. Students will learn to analyze and create such campaigns.

The course is designed for students who want to understand how influencers affect and change public policy through mediums like media, legislation, litigation, lobbying, marketing, and advertising. Those influencers can include the government, politicians, think tanks, charitable organizations, and corporations.

The course will focus on current communication campaigns and identify the actors and mediums controlling those campaigns. Students will learn how to decipher messages and understand how to strategically develop public policy. The course will cover a variety of issues affecting public policy including fake news accusations, foreign media meddling, and cyber security.

Students will be expected to participate in classroom discussions on politics, the economy, cultural and societal issues. The discussion will focus on multiple and diverse perspective of all issues. Students will be expected to advocate the pros and cons, the left and right, the red or blue, and the right or wrong aspects of all topics.

During class, we will review the assigned reading which will be supplemented with internet articles and videos. The purpose of the internet articles and videos is to augment the reading with current events and examples. Guest speakers may include local and national politicians or other policy influencers. The course will be graded and will provide four (4) credits.

II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment
The overall objective of the class is to equip students with the ability to understand the impact of communication campaigns and to learn how to develop and influence public policy through the development of communication campaigns. Specific objectives are listed below.

1. Identify communication campaigns and strategies. Students will be asked to research and identify strategies in the media and other mediums, including diverse and non-traditional media.
2. Determine the influencers behind the communication campaign.
3. Interpret the message behind the communication campaign. Students will be asked to provide interpretations of the messages underlying the campaign.
4. Identity the results of the campaign strategy.
5. Develop a communication campaign to affect public policy.

III. Course Notes
The class will be structured around prepared lesson plans and will be interactive. Homework assignments will be included at the end of each lesson plan. Additional information will be posted on Blackboard if needed.

IV. Description and Assessment of Assignments

Classroom Participation (15%): Students are expected to attend all classes and to actively participate in classroom discussions.

Homework Assignments (35%): Students will be given periodic homework assignments to complete on a timely basis.

Midterm Examination (20%): A midterm examination will be administered which will cover class discussions and class assignments.

Final Project (30%): The final project will include the creation and presentation of a communications campaign strategy. Students may work individually or together in teams. The students will work on the final project throughout the semester.

V. Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Classroom Participation	15	15%
Homework Assignments	35	35%
Midterm Examination	20	20%
Final Project	30	30%
TOTAL	**100**	**100%**

b. Grading Scale

95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 94%: A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

c. Grading Standards

Public Relations

"A" projects have writing near professional quality; one or no mistakes; clearly proofread and edited material. All required elements included (catchy headline, solid lead, varied vocabulary; supporting facts/figures; quotes as required). Excellent organization and flow; original thinking. Showed creativity in packaging/distribution method. High end of scale: publishable today as is.

"B" projects have two to five spelling, grammar or AP Style mistakes. One or more required elements missing or poorly displayed (i.e., boring headline; confusing lead, etc.). Shows potential as a good writer. Adhered to inverted pyramid. High end of scale will have at least one extraordinary element such as astonishing lead or little-known facts or pithy quote. Some creativity shown. Publishable with medium editing.

"C" projects have more than five errors (spelling, grammar, AP style). Poorly edited and/or proofread. May have adhered to inverted pyramid but strayed at beginning or end. Hackneyed elements such as trite headline or uninteresting lead. Little or no facts/figures included. Passive rather than active verbs become the norm. Little or no creativity shown. Publishable with major editing.

"**D" projects** have more than 10 errors (spelling, grammar). Needs to be completely rewritten. Poorly organized with little or no understanding of journalistic style/standards. Needs to work with writing coach.

"F" projects are not rewritable, late or not turned in.

d. Grading Timeline

Assignments submitted on time will be returned and graded one week after submission unless otherwise indicated. Late submissions will be returned and graded as soon as practicable.

VI. Assignment Rubrics

Assignments will be graded 50% on content and 50% on structure, clarity, style, grammar, and spelling.

VII. Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a lower grade. Assignments submitted beyond one week late will receive a grade of zero. Assignments must be submitted via email on the due date before class.

VIII. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

- Castells, Manuel. Communication Power. Oxford University Press. 2009. EBook full text online via USC library.
- All other reading and assignments will be posted on Blackboard or by email.

IX. Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the **Annenberg Digital Lounge** for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's **Information Technology Services** website.

X. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/26/19 – 12/6/19)

Friday, September 13: Last day to register and add classes for Session 001
Friday, September 13: 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 17: Last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 001
Friday, October 11: 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 11: 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 15: Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

XI. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: *Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.*

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 **Tuesday, 8/27**	Course Introduction	Castells, Manuel Pages 1 to 54	Due 9/3
Week 2 **Tuesday, 9/3**	The Network Society	Castells, Manuel Pages 54 to 99	Due 9/10
Week 3 **Tuesday, 9/10**	Digital Communication	Castells, Manuel Pages 99 to 127	Due 9/17
Week 4 **Tuesday, 9/17**	Mind and Power	Castells, Manuel Pages 127 to 150	Due 9/24
Week 5 **Tuesday, 9/24**	Mind and Power	Castells, Manuel Pages 150 to 165	Due 10/1
Week 6 **Tuesday, 10/1**	Mind and Power	Castells, Manuel Pages 165 to 193	Due 10/8
Week 7 **Tuesday, 10/8**	Mind and Power	Study for In Class Midterm	NA
Week 8 **Tuesday, 10/15**	In Class Midterm	Castells, Manuel Pages 193 to 240	Due 10/22
Week 9 **Tuesday, 10/22**	Media Politics	Castells, Manuel Pages 240 to 264	Due 10/29
Week 10 **Tuesday, 10/29**	Media Politics	Castells, Manuel Pages 264 to 299	Due 11/5
Week 11 **Tuesday, 11/5**	Media Politics	Castells, Manuel Pages 299 to 346	Due 11/12
Week 12 **Tuesday, 11/12**	Social Movements	Castells, Manuel Pages 346 to 416 Assign final project	Due 11/19
Week 13 **Tuesday, 11/19**	Social Movements	Castells, Manuel Pages 416 to 433	Due 11/26
Week 14 **Tuesday, 11/26**	Communication Theory of Power	Finalize Final Project	
Week 15 **Tuesday, 12/3**	Course Evaluations Present Final Projects	NA	NA
FINAL EXAM PERIOD **Thursday, 12/12, 2-4 p.m.**	Student Meetings	**NA**	**NA**

XII. Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

Classroom attendance is a critical part of this course. Please make every effort to attend all classes and to arrive on time. If you miss a class for any reason, the lesson plan will be posted on Blackboard immediately following the class. During class, all points of view are encouraged, and respect for those points of view are expected.

Communication

Please contact me at terriaus@usc.edu if you need to meet with me and are unable to do so during office hours. I will respond to your email within 24 hours.

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must by unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism or public relations class.

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

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421
studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710
studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Annenberg Student Success Fund
https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/additional-funding-resources
The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Breaking Bread Program [undergraduate students only]
https://undergrad.usc.edu/faculty/bread/
The Breaking Bread Program is designed to provide individual undergraduate students with an opportunity to meet and have scholarly discussions with faculty members outside of the normal classroom setting. Through this program, students and faculty enjoy good company and great conversation by literally "breaking bread" over a meal together and USC will pick up the tab! Your meal event can take place anywhere outside of the normal classroom setting. Your venue can be a restaurant or eatery on or off-campus.

XIII. About Your Instructor

Ms. Austin currently serves as a legal analyst on multiple television stations and online media. She most recently served as Chief Corporate Policy Officer for S&P Global where she implemented and monitored corporate policies, standards, and procedures. She previously served as Chief Diversity Officer from 2010 to 2015 where she developed an integrated diversity and inclusion strategy across the businesses. Previously she served as Chief Compliance & Ethics Officer for AIG's Domestic Insurance Operations, as an associate at Richards & O'Neil, and as an Assistant General Counsel for the New York City Law Department.

Ms. Austin holds a bachelor's degree in political science from Grinnell College, a Juris Doctorate from Columbia University School of Law, and a Master's degree from the Columbia School of Journalism. Ms. Austin serves on a number of boards including Riverdale Country School and Girls Inc. of NYC. She has received a number of honors including *The Network Journal's* 25 Influential Black Women in Business in 2008 and Top Diversity Executive by *Black Enterprise* in 2011.