



**PR 538 Image Management in  
Entertainment  
3 Units**

**Fall 2021 – Thursdays – 6:30-9 p.m.**

**Section:** 21563D

**Location:** ANN 408

**Instructor:** Jennie O'Hagan

**I. Course Description**

This class will examine the role of public relations and publicity in managing the public images of performers, executives and entertainment companies. Through the real-life experiences of top public relations practitioners, journalists, entertainers, industry professionals and executives in the entertainment field, we will discuss the role of PR and the importance of creating and maintaining a personalized, positive image through media of all types. This includes personal image reflection, reputation evolution and crisis management. Analysis of current pop culture and news stories will be an integral element of these discussions.

**II. Student Learning Outcomes**

Objectives

- Familiarize students with the concept of image management, both personally and professionally and its importance and execution in the entertainment industry
- Familiarize students with the unique aspects of public relations as practiced in various sectors of the entertainment industry.
- Bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical execution of PR strategies and tactics in entertainment by discussing terminology, common practices and idiosyncrasies specific to the industry.

Assessment

Students will be expected to demonstrate proficient communication skills, including efficient and effective writing. In addition, through discussion, they will be able to demonstrate their understanding of both the entertainment context and PR processes involved in current stories, as well as evaluate PR tactics and resulting outcomes.

Flexibility in the time of a pandemic

This course has been designed to transition to fully online, should the need arise due to local, state or federal guidelines. In the event that the delivery method is altered, please be assured that the learning goals and outcomes of the course will not change; however, some aspects of the course will change in terms of the mode of delivery, participation and testing methods.

**III. Description and Assessment of Assignments**

- Participation is a major component of this class, but how you participate is (in part) up to you. In-class discussions, posing questions to our guest speakers and correspondence with me will all be factored into participation. Respect for the classroom space — helping to create an environment where other students can learn — will be considered, as well. What is NOT graded is whether or

not what you say is right or wrong — if you already knew everything, you wouldn't have had to COME to college. You SHOULD be wrong sometimes. That's how we learn together.

- Students will be asked to discuss pop culture and entertainment news of the week, topics relevant to the day's discussion, ask questions of guest speakers, etc. Students will provide ONE (1) or (2) questions for each guest speaker \*ON BLACKBOARD\* by noon on Thursday. The question will be specific to the speaker's job, company and or personal experience. Questions will be chosen by the professor to be asked of the speaker and students may be called on to ask their Q aloud. Not every Q will be chosen each week.
- Written assignments: Students will write and be prepared to discuss five (5) written assignments covering a variety of image management and entertainment-related topics described later in this syllabus and assigned throughout the semester.
- We will be reading Luvvie Ajayi Jones' book Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual together. Luvvie's book is fun, entertaining, challenging, educational and stimulating. She also enjoys the liberal use of the F word. Please let me know if this becomes an overwhelming barrier to your learning.
- Midterm: YOU'LL BE PROVIDED WITH A MEMBER OF/ORGANIZATION IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY. Your team wants to be this person's \*new\* publicity firm. Use what you know about PR and have learned about Image Management to create an ENTERTAINMENT STRATEGY for this person/organization. You're competing for this job (with another fictitious company) - this is your chance to win the business.
- Case Study: Each student will give a slide presentation about their chosen subject's IMAGE MANAGEMENT - successes and failures (PowerPoint, Keynote, Prezzi and Google are all acceptable) that includes an overview/history of the celebrity, key findings, and PR implications (e.g. what should a PR practitioner take away from this case). Presentation should be approximately 3-4 minutes in length, followed by class Q&A.
- Thank You Notes: Students will be required to write a thank you note to each speaker specifically detailing two or three key learnings from the talk. The thank you will be due IN BLACKBOARD by noon on the Friday after class so the speaker can get a timely response of gratitude for their time. Instructor will pass an email with ALL notes to the speaker.
- ORAL FINAL EXAM: Class will participate in-group discussion re: all Image Management subjects covered over the term. Questions will be given in advance. Specific case studies will be required as answers to questions, with a clear understanding of how class learnings have affected the subject. Every student will be expected to participate in conversation when called upon or by volunteering and be able to provide a thorough understanding and defense of image management skills and practical applications for public relations. There will be a written component, as well.

#### IV. Grading

##### a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Participation	10	10%
Written assignments	15	15%
Midterm	20	20%
Case Study	20	20%
Thank You Notes	10	10%
Final	25	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

##### 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**

Every effort will be made to complete grading of writing assignments within two weeks of due date. Midterms will be graded in blackboard within three weeks of due date and Final exam grade will be in blackboard within a week.

#### **V. Assignment Rubrics**

Assignment rubrics will be explained with assignment details.

#### **VI. Assignment Submission Policy**

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments turned in within a week will be accepted but, will not receive a grade higher than “B.” An assignment that is later than one week will not be accepted and zero (0) points will be given.

B. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard by midnight on the due date.

#### **VII. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

We will read Professional Troublemaker: the Fear-Fighter Manual by Luvvie Ajayi Jones. Any other readings or videos will be added to BLACKBOARD. The instructor expects students to read all of these materials, even though some of them will serve as background for classroom discussion and may not be specifically discussed in class. Students will be expected to be current with breaking entertainment-related news, both consumer and business, by reading the online versions of major general and entertainment news sources (i.e. LA Times, Variety, The Hollywood Reporter, [EntertainmentTonight.com](http://EntertainmentTonight.com), [entertainmentweekly.com](http://entertainmentweekly.com), Deadline, The Wall Street Journal, New York Times, etc.)

#### **VIII. 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. **LAPTOPS MUST BE CLOSED DURING GUEST SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS. PLEASE CLOSE ALL SOCIAL MEDIA DURING CLASS TIME.**

#### **IX. Masking and Face Covering**

USC’s current mandate is that everyone will be required to wear a face mask in university buildings, including classrooms. You **MUST** wear a mask appropriately (i.e., covering both your mouth and nose) the entire time you are in class. There is a no eating or drinking allowed classroom policy; however, students may briefly remove their masks to sip on a beverage, but masks must be worn between sips. Anyone attending class in-person without a mask will be asked to put one on or leave. Stu-

dents who refuse to wear masks appropriately or adhere to stated requirements will face disciplinary action.

**X: Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 8/23/21 – 12/3/21)**

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20213/calendar/>

**Friday, September 10:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, September 10:** Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001

**Friday, September 10:** Last day to purchase or waive tuition refund insurance for fall

**Tuesday, September 14:** Last day to add or drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund or change to Pass/No Pass or Audit for Session 001

**Friday, October 8:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript for Session 001. Mark of “W” will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the 20 percent mark of the session) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, October 8:** 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 12:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of “W” for Session 001

**XI. Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

***Important note to students:*** *As is true of all aspects of the entertainment industry, this syllabus is subject to change and adjustment throughout the semester in order to accommodate timely, late-breaking topics and events, the progress of the class, and/or guest speaker availability. Students having any doubt or questions regarding assignments, schedules, etc. should immediately check with the instructor. [students shouldn't be the official source of info; they usually are incorrect]*

Session One – August 26: Introductions

Introduction to class and instructor. Assumptions and expectations. Discussion of the history and importance of image management across the industry and tools available to public relations professionals. Introduction of students.

Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual chapters 1-3
- Writing Assignment #1: Complete “YOUR LIFE MISSION STATEMENT” & Oriki \*the foundation for your own IMAGE MANAGEMENT\* on pages 9-10 & 16-17 of Professional Troublemaker (worksheet will also be in Blackboard) **DUE on BLACKBOARD by noon THURSDAY, September 2.**
- Conduct research on and learn all you can about next week’s speaker and write one or two questions based on direction at the end of class. Questions will be **due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, September 2.**

Session Two – September 2: Character/Image Development

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

Discussion Topics:

- Share mission statements and Orikis
- What is image? Why does it matter?
- Building blocks of creating image for client: person or corporation

- Pitfalls
- How do I “manage” another person/corporation image respectfully - esp. when disagreements occur?

Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Daily entertainment coverage & Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual chapter 4
- Conduct research on and learn all you can about next week’s speaker and write one or two questions based on direction at the end of class. Questions will be **due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, September 9**

Session Three – September 9: Working with the Media: How mainstream business publications fit in

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

Discussion Topics:

- Where do you get your news and how do you determine its credibility?
- The difference between publicity and public relations.
- Why is image important in entertainment?

CASE STUDY PRESENTATION

Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Daily entertainment coverage & Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual chapter 6-7
- Writing Assignment #2: In 2-4 pages - you’ll reflect about a time you did or wish you had spoken the truth OR made a mistake AND a time when an entertainment figure you love did or should have spoken the truth OR made a mistake ...with what you now know, how would you advise yourself and that entertainment figure to handle these situations. **DUE ON BLACKBOARD BY NOON SEPTEMBER 16**

Session Four – September 16: How to See and Be Seen

Discussion Topics:

- Speaking up and failing ... (from reading and writing assignment)
- How to be seen...specifically in Hollywood
- The elevator pitch and is your resume helping you?
- Altering your pitch for different outlets
- Learning to PITCH - (role play!)
- EXPLAIN MIDTERM

Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Daily entertainment coverage & Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual chapter 8-10 BE READY DISCUSS - esp. about SOCIAL MEDIA!!
- Conduct research on and learn all you can about next week’s speaker and write one or two questions based on direction at the end of class. Questions will be due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, September 23

Session Five – September 23: Working with Media

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

Discussion Topics:

- Relationships and exclusives.
- How to create and maintain strong media ties.
- What is “on the record”

CASE STUDY PRESENTATION

Assignments:

- Work on MIDTERM

Session Six – September 30: MIDTERM

MIDTERM DUE- *No class meeting*

All presentations must be turned in to BLACKBOARD and time stamped by 9pm/PT

Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Daily entertainment coverage & Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual chapters 11 - 12
- Conduct research on and learn all you can about next week’s speaker and write one or two questions based on direction at the end of class. Questions will be due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, October 7

Session Seven – October 7: Working with Personal Publicists

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

Discussion Topics:

- Working with talent; celebrity vs. fame; A vs. B vs. C list talent
- How publicity choices impact image.
- How personal PR agencies manage image against the commitments of their clients to various projects.
- Philanthropic efforts as part of image management.

CASE STUDY PRESENTATION

Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Daily entertainment coverage & Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual chapters 13-14
- WRITING ASSIGNMENT #3: Research social media of one person with strong philanthropic leanings: evaluate brand and use of SM to enhance or detract from intended image. **Due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, October 21**
- Conduct research on and learn all you can about next week’s speaker and write one or two questions based on direction at the end of class. Questions will be **due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, October 21**

Session Eight – October 14: FALL RECESS

**NO CLASS MEETING**

Session Nine – October 21: Scripted TV & Reality Marketing and Publicity

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

Discussion Topics:

- PR Timelines for launching TV series & Reality Shows
- Designing your plan. How different media cover entertainment, how they are used, how they fit into a campaign.
- Being an executive in entertainment

CASE STUDY PRESENTATION

Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Daily entertainment coverage & TBA
- Conduct research on and learn all you can about next week's speaker and write one or two questions based on direction at the end of class. Questions will be **due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, October 28**

Session Ten – October 28: Podcast

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

Discussion Topics:

- Podcast as a medium - how do you create an image through the ears?
- Podcast publicity

CASE STUDY PRESENTATION

Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Daily entertainment coverage & TBA
- Conduct research on and learn all you can about next week's speaker and write one or two questions based on direction at the end of class. Questions will be **due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, November 4**

Session Eleven – November 4: Feature Film & Television

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

Discussion Topics:

- Relationship with publicist film/TV actors
- Engaging in personal PR vs project PR
- How perception impacts performance of marketing
- Altering your pitch for different outlets/clients



## CASE STUDY PRESENTATION

### Session Twelve – November 11: Image vs reality - personal and professional

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

#### Discussion Topics:

- Early semester mission statements - any adds/edits?
- How has living through a global pandemic affected image management?
- Why is my image and how I manage it important to my work as a PR professional.
- How are we, in the digital world, curating our own image ...how do people see us?
- Making a good apology

## CASE STUDY PRESENTATION

#### Assignments:

- Assigned readings: Daily entertainment coverage & Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual chapters 15 - END
- Conduct research on and learn all you can about next week's speaker and write one or two questions based on direction at the end of class. Questions will be **due on BLACKBOARD by noon on Thursday, November 18**

### Session Thirteen – November 18: Revolution and "Disruption" in Creation and Distribution of Content

GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

#### Discussion Topics:

- How creation and distribution of content have changed and will continue to change; emerging platforms.
- Content production across both traditional and new media
- Pluses and minuses of being a disruptor. Big change or epic fail?
- How disruption is used to create diversion, to change public images of both entertainment entities and performers.
- New platforms erupt every day. How to keep up.

## CASE STUDY PRESENTATION

#### Assignments:

- Complete course evaluations - on-line
- Prepare for FINAL EXAM

### Session Fourteen – November 25: THANKSGIVING

**NO CLASS TONIGHT**

### Session Fifteen - Final Exam ORAL - December 2

Oral Final Exam

Final Exam Period – Final Exam WRITTEN - December 9, 7-9 p.m.

Written Final Exam

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

## **XII. Policies and Procedures**

### **Additional Policies**

Please alert professor if you will be missing class. Writing assignments can be made-up but, in-class discussions are a valuable part of the class and participation is highly recommended.

**Cell Phones & Laptops:** Please leave your phones in your bag. There will be a break during class where you can check your phone, make a call, text, etc. The expectation will be that your online activities NOT related to class will be completed out of class. If these activities become a distraction to your participation in class, your participation grade will be affected.

### **Communication**

Please feel free to contact Professor O’Hagan via email with any questions or challenges that you have. I will be available before class (by appointment) to meet with students (via ZOOM or phone) and welcome the opportunity to meet to discuss the class or communications industry. I will make every effort to reply to emails within 48-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 be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism or public relations class.

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

### **a. Academic Conduct**

#### *Plagiarism*

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://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, [policy.usc.edu/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**

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.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](http://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 and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)- (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298*

[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by 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. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*

[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776*

[dsp.usc.edu](http://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*

[uscsa.usc.edu](https://uscsa.usc.edu)

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](https://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](https://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](https://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](https://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Annenberg Student Success Fund*

<https://annenbergsuccessfund.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.

### **XIII. About Your Instructor**

Jennie O'Hagan is a Multi-Emmy winning Television Producer and Public Relations Professional. Jennie was the original Entertainment Producer for the *KTLA Morning News* in Los Angeles and Executive Producer of KTLA's broadcast of the *ROSE PARADE*. These days, she is Producer of Spectrum News One's *LA TIMES TODAY* Daily News Magazine - which earned an Emmy award and two LA Press Club awards in its first year of broadcast. She often produces Red Carpet Awards Season coverage and is an Executive Consultant for clients like Disneyland; in both publicity and video production. Most recently, Jennie assisted in the opening of the Avenger's Campus in Disney California Adventure park.

Jennie volunteers with Common Sense Media, sits on the Board of Harvest Home in Venice, CA. She is married to Dan, has two adult stepdaughters and her daughter, Madeline is USC class of 2023.