**PR 452: Public Relations in Entertainment**

**4 Units**

**Spring 2022 – Thursdays – 6:30-9:50 p.m.**

**Section:** 21267R

**Location:** ANN 209

**Instructor: Joy Fehily**

**Office:** ANN lobby or classroom

**Office Hours:** Time coordinated via email with instructor

**Contact Info:** Email is preferred: fehily@usc.edu or office 424-284-4400

**I. Course Description**

Public relations in the design, promotion, and presentation of popular entertainment focusing on personal representation for celebrities, films, television, streaming, events, music, sports, etc. Students will learn context, tactics and strategies used in entertainment PR with the integration of real world and real time examples. Multimedia will be used in the form of clips, web pages, presentations, etc. There is no textbook for this course, so class attendance is necessary to receive all the required information. The course is designed to be interactive with extensive discussion and class participation expected. Lectures will be supplemented by in‐class guest speakers who are working professionals in the fields of media and/or entertainment public relations.

**II. Student Learning Outcomes**

Students will come away with extensive knowledge in all areas of the career of an entertainment publicist, strategic communications executive, major areas of the entertainment industry and modern PR campaigns. Students will be able to converse with PR professionals and show a knowledge of entertainment PR in a job interview or entry level work setting. Based on the knowledge and progress of each student, certain assignments may be altered.

**III. Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Each student’s grade in the course will be based on five elements: Two group projects, one individual interview assignment, in class assignments and class participation. The group projects and individual interview assignment are calendared below and will be explained thoroughly in class. Additionally, to augment a particular lecture a short reading assignment from a current newspaper, magazine or web site may be provided via email to each student by 11 pm PT on the Sunday prior to the next upcoming Thursday lecture. Students are expected to stay informed of current topics in the entertainment industry.

**IV. Grading**

**a. Breakdown of Grade**

| Assignment | Points | % of Grade  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Group Project #1 | 20 | 20% |
| Individual Interview Assignment | 20 | 20% |
| Final Group Project #2 | 30 | 30% |
| In-class Assignments | 15 | 15% |
| Participation | 15 | 15% |
| **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**

The two group project assignments will be evaluated on presenting all of the requested information, their contribution to the group presentation from a thought and idea perspective and general presentation preparedness in delivering project results. Grades for the individual interview assignment will be graded on the expected format that will be explained thoroughly in class. In class assignments will be graded on content and strategic insight.

***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. A grade of F also will be assigned for any plagiarized and/or fabricated material that is submitted.

**d. Grading Timeline**

Grades for the two group project assignments and the individual interview assignment will be made within the one-week period following the due date. Grades will be updated and tracked in Blackboard. In class assignments will be graded and returned by the end of class.

**V. Assignment Submission Policy**

There are two group project assignments that are dated below and will be presented by the group in class. There is only one outside physical assignment – the individual interview assignment - to turn in for this course via Blackboard and it is due at the beginning of class on 4/2. I will accept early assignments, but I will not accept late assignments. Late assignments will automatically be given a grade of 0/F.

Additionally, the portion of your grade relating to in class assignments will be due at the end of that particular class. There are no make-ups. These assignments must be done in-class.

Participation is expected by every student in every class. Face to face communication is one of the most important skills to obtain for a career in public relations. Everyone will be expected to ask a question of speakers. Be prepared to discuss current topics and be called on in class as well.

You will be allowed no more than TWO unexcused absences. Any number of unexcused absences more than TWO will result in you receiving a “0” for the participation portion of your grade.

**VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

Specific publications, web sites and articles will be identified throughout the semester by instructor as required reading. These outlets will include The Hollywood Reporter, Deadline, Variety, The New York Times, to name a few. These will be assigned by 11 pm PT on the Sunday prior to the next upcoming Thursday lecture. Students will receive direction and reading material via email.

**VII. 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**](http://www.annenbergdl.org/) for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s [Information Technology Services](http://itservices.usc.edu/wireless/support/) website.

**VIII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/10/2022 – 4/29/2022; Final Exam Period: 5/4-11/2022)**

**Link: https://classes.usc.edu/term-20221/calendar/**

**Last day to add:** Friday, January 28, 2022

**Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund:** Friday, January 28, 2022

**Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit:** Friday, January 28, 2022 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

**Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund or change to Audit:** Tuesday, February 1

**Last day to withdraw without a “W” on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade:** Friday, February 25, 2022 [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 for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Last day to drop with a mark of "W":** Friday, April 1, 2022

**IX. 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 Date: 1/13 | General instructor introduction; class policies and procedures; Discussion related to the job of a publicist and where/how students consume entertainment media and news. |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 2Date: 1/20 | Lecture Topics: Categorizing press, their needs vs our needs vs client’s needs. Building out a press plan and client schedule. Discussing how entertainment PR was practiced decades ago and how it has evolved to present day. Guest speaker TBD. |  | [**Martin Luther King’s Birthday:** Monday, January 17]In class notecard due |
| Week 3Date: 1/27 | Lecture Topics: Topline discussion about PR = SALES; messaging, pitches, press releases, bullets, talking points, media training. Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 4 Date: 2/3 | First group project overview. Lecture topics: The day-to-day activities of an entry level PR executive; mindset, google alerts, cision, social media, etiquette, multi-tasking, prioritization.Guest speaker TBD |  |  In class notecard due |
| Week 5 Date: 2/10 | Lecture topics: The ins and out of talent publicity – acquiring clients, communication, strategy, press lines, paparazzi, photo shoots and junkets.Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 6Date: 2/17 | Lecture topics: Discuss film tracking, box office, marketing and how it all works hand in hand with PR.Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard dueReminder about group projects |
| Week 7Date: 2/24 | Group Project Presentations beginLecture topics: Discuss all aspects of talent representation; agents, managers, lawyers, business managers. Guest speaker TBD |  | [**President’s Day:** Monday, February 21]In class notecard due |
| Week 8Date: 3/3 | Finish Group Project Presentations Lecture topics:The differences between entertainment corporate PR and talent PR. Discuss the importance of handling crisis PR for all clients. Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 9Date: 3/10 | Individual project overview. Lecture topics:Discuss press needs for various outlets.Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard dueReminder about individual projects |
| Spring BreakDate: 3/17 | No Class |  |  |
| Week 10Date: 3/24 | Lecture topics:Music PR, strategy, marketing and awardsGuest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 11Date: 3/31 | Individual project due with follow-up discussions re results and feedback learned.Lecture topics:The celebrity glam team – the jobs of a stylist and groomer.Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 12Date: 4/7 | Lecture topics:How projects get made and what PR has to do with it from the perspective of a producer.Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 13Date: 4/14 | Lecture topics: Film and television publicity and marketing; festivals, award campaigns, conventions.Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 14Date: 4/21 | Lecture topics:Discuss international publicity – the similarities and differences around the world.Guest speaker TBD |  | In class notecard due |
| Week 15Date: 4/28 | Lecture topics:The crossover of digital and social media regarding talent and press Guest speaker TBD |  |  In class notecard dueReminder – final projects due |
| FINAL EXAM PERIODDate: 5/4, 7-9 p.m. | Present final Group project. |  |  |

**X. Policies and Procedures**

**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.

**XI. Communication**

**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](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, [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](https://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://www.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](https://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](https://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](https://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 Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776*

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

**XII. About Your Instructor**

Joy Fehily is the founder of Joy Fehily Management + Consulting where she manages the career, company and charitable foundation of one client and oversees the publicity and brand strategy of several other high-profile clients. Prior to launching this new company, Fehily was Executive Vice President at PMK\*BNC for three years. Before working at PMK\*BNC, Fehily co-founded PRIME, a Los Angeles-based firm providing communications, brand management, publicity, marketing and strategic planning to the entertainment industry. Clients of the specialty firm included prominent actors, award-winning filmmakers, leading television creators and producers, production companies, websites and nonprofit and entertainment corporations. Fehily began her public relations career over 25 years ago at PMK Public Relations, segued to Castle Rock Entertainment and then returned to the newly formed PMK/HBH. At PMK/HBH, Fehily served as Senior Vice President of their bi-coastal film department. Fehily attended the University of Southern California and received a dual degree in Social Science and Communication. She resides in Los Angeles with her husband and two daughters.