**PR 529: Business and Economic**

 **Foundations for Communicators**

 **3 units**

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

**Section:** 21521D
**Location:** ASC 328

**Instructor: Melanie Cherry**

**Office:** Online or by phone

**Office Hours:** By prior appointment before or after class or at mutually convenient time during the week. Please email for appointment

**Contact Info:** cherrym@usc.edu

**Course Description**

As the public relations and advertising industries are evolving into disciplines that are central to the success of organizations of all types, practitioners increasingly need to be familiar with fundamental aspects of business and economics as they relate to the communication function.  To be a valuable counselor to the executive management team and/or clients, practitioners need to be conversant in the language of the boardroom.

At the same time, changes in the media landscape and social media have created a dynamic employment market, lowering the threshold for entrepreneurially minded practitioners to build their own communication firms. This requires a solid understanding of media business models.

Whether they enter the profession as agency employees, corporate communicators, independent consultants or working in non-profit/NGOs or government organizations, today’s practitioners must understand the fundamentals economics and of how businesses operate, and how the global economy affects their everyday work.

**Overall Learning Objectives**

Guided by the principle of economic literacy, this course focuses on core themes related to the business and economics of public relations and advertising industries:

1. Core economic principles as they relate to the corporate PR/communications and advertising functions. Students will examine the impact of macroeconomic developments on business strategy and communication programs of companies and other organizations. Also, students will examine how development of capitalism shaped the current American economic system.
2. “Business 101,” the basic principles that govern businesses, including accounting, finance, human resources, operations, marketing and sales. Also, students will learn how to determine a business risk assessment, how to tell a business narrative, and the business of advertising and PR agencies.
3. Financial communications and investor relations including basics such as quarterly earnings announcements and what constitutes a shareholder, but also spanning the lifecycle of a private enterprise from funding announcement to filing for initial public offering to quiet period. This section will discuss investor relations as a specialization of financial public relations, as well the function of annual earnings calls. It will explore how the current financial communication environment has evolved in light of the corporate scandals of the early 21st Century.
4. Explore key entrepreneurial concepts including innovation theory, start-up strategies, business-idea evolution, and an introduction to entrepreneurial finance and business models.
5. Developing corporate communication writing material to be incorporated in the student’s writing portfolio.

 **By the end of this course, students should be able to:**

1. Explain how corporations and various government institutions are impacted by macroeconomic crises and understand the public statements issued by them in response.
2. Critique public statements on macroeconomic and microeconomic topics issued by corporations and government officials
3. Understand investor relations basics, including earning call, financial statements, SEC filings
4. Converse on basic macro- and micro-economic topics
5. Execute basic financial communications such as Q&A documents and media pitches

Explain how corporations (including start-up companies) are formed, capitalized and governed

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

### Participation in Class Discussions and Following the News (15% of grade)

It is important to attend class and actively participate, since class activities and interaction with peers encourage creative dialogue and diversity of perspective, which helps enhance your learning. It is expected that students will come to class having read/viewed the materials and be prepared to join class discussions, contributing questions and comments. Every week students will be asked to present news items in the area of major business and economic developments.

Classes begin promptly, so please arrive on time. If you are unable to attend class for some reason, please notify the instructor as soon as possible, and assume personal responsibility for gathering notes from other classmates. At the end of the semester, points will be allocated to students based upon:

* Consistent demonstration that they have read the material for scheduled class discussion
* Contribution to class discussion; answering questions, asking relevant questions
* Following business events in the news and contributing to class discussion
* Consistent attendance in class in order to participate in and contribute to class discussions
* Demonstrating respect for fellow classmates, guest speakers, and instructor (including appropriate use of personal technologies during classroom time)
* Mature classroom behavior that supports learning

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| **Participation in Class Discussion Grading** |
| **CRITERION** | **EXEMPLARY**130-150 pts | **SATISFACTORY**90-129 pts | **UNACCEPTABLE**0-89 pts |
| **Frequency** | Frequent contribution to class discussion. | Regular contribution to class discussion | Seldom or no contribution to class discussion |
| **Relevance** | Contributions to class directly address key issues, questions, or problems related to the text and the discussion activity. | Contributions to class address key issues, questions, or problems related to the text and the discussion activity, but in some cases only. | Contributions to class do not directly address the question or problem posed by the discussion activities. |
| **Insight** | Contributions to class offer original or thoughtful insights, analyses, or observations that demonstrate a strong grasps of concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics. | Contributions to class offer some insight, analysis, or observation to the topic but may not demonstrate a full understanding or knowledge of concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics. | Contributions to class do not offer any significant insight, analysis, or observation related to the topic. No knowledge or understanding is demonstrated regarding concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics. |
| **Support** | Contributions to class support all claims and opinions with either rational argument or evidence. | Contributions to class generally support claims and opinions with evidence or argument, but may leave some gaps where unsupported opinions still appear. | Contributions to class do not support their claims with either evidence or argument. The contributions contain largely unsupported opinion. |

Following a Publicly Traded Company (25% of grade)

Each student will choose one publicly traded company and will follow its announcements, PR activities and news coverage as they relate to microeconomic or macroeconomic developments. Examples include major personnel announcements, earnings releases and a material crisis. Throughout the semester, students will repeatedly be asked to verbally report on their company's news of financial impact, and offer a perspective or pose questions. Students will write two papers on their company per the syllabus (3-4 pages each). The first paper is due in the middle of the semester and the second one at the end of the semester, as noted on the weekly breakdown. Students will also be graded on an in-class presentation on their company.

Written Assignment (5% of grade)

At the start of the semester, as outlined in the Course Schedule section below, students will be asked to write a three to four-page paper on a specific topic.

Midterm Project: Case Analysis (15% of grade)

Students will analyze a major economic/business event of choice. Students will deduce how this particular issue had an economic/business impact on the parties involved and obtained prominent media coverage and, choosing the perspective of one of the parties involved, will hypothesize how the public relations and advertising efforts of all parties involved may have shaped the outcome (2,000 – 2,400 words, 6-8 pages). Apply critical thinking to hypothesize in those instances where insufficient data are available to you, making certain that your hypotheses make sound intellectual and strategic sense. Be sure to cite your research sources and indicate those areas in which you are hypothesizing. Bear in mind you are analyzing a program that has already taken place, not creating a new one (except to the extent that you offer suggested alternative approaches as part of your analysis). Include citations and references (APA style).

Quizzes (10% of grade)

At two points in the semester (towards the middle and the end), students will complete an in-class quiz requiring short written answers to questions on topics covered in class. A study guide will be provided prior to each quiz.

LinkedIn Learning Courses (5% of grade)

During the semester, students will complete three LinkedIn Learning Courses from an approved list in their own time. These must be completed by Week 12 of the course at the latest. Sending the instructor the course completion certificate for each course will automatically qualify the student for the grade allocation.

Final Project: Developing a Corporate Communication Campaign for a Company Impacted By The Current Economic Dislocation (25% of grade)

Students will be assigned a company that is being impacted (positively or negatively) by the current by the disruptions caused by COVID-19. Examples might include The Walt Disney Company, United Airlines, Kroger, Clorox, Apple etc. Four or Five students may be allocated the same company but this is an individual and not a group project.

There are four parts to the final project, which makes up 15% of the final course grade.

1. For part one of your final project, you will write a 4-5 page paper detailing ONLY the recent economic impact for the company, what has happened to the valuation/stock etc., supply chain impact, how they have reacted so far to the virus situation, what they have said or not said about it and how they've communicated with customers. How has the media and Wall Street commented on the company’s stock performance, and what is the expected long-term impact or road to recovery. Make sure to include in-text citations and references. The paper should be emailed to the instructor directly.
2. For the second part of the project, students will create a 10-slide PPT presentation on the paper they developed on the company. Each presentation will include a slide with two discussion questions. Students will post their presentations on a shared space at Blackboard.
3. Next, students will access and view their peers’ presentations during the online class week of week 14 April 30 and as directed by instructor select two presentations on which they will answer at least one discussion question in a discussion.
4. For the final fourth element, students will submit one specific piece of communication material that the company would use as part of their next quarterly earnings announcement. These could be CEO talking points, an infographic, a video, a full-page New York Times ad, Q&A document for investor call, etc. The final elements should be emailed to the instructor directly.

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| **Final Project Grading: Criteria** | **Points** |
| * Student produces sound, thought-provoking analysis grounded in research on a singular organizational area of interest.
* Thoroughly examines all pertinent aspects of a given organization with a singular, clear purpose.
* Formulates innovative, valid conclusions grounded in empirical evidence.
* Effectively delivers engaging, informative multimedia presentation on research findings.
* Provides defensible implementation plan for the organization, including themes, messages, channels, sources etc.
* Optimally structures and organizes content in written product and presentation.
* Delivers professional quality paper and presentation, without grammatical errors, typos, etc.
* Accurately cites all source material in accordance with APA style standards.
* Meets all posted deadlines for project deliverables.
 | **Exemplary****160-200 pts** |
| * Student produces sound, interesting analysis grounded in research on a singular organizational area of interest.
* Examines all pertinent aspects of a given organization with a singular, clear purpose.
* Formulates innovative conclusions grounded in sound empirical evidence.
* Delivers engaging, informative multimedia presentation on research findings.
* Effectively structures and organizes content in the written product and the multimedia presentation.
* Delivers professional quality paper and presentation, without grammatical errors, typos, etc.
* Accurately cites all source material in accordance with APA style standards.
* Meets all posted deadlines for project deliverables.
 | **Satisfactory****100-159 pts** |
| * Student produces interesting analysis grounded in research on a singular organizational area of interest.
* Examines some pertinent aspects of a given organization without identifying a singular, clear purpose.
* Paper/presentation lacks in the professional quality and standards expected of today’s PR professionals.
 | **Unacceptable****0-99 pts** |

**Grading**

**a. Breakdown of Grade**

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| **Assignment** | **Points** | **% of Grade**  |
| Class participation/Following the News | 150 | 15% |
| Presentation on the company you follow | 50 | 5% |
| Topic Paper | 50 | 5% |
| First paper on the company you follow | 100 | 10% |
| Midterm paper | 150 | 15% |
| Quiz 1 | 50 | 5% |
| Second paper on the company you follow | 100 | 10% |
| Quiz 2 | 50 | 5% |
| Final project | 250 | 25% |
| LinkedIn Learning Courses (3 to be completed) | 50 | 5% |
| **TOTAL** | **1000** | **100%** |

**b. Grading Scale**

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| 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**

All assignments will be evaluated first on content, level of analytical thinking and strategic insight. Student work with then be evaluated based on writing style and grammatical correctness.

**“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**

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments will be graded within one week. Exceptions might apply.

**Assignment Rubrics**

Individual grading rubrics for particular course elements will be detailed when the assignment is posted.

**Assignment Submission Policy**

1. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will receive a full grade deduction for each day they are late.
2. Assignments must be uploaded to Blackboard/Turnitin before beginning of class on the day the assignment is due in a pdf, World or PowerPoint format. They should also be emailed to the instructor at cherrym@usc.edu
3. All papers must be APA format with notes in bibliography page.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

* Ragas, Matthew & Culp, Ron: *Business Essentials for Strategic Communicators*, New York 2014
* Other readings will include handouts and articles provided electronically by the instructor.
* Videos, podcasts and movies will also be part of the required materials. Details and/or link will be provided by the instructor.
* It is essential that students stay current with major economic and business events. Appropriate website and sources for this will be discussed in the first class.

**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.

**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/**](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 8, 2022

 **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.*

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| Week/Date | Topics/Daily Activities | Readings and Homework due for this week’s class | Assignment Deliverable/Due Dates |
| Week 1 Date: Jan. 10 | Course logistics;Introduction to Business & Economic Foundations | READ: Ragas & CulpR: 1- *Why Knowledge of “Business 101” Matters* |  |
| Week 2Date: Jan. 17 | **MLK DAY** |
| Week 3Date: Jan. 24 | Economics & Macroeconomic Indicators; Public Markets Overview; American Capitalism | READ: Ragas & Culp2-*Economics and Economic Indicators*3- *Finance and the Stock Market* WATCH: “The Month Coronavirus Unraveled American Businesses” | PAPER: Topic Paper “New Year, Same Pandemic”  |
| Week 4Date: Jan. 31 | Macroeconomic Crisis: From the Great Depression to the Great Recession to COVID 19 | WATCH: “1929 The Great Crash,” “Panic – the Untold Story of the 2008 Financial Crisis,” (Vice) and “the Month Coronavirus Unraveled American Business” (WSJ)  |  |
| Week 5Date: Feb. 7 | The Law of Corporate Disclosure; Bankruptcy  | READ: Ragas & Culp4- *Accounting and Financial Statements* |   |
| Week 6Date: Feb. 14 | Financial Comm. IQuarterly earnings announcements, annual reports, SEC filings | READ: Ragas & Culp5- *The Law of Corporate Disclosure*WATCH: *Enron. The Smartest Guys in the Rm.* | PAPER: Follow a Company Paper 1DUE AT START OF THIS CLASS |
| Week 7Date: Feb. 21 | **PRESIDENT’S DAY** |
| Week 8Date: Feb. 28 | Financial Comm. IIInvestor relations, Intangible Assets and Non-Financial Info. | READ: Ragas & Culp6- *Intangible Assets and Non-Financial Information*LISTEN: 1619 Project | QUIZ: First quiz during class  |
| Week 9Date: Mar. 7 | Corporations, Corporate Governance Corporate Social Responsibility | READ: Ragas & Culp7- *Corporations and Corporate Governance*8-*Corporate Social Responsibility* | PAPER: Midterm Paper (6-8 pages) |
| Week 10Date: Mar. 14 | **SPRING BREAK** |
| Week 11Date: Mar. 21 | Macroeconomics: Trade deals and tariffs  | Articles for reading will be assigned by instructor  |  |
| Week 12Date: Mar. 28 | Business Strategy: What is strategy and overview of key concepts | Articles for reading will be assigned by instructor | PAPER: Follow a Company Paper 2 |
| Week 13Date: Apr. 4 | Marketing Strategy: Market and Audience Segmentation, Target Selection, The “5 Cs” and the “4 Ps” | READ: “Note on Marketing Strategy,” Robert J. Dolan, Harvard Bus. School, #9-598-061, Rev. November 1, 2000 |  |
| Week 14Date: Apr. 11 | Innovation Theory:Disruption, Innovator’s Dilemma | Articles for reading will be assigned by instructor | QUIZ: Second quiz during classDUE: Completion of 3 LinkedIn Learning courses due by this week |
| Week 15Date: Apr. 18 | Entrepreneurship Opportunity Recognition, Starting a Company, Entrepreneurial Finance, The Business of Ad/PR Agencies | Articles for reading will be assigned by instructor | FINAL PROJECT: Group Written paper due this week |
| Week 16Date: Apr. 25 | The Business of Ad/PR Agencies; Agency Operations |  | FINAL PROJECT: PPT (10 slides) due and in-class presentations  |
| FINAL EXAM PERIODDate: May 9, 7-9 p.m. | Recap and Summation Class. |   | FINAL PROJECT: Final supporting element due  |

***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.*

**Policies and Procedures**

**Communication**

The students are encouraged to contact the instructor outside of class. Whether for a meeting during office hours or at another time, students are asked to arrange for the meeting by email. It is the instructor’s intention to reply to any student 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 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*

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.

**About Your Instructor**

Melanie Cherry is a communications specialist with more than 20 years of agency, non-profit, and corporate experience. Recently relocated from New York City to Los Angeles, she has experience in a variety of industries including TV, fashion, sports, arts, and finance. Currently she works as the Marketing Director for Cayton Children’s Museum in Santa Monica, managing the museum’s communications, marketing and PR activities. Previously Melanie worked in marketing communications for Carnegie Hall and BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music). Prior to a career in arts communications, Melanie worked for business PR agency, CooperKatz & Co. (now G&S Business Communications), on accounts for Otis Elevators, Polar Fitness, Jackson Hewitt Tax Services, and Popeyes Chicken. In addition, she worked at boutique agencies focused on influencer product placement, PR, and event production with such brands as New Balance, Timberland, Toyota, and Nike. Melanie received an M.A. in Public Relations and a B.S. in Information Systems Technology from Syracuse University.