USCAnnenberg

JOUR 372: Engaging Diverse Communities 2 Units

Summer 2022 – Tues. & Thurs. – 3-5:05 p.m. Section: 050-21109R Location: Online

Instructor: Sarah Springer Office Hours: By appointment Contact Info: sspringe@usc.edu

Course Description

There is an adage amongst 21st-century activists that echoes often on Twitter. Grassroots leaders now tell journalists: "There is no such thing as 'giving voice to the voiceless.' We have voices. Just pass the mic." This assertion—that a proverbial microphone has been withheld from some communities—is the key point of exploration for this course. In Engaging Diverse Communities, we study who has been left out of news discourse historically—and what you, as a future industry leader, can do about it. To achieve this, our course is divided into five parts: (1) Frames, (2) Rhetoric, (3) Actors, (4) Movements, and (5) Elevation—or F.R.A.M.E., for short.

In Unit 1 (Frames), we explore how the news has played a powerful role in creating and maintaining enduring narratives about our world. We question problematic news frames and discuss how we can create new ones. In Unit 2 (Rhetoric), we study how journalists talk about certain hot-button issues, and how word choices and accompanying imagery can either unite or divide a community. Accordingly, we examine some of journalism's biggest recent "fails" to see how a bit of cultural competence in the newsroom might have gone a long way. In Unit 3 (Actors), we consider the many communities of people that journalism has either overlooked or maligned. Then, we explore how to find and amplify new voices. In Unit 4 (Movements) we investigate how the rise of social-media-driven movements such as #MeToo, #BlackLivesMatter, #NoDAPL, #GirlsLikeUs, etc. reflect marginalized communities' desire to tell their own stories, on their own terms. We will talk about how you, as a professional journalist, may encounter conflicts if these activists distrust or outright dislike you. Additionally, we will talk about what to do when you are expected to report objectively on a movement that you really love (or hate). And in Unit 5, (Elevation), we pull it all together to elevate a historically marginalized community in America. You get to be the news intervention you would like to see.

Overall Learning Objectives and Assessments

If you show up for every class, ask great questions and listen compassionately, you will leave this class knowing how to:

- 1. Explain how the term "diverse communities" can encompass many kinds of differences, which include (but are not limited to) age, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, disability, religion, etc.
- 2. Explain how diverse communities can become distrustful of traditional media outlets when it does not see itself represented favorably.
- 3. Identify news coverage gaps within various diverse communities in Los Angeles.

- 4. Use various platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat to engage in social listening for new voices and story ledes.
- 5. Engage different audiences effectively through appropriate language choices and cultural cues in news coverage.
- 6. Verify social media content, especially when including user-generated content in a story.

Description of Assignments

At the beginning of the semester, you will decide on a diverse community you would like to cover. The community does not have to be bound by a specific geographical region (although it can be). You may focus also on communities that form based on intersecting markers of identity, such as race or gender. The idea here is that you think deeper into who is missing from the day-to-day news coverage you consume—especially during this COVID-19 pandemic. Each assignment in this class will allow you to delve deeper into what it means to include these diverse groups into your beat. Accordingly, the five-part F.R.A.M.E. mindset is mirrored in our graded assignments for this course. At the end of each unit on 1) frames, 2) rhetoric, 3) actors, 4) movements and 5) elevation.

You will complete the following activities.

Discussions of Readings (5%)

Every unit will contain a relevant reading and video viewing. You will be expected to participate in class to discussion the materials for each unit. To earn full credit, you mus tparticipate in class.

Discussion 1—News & emotion Discussion 2—News & cancel culture Discussion 3—News & generational difference Discussion 4—News & new voices Discussion 5—News & Social Justice

Assignment 1—Frames (5%)

You will prepare a 5- to 7-minute presentation where you share with the class a problematic news frame that features your chosen community. You will replay the offending news clip, cringe-worthy headline, or gasp-inducing magazine cover, etc. Then, you will offer an explanation of the media "fail." You will close by offering an alternative news frame that journalists could have used to highlight your community fairly.

Assignment 2—Rhetoric (20%)

In this assignment, you will explore how different news websites report on so-called "wedge" issues that concern your community. First, you will be assigned a hot-button topics, such as immigration, police brutality, abortion or gun control. Then you will compare and contrast how progressive and conservative outlets use different words to report on the same issues. You will make two, separate <u>word clouds</u> to depict these differences. Then you will share your two word clouds with the class in a 5- to 7-minute presentation. You will explain what words were used most commonly along the political spectrum from left to right. You will also explain why these words choices resonate (or not!) with your generation.

Assignment 3—Actors (25%)

In this midterm assignment, you will profile an interesting person within your community. This "actor" should be unique in some way, offering us an unlikely look at a segment of your chosen community. For example, maybe there is an active group of senior citizens that wakes at dawn every Saturday to engage in socially distanced surfing. Your story can take any form you like. Podcasts, social videos, packages, photo-essays, and any other creative formats are welcome.

Assignment 4-Movements (20%)

Many marginalized communities across America have leveraged social media to launch transformative social justice movements. Some issues include, but are not limited to affordable housing, economic inequality, fair labor practices, gender equality, mental health, etc. Ask some of the "Actors" you met in the last unit to help you identify what cause is dearest to your community. Then, create a 1-minute "explainer" social video or podcast that highlights that issue.

Assignment 5—Elevation (25%)

For the final assignment, you will pretend that a large media company has invited you to help them shift their approach to the industry by reimagining the future culture of journalism. You will write a two-page proposal that highlights these changes and how they should be implemented.

Grading Scheme

Assignment	% of Grade
Online Discussions of Readings/Videos	5%
Assignment 1—Frames	5%
Assignment 2—Rhetoric	20%
Assignment 3—Actors	25%
Assignment 4—Movements	20%
Assignment 5—Elevation (Final)	25%
Total:	100 percent

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

Grading Standards

Our curriculum is structured to prepare students to be successful in a professional news organization with the highest standards. Students will be evaluated first on accuracy and truthfulness in their stories. Good journalism prioritizes transparency, context and inclusivity. All stories should be written in AP style unless Annenberg style conflicts, in which case students can follow Annenberg style. The following standards apply to news assignments:

"A" stories are accurate, clear, comprehensive stories that are well written and require only minor copyediting (i.e., they would be aired or published). Video work must also be shot and edited creatively, be well paced and include good sound bites and natural sound that add flavor, color or emotion to the story. Sources are varied, diverse and offer a complete view of the topic.

"B" stories require more than minor editing and have a few style or spelling errors or one significant error of omission. For video, there may be minor flaws in the composition of some shots or in the editing. Good use of available sound bites is required. Sources are mostly varied, diverse and offer a complete view of the topic.

"C" stories need considerable editing or rewriting and/or have many spelling, style or omission errors. Camera work and editing techniques in video stories are mediocre or unimaginative, but passable. Sound bites add little or no color - only information that could be better told in the reporter's narration. Sources are repetitive or incomplete.

"D" stories require excessive rewriting, have numerous errors and should not have been submitted. Camera work is unsatisfactory or fails to show important elements. Sources are repetitive or incomplete.

"F" stories have failed to meet the major criteria of the assignment, are late, have numerous errors or both. Your copy should not contain any errors in spelling, style, grammar and facts. Any misspelled or mispronounced proper noun will result in an automatic "F" on that assignment. Any factual error will also result in an automatic "F" on the assignment. Accuracy is the first law of journalism. The following are some other circumstances that would warrant a grade of "F" and potential USC/Annenberg disciplinary action:

- Fabricating a story or making up quotes or information.
- "Double-dipping" or using the same story twice—once in this course and again in another.
- Plagiarizing a script/article, part of a script/article or information from any source.
- Staging video or telling interview subjects what to say.
- Using video shot by someone else and presenting it as original work.
- Shooting video in one location and presenting it as another location.
- Using the camcorder to intentionally intimidate, provoke or incite a person or a group of people to elicit more "dramatic" video.
- Promising, paying or giving someone something in exchange for doing an interview either on or off camera.

Assignment Submission Policy

Please submit your work to the class Blackboard site by the posted deadline dates. If you do not upload your work by the designated date, you will lose one letter grade for each day that the assignment is late. Deadline extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, at the instructor's discretion.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

There is not a required text for this course. Required readings are included in the syllabus and others will occasionally be distributed via Blackboard. The readings will be discussed in class, and they will help inform the assignments for this course. All USC students have access to the AP stylebook via the library.

(https://libproxy.usc.edu/login?url=http://www.apstylebook.com/usc_edu/.)

Students will be graded on adherence to AP style in assignments, including when writing about race and ethnicity. The updated AP style guidelines include capitalizing Black and deleting the hyphen in terms such as Asian American.

The following style guides will be available on BB: NLGJA Stylebook on LGBTQ Terminology https://najanewsroom.com/reporting-guides/ https://www.nabj.org/page/styleguide https://aaja.org/2020/11/30/covering-asia-and-asian-americans/ The Diversity Style Guide: The NAHJ Cultural Competence Handbook: Transjournalist Style Guide: https://transjournalists.org/style-guide/ SPJ Diversity Toolbox: https://www.spj.org/diversity.asp

Annenberg also has its own style guide that students can access through the app Amy the Stylebot on the Annenberg Media Center's Slack workspace. Annenberg's style guide is being developed with input from students, and whether or not students use our guide, they can provide valuable input here: http://bit.ly/annenbergediting

In addition, Annenberg Media's Guide for Equitable Reporting Strategies and Newsroom Style (https://bit.ly/AnnMediaEquitableReportingGuide) created by students, has detailed guidelines on thoughtful language and best practices for creating journalism respectful and reflective of a diverse world. Along with other useful resources, it can be found on Blackboard and is incorporated into Amy the Stylebot (mentioned above).

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.

Annenberg is committed to every student's success. There are multiple resources available to assist students with issues that limit their ability to participate fully in class. Please reach out to a professor and/or advisor for help connecting with these resources. They include the Annenberg Student Success Fund, 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, and other scholarships and awards.

News Consumption and Knowledge of Current Events

As journalists, you should keep up with what is happening on campus, in the Los Angeles area, in the United States and around the world. USC provides subscriptions for students, staff and faculty to The New York Times and the Los Angeles Times, as well as the Wall Street Journal.

Through the USC library, you have access to many regional news outlets and a variety of publications that cover specific communities. You should be familiar with publications covering the many communities of Los Angeles such as The Los Angeles Sentinel, The Los Angeles Blade, The Los Angeles Wave, La Opinión, L.A. Taco, The Eastsider, The Armenian Weekly, High Country News, the Asian Journal and others. You should keep up with the Daily Trojan and uscannenbergmedia.com, including USC student-led verticals Dímelo and Black., listen to NPR and news radio, watch local and national television news, read news email newsletters and push alerts and follow news organizations social networks, including Twitter, Instagram and TikTok. You're encouraged to sign up for Nieman Lab's newsletter, which publishes brief, readable articles on important issues in the media. Following the news will sharpen your judgment and provide good (and bad) examples of the state of mainstream journalism.

Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments should be submitted via Blackboard (Bb) by the deadlines designated in this syllabus. After the deadline passes, the portals will close. Students will not be able to submit work after the deadline, unless it is a documented medical emergency. After returning from medical leave, students have one week to make up missed assignments, or the instructor will enter a grade of "0/F" in Bb.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 050 (6 weeks: 5/19/2022 – 6/28/2022)

Last day to add: Thursday, May 26, 2022

Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund: Thursday, May 26, 2022

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Thursday, May 26, 2022 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Monday, June 6, 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 050 (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": Tuesday, June 21, 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.

	Lectures/ Activities	Read/View Before Class	Complete/Upload to BB
5/19/22 UNIT I FRAMES	Course Overview Lecture #NewsFails: Why diversity matters in the newsroom + In-Class Activity Class Discussion: What is diversity? What is a news frame? Do frames=feelings?	Read: Jelani Cobb's "When newsrooms are dominated by white people, they miss crucial facts," in <u>The Guardian</u> . + Watch: Dhanya Rajendran's TED Talk: <u>Diversity in</u> <u>newsrooms leads to better</u> <u>journalism</u> .	Read on Bb: Santos' + Nabi's Emotionally charged: Exploring the role of emotion in online news information seeking and processing in Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 63(1), 39-58. Participate in Discussion: News & Emotion
5/24/22 UNIT I FRAMES	Framing America Lecture Race, riots, free speech, and the far right: How to write about America without getting canceled + In-Class Activity Class Discussion: How has modern cancel culture shaped how journalists frame news about marginalized groups?	Read: A Letter on Justice & Open Debate Harper's Magazine + Hannah Giorgis' A Deeply Provincial View of <u>Free Speech</u> The Atlantic + Watch: <u>Karens & Cancel Culture</u> <u>w/Chelsea Handler</u> on Emmanuel Acho's <u>Uncomfortable</u> Conversations with a Black Man, Ep. 10.	NO ASSIGNMENT DUE

	Lectures/ Activities	Read/View Before Class	Complete/Upload to BB
5/26/22 UNIT II RHETORIC	Riling the "Base" Lecture How the news shapes opinion with word choices + In-Class Activity Class Discussion: Decoding dog whistles + Word cloud workshop	Read: Dietram A. Scheufele's " <u>Framing, Agenda Setting,</u> and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects <u>Models</u> ," in Journal of Communication. + Watch: Vox's/Netflix's <u>Explained:</u> Political Correctness.	NO ASSIGNMENT DUE Prepare to participate in class
5/31/22 UNIT II RHETORIC	The Visual Rhetoric of Gen Z Lecture Posing protest: TikTok and the future of Gen Z news images + In-Class Activity Searching Instagram + TikTok for news ledes	Read: John Hermann's "How TikTok is Rewriting the World" in The New York Times. + Allissa Richardson's "The Problem with Police Shooting Videos" in The Atlantic. + Watch: BuzzFeedVideo's Generations Throughout History.	Prepare: Curate the news stories for your two (2) word clouds. See Bb for full instructions. Due 6/7/22 @ 12 p.m. PT
6/2/22 UNIT II RHETORIC	Word Cloud Reveal Mini-Lecture What to do when your worldview doesn't fit in your newsroom	View the complete assignment instructions and rubric on Blackboard (Bb) for your student presentation.	<u>NO ASSIGNMENT DUE</u>

	Lectures/ Activities	Read/View Before Class	Complete/Upload to BB
6/7/22 UNIT II ACTORS	Objectivity vs. Identity in the Newsroom Lecture Being True to Yourself; Battling the Bots + In-Class Activity How to combat trolls as a live moderator (without censoring your audience)	Read: Wesley Lowery's " <u>A reckoning with</u> objectivity, led by Black journalists," in The New York Times. + Watch: <u>"Piers and Alex Clash Over</u> Prince Harry and Meghan's <u>Accusations of Racism,"</u> on Good Morning Britain.	Submit: Upload your two (2) word clouds to Bb 6/7/22 by @ 12 p.m. PT. You must present it in class for full credit. Prepare: Find a local "actor" to profile within your chosen community. See Bb for full instructions and grading rubric. Due 6/14/22 @ 12 p.m. PT
6/9/22 UNIT III ACTORS	Reporting as the "Other" Lecture How to Lift Other Voices While Keeping Your Own + In-Class Activity Mining Twitter for new voices	Read: Jason Parham's <u>TikTok and the Evolution of</u> <u>Digital Blackface</u> in Wired. + Watch: <u>The White Internet's Love</u> <u>Affair with Digital Blackface</u> in The New York Times.	Work on Profile piece due NEXT WEEK 6/14/22
6/14/22 UNIT III ACTORS	Mining for Fresh Voices Mini-Lecture Final tips for searching for actors from the margins + In-Class Activity Student Presentations: How I found my unique voice for an original profile piece	View the complete assignment instructions and rubric on Blackboard (Bb) for your student presentation.	Submit: Upload your profile piece to BB by <u>@ 12 p.m. PT</u> <u>today</u> . You must present it in class today for full credit.

	Lectures/ Activities	Read/View Before Class	Complete/Upload to BB
6/16/22 UNIT IV MOVEMENTS	What is Social Justice? Lecture A brief history of 21 st century movements + In-Class Activity Case studies: How the news media frame various social movements	Read: Sarah J. Jackson's "Twitter Made Us Better" in <u>The New York Times.</u> + Watch: <u>How #BlackLivesMatter and</u> <u>#MeToo went from</u> <u>Hashtags to Movements</u> From <i>ELLE</i> magazine.	Prepare: Begin researching an issue that your community cares about. You will explain it in a one-minute social video. See Bb for full instructions. ASSIGNMENT DUE: 6/23/22
6/21/22 UNIT IV MOVEMENTS	Best Practices in Crowdsourcing Lecture The end of parachuting into crises: Using social media to find reliable experts	Read: Leah Sottile's " <u>The First Responders</u> " in <i>Columbia Journalism</i> <i>Review.</i> + Watch: FBI begins urgent search for information on Capitol rioters on GMA	Continue working on your social media explainer video DUE: 6/23/22 .
6/23/22 UNIT IV ELEVATION	Pulling it All Together Lecture New voices, new paradigms: How to "fix" journalism, one story at a time	Watch: Remezcla's <u>10 Instagram accounts</u> documenting overlooked parts of Latino and Latin American History + Visit IG: Life Goes on Wheels; IG: <u>#100yearsold</u> ; IG: crenshawskateclub	Submit: Upload your social issue explainer video to BB by <u>12 p.m. PT</u> today. BE PREPARED TO PRESENT IN CLASS
6/28/22 UNIT IV ELEVATION	Title Mini-Lecture How to be an ally in the newsroom	Guest Speaker TBD	UPLOAD YOUR PROPOSALS TO Bb for final grade by 12 p.m. PT today.

Policies and Procedures Additional Policies

Communication

Please book a virtual office hour session. We can chat by phone or Zoom.

Internships

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 my approval, please request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to me to sign by the end of the third week of classes. You 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 me at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned in by the last day of class.

Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one journalism 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. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, 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."

Lastly, 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 the approval of your instructor. Double dipping is NOT allowed in this course. If you repurpose this assignment in another course or from a previous course, you will earn an F for the recycled project.

b. Support Systems

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

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

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, 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

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

<u>osas.usc.edu/</u>

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

<u>uscsa.usc.edu</u>

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

<u>https://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-and-awards</u> 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.

Instructor Bio

Sarah Springer is an Emmy-nominated producer, documentary filmmaker, consultant, and development executive working in unscripted and scripted for production companies and labs. She started her career at CNN where she reported and wrote stories about race and identity for Soledad O'Brien's In America series, then later worked as a producer for ABC's Good Morning America, Nike, CBS News/60 Minutes, BET, and VICE Media. She began working in immersive storytelling at RYOT Media where she oversaw creative direction and production for immersive, branded, and linear series before becoming an independent consultant and producer/director. Sarah was also voted one of the top 28 most powerful black people in media by Blavity.

Most recently, Sarah and the BET News team were awarded NABJ's 2021 Salute To Excellence Award for their work on "Justice Now: A BET Town Hall was given nominated for a Clio Award for her role as a producer and advocate in the media space.

She is the Co-creator of STILL HERE, an immersive experience that premiered at the Sundance Festival this year created in partnership with Al Jazeera Contrast that focuses on Black women and their triumph over generational trauma, mass incarceration, gentrification, and abuse. She is an activist and advocate for intersectional parity, inclusion, and accurate representation in media and teaches about such topics at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. She hopes to continue to spread awareness and promote equity in media as the CEO of TISSUE LLC, through her TedX Talk, How To Become a True Agent of Change, and Co-founder of Advocates for Inclusion in Media, an organization that works to create safe environments and a sense of community for underrepresented people in the industry. She also hopes to continue her mission for representation in media through her current unscripted and scripted projects in development at AMC, Warner Media, and in collaboration with MACRO.