

COMM 495: Knowing Ways of Knowing

4 units

Fall 2023 – Section # 20763D

Thursdays, 9am-11:50am

Location: ANN 305 (Zoom Link in Blackboard when needed)

Instructor: Prof Mike Ananny

Office Hours: Mondays, 2pm-3pm & by appointment

Office: in ANN-310B / via Zoom / by arrangement

Contact Info: ananny@usc.edu

*The University of Southern California's (USC) University Park campus is located on the **traditional land of the Tongva People**. Visit <https://mila.ss.ucla.edu> to learn about the history of Indigenous peoples in Los Angeles and read stories shared by the Tongva community. To learn about the Indigenous land on which your learning location resides, visit <https://native-land.ca>.*

*Parts of this syllabus benefit from **Prof Alison Trope** teaching this class in Fall 2022. I thank her for many suggestions and much thoughtfulness throughout.*

Course Description:

This course helps undergraduates in the COMM honors program prepare their thesis proposals. It is designed to be a workshop in which students learn (more) about different inquiry methodologies and research designs, reflect upon compromises and tradeoffs involved in planning and executing an independent research project, practice describing and receiving feedback on projects, and become familiar with the research of COMM faculty who may become their thesis advisors. By the end of the course students will have a full thesis proposal, a working relationship with their thesis advisor, and an appreciation of the diversity of methods and questions underpinning scholarship in Communication. While not exhaustive in addressing the breadth of possible methods each student may want to use in their thesis, the course will be flexible and adapt as needed.

Learning Objectives:

The primary objective is for students to produce a thesis proposal. To get there, students will learn about different types of research project designs, ways of communicating their research to audiences, how to identify the stakes in their projects, ways of approaching a literature review, how to think critically about popular press depictions of their research interests, and how to give and receive scholarly feedback.

Readings:

All readings will be provided through Blackboard.

Assignments:

The entire course is designed around helping students prepare their thesis proposal. To get to that proposal, students will do a number of small assignments that will collectively provide the building blocks for the proposal. More information on each assignment will be provided in class well before the due date. For many of the assignments, you will be finding your own materials and creating your own interpretation of the assignment – this is *by design* and intended to help you practice taking ownership and control over your own thesis project and how you think it should be executed.

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments to be submitted as PDFs through email to ananny@usc.edu.

ASSIGNMENT 1 (10%): Revised project statement & article reflection: (due Sept 10, 11:59pm)

A short essay (~1000 words) with (a) a revised description of your project and (b) explicit engagement with the question of what's at stake in the project. Why does it matter and who are its audiences? Why does it need to be done, why does it need to be done *now*, and why are you the person to do it?

ASSIGNMENT 2 (5%): Approaching advisor(s) & reporting on the meeting (due Sept 21, 11:59pm)

Prepare a 1-paragraph and 1-page draft description of your thesis project interests for approaching one or more potential advisors; draft an email to them to set up a Zoom meeting; afterward, write up a short report (~500 words) on the conversation(s). This doesn't have to be perfect or formal – rather, this is a chance for you to articulate your interests and questions well enough to support a conversation with an advisor or prospective advisor, and a chance for your to reflect on how the meeting went, what you know and don't know, what your next steps are.

ASSIGNMENT 3 (10%): Reflecting on fieldwork (due Oct 26, 11:59pm)

A short essay (~1000 words) reflecting on your study of a social “field”. Who/what did you observe or interview? How did you keep notes? How did your thinking change and what surprised you about the experience? What would you do differently if you could approach the field differently?

ASSIGNMENT 4 (5%): Giving & getting feedback (any time during the semester, must be done by last class)

Learning how to give and get feedback is a key research skill. Partner with another student in the class to give and get feedback on either Assignment #2 or #3, and write a short essay (~500 words) reflecting on the experience of giving and getting feedback.

ASSIGNMENT 5 (15%): Annotated bibliography (due Nov 16)

Create an annotated bibliography of *at least 12 scholarly texts* that are relevant to the background or context of your thesis project. Your thesis advisor will probably ask you to prepare a more extensive literature review but this will get you started on mapping your project's relevant related work and practicing how to prepare succinct summaries of a text's significance.

ASSIGNMENT 6 (5%): Opening a scholarly text (various times during the semester, will schedule)

Share with the class and give a very short precis (7-8 minutes) of a scholarly text and lead a discussion around it. Explain the text's value and contributions, the choices it makes about object of study and/or method, and the possible relevance to your project or someone else's. This is not a formal presentation but a chance to practice giving a very concise description of scholarship and showing how it connects to a thesis. No written submission is required.

ASSIGNMENT 7 (0%): Project notebook & proposal Google Doc (ongoing)

Throughout the semester, I expect you to keep a project “notebook” and to give the class very short weekly updates on the state of your project. I put “notebook” in quotes because it's up to you to decide what format this notebook takes—it could be a physical book or a file on your computer/phone or a section of the proposal Google doc—but it must be a place where you are capturing, revising, and organizing your thoughts on your project. While I expect there to be approximately 5 short entries or updates per week, it's up to you to decide what these are and the format they take. They can be very quick observations or reflections or more substantive reflections on your project. The point of keeping this notebook and giving regular updates to the class is to make sure that you are thinking about your thesis project throughout the semester, and create some sense of collective accountability for progress. A thesis is not something you can do the night before; insights come at all times of day, in different ways, and it's good to see how your thinking changes over time.

Additionally, I'm asking you to keep a Google doc in which you build the pieces of your thesis proposal. I'll say more about this in class but the idea is that this is the doc where you will put your different assignments, where you'll be able to share your work with other students, and where they and I will be able to give you

ongoing feedback. If you keep it an updated and rich repository of your thinking it will be much easier to write the final thesis proposal documents, which will essentially emerge from the assignment building blocks.

ASSIGNMENT 8: Thesis Proposal Presentation (Nov 30, 15%) and Written Proposal (due Dec 12, 35%)

Your thesis proposal (written submission) and oral presentation (final class). I will say more about these two deliverables as the semester progresses.

“Participation” & Expectations:

I understand that “participation” can mean many different things and that not everyone feels comfortable speaking up in every class meeting, so I don’t explicitly assign points for participation. However, I do ask that everyone is *engaged* in the class. This might mean offering an original interpretation or thoughtful reaction, taking the conversation in a new direction, asking an insightful question at just the right moment, or even listening intently and generously. A class like this only works when people show up prepared, contribute in substantive ways, are generous and thoughtful with each other. I guarantee that if you’re *not* participating in meaningful ways, your grades on all the other elements will tend to suffer!

You are required to do all course reading, attend all classes, and complete all assignments. This course is about *you* and *your thesis*, so showing up and engaging are important. If circumstances prevent you from attending class or actively participating, please inform me by email immediately. Regardless of why you are missing a class, you should keep me informed. If you need to miss class for a religious or university-sanctioned activity, please let me know at the beginning of the term. You are responsible for accessing and staying abreast of course content in cases where you miss class, and for communicating with me in a timely manner if you have any obstacles to doing your work or successfully completing the course. Some of our guests will visit via Zoom. I expect you to have camera on and actively participate.

Communication:

You can email me if you have a question/concern or you want to make a time to meet outside of my official office hours. I’ll answer your email in about 24-36 hours, but I usually don’t answer email on weekends and after 7pm. If it’s urgent or an emergency, please mark the subject line ‘urgent’.

If you have a longer question that’s best addressed in a conversation, ***please visit my office hours*** (see top of first page of syllabus). More involved questions about course content or personal matters are often best answered individually.

Make friends with your fellow students! They’re often a good point of contact if you missed a class or want to compare assignment approaches. The course works best with a strong class culture.

Basic Needs:

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is urged to review the resources at the end of this syllabus and contact Annenberg’s Associate Dean of Student Affairs, Vince Gonzalez (vince.gonzales@usc.edu). Further, if you are comfortable, please feel free to let me know about your situation, so that I may help connect you with the support you need.

Generative Artificial Intelligence:

Though I understand the appeal of GenAI tools (such as ChatGPT, Bard, Midjourney, DALL-E, etc.), their use is not permitted in this class. I *may* permit exceptions during supervised in-class exercises, but we will discuss and contextualize these in class. If you are ever in doubt about these tools or their use, ask me *in advance*. Do not submit any work that uses GenAI without discussing with me why you would like to use them and we agree on the ground rules. Any other use will be considered plagiarism.

Assignment Submission Policy:

All assignments are to be **submitted via email (ananny@usc.edu)**. Unless otherwise negotiated, late submissions will be penalized 10% per day and will not be accepted more than 5 days after the due date. If you're having troubles with the due dates or rhythm of assignments, just talk to me and we'll figure out a good way forward. It's important to stay current on the class's work, but I understand that things can arise that are stressful and may derail you.

Grade Breakdown:

Assignment	Points	Due	Grade %
A1: Revised project statement	10	Sept 10, 11:59pm (note this is a Monday)	10
A2: Approaching potential advisor(s) & reporting on meeting	5	Sept 21, 11:59pm	5
A3: Reflecting on fieldwork	10	Oct 26, 11:59pm	10
A4: Giving and getting feedback	5	Any time during the semester; must be done by last class	5
A5: Annotated bibliography	15	Nov 16, 11:59pm	15
A6: Opening a scholarly text related to your project	5	Various points during the semester	5
A7: Project Notebook & Proposal Google Doc (not graded but required)	0	Weekly	0
A8: Thesis proposal presentation	15	Nov 30 (in class)	15
A9: Thesis proposal	35	Dec 12, 11:59pm	35
TOTAL	100		100%

Course Grading Policy:

You will receive details about each assignment separately. **All assignments need to be completed and handed in on time to avoid a grade reduction. If you are unable to turn in an assignment due to illness or a personal emergency, you must provide written documentation that will allow you to be excused, or discuss your situation with me in a timely manner (at least within 2-3 days of a missed deadline). Do not wait until the end of the semester to sort things out.**

In order to pass this class you will need to complete ALL of the assignments. Failure to complete one or more of them will result in an F in the class.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

- A/A- outstanding, thoughtful and enthusiastic work
- B+/B above average work, demonstrating good insight into assignment
- B-/C+ needs improvement on ideas, argument and follow through
- C and below fulfilling the bare minimum and showing little understanding of the material

Each assignment will be worth 100 points and will be converted to a percentage score depending upon the weight assigned to each. Your percentage scores won the assignments will be totaled and translated to a letter grade per the scale shown below:

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

If you have concerns regarding a grade on a given assignment, you must appeal it in writing, stating the reasons why you feel the grade is inaccurate, within one week of receiving the graded assignment. No late appeals will be accepted for review.

Laptops & Phones:

Although all undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop, **laptops and phones should only be used for class purposes during class meetings.** I know it's hard but, whatever modality we're meeting in, I expect you to stay focused on class when you're in it.

Course Schedule:

A few notes on the weekly schedule (see table following):

- All weekly readings are **in the Blackboard folder**, organized by date.
- This syllabus is **subject to change** based on the progress of the class, current events, and/or guest speaker availability.
- Some weeks have less reading that I would normally assign for a 4-unit senior seminar that meets once a week. That is because I *expect that you are building your thesis project and bibliography* as the semester proceeds – i.e., you are both skimming and reading deeply work that is relevant to your project. Materials that you find on your own are great for Assignments #5 and #7 so use the “extra” time you have from lighter reading to build your own project bibliography.
- This class has **several guest speakers**. Not only is this a way of helping you appreciate the breadth of Communication as a field and (a part of!) the diversity of our faculty, it's also a chance for you to connect with potential thesis advisors or hear their recommendations of people who fit with your projects. Even if a particular visitor or his/her methodology isn't exactly on topic for your thesis, it's good practice to understand different ways of knowing.
- Though not explicitly graded, Assignment #7 (“Project notebook and Proposal Google Doc”) is due **every week**. I.e., I expect you to arrive to each class meeting with some update to share, and I expect you to engage with others and help make the class a cohort of researchers.
- We may not explicitly discuss *every* reading *every* week, but you are **expected to arrive having done the readings and ready to incorporate them** into our conversation.

PART ONE: SETTING UP

Iterating projects, creating a workspace, identifying resources, approaching advisors, building community, examining examples, stating your “why”

Wk	Date	Topic/Visitor	Readings & Activities	Due
1	Aug 24	<p>Introduction: What’s an honors thesis, why do one, how will we work this semester?</p>	<p>Readings to do before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mullaney & Rae</i>: Introduction & Chapter 1 (“Questions”) - <i>Ananny</i>: “Tips for reading an article” - <i>Edwards</i>: “How to read a book” <p>In-class activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introducing ourselves and our interests - Introducing the spreadsheet & signing up for readings - Reviewing the process and expectations for this semester and next 	n/a
2	Aug 31	<p>From Interests to Problems, Cases & Projects: Defining your thesis’s scope and motivations</p>	<p>Readings to do before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mullaney & Rae</i>: Chapter 2 (“What’s your Problem”) - <i>Lucker</i>: Chapter 4 (“What is This a Case of, Anyway?”) - Read ONE of the “<u>How to...</u>” Guides in the Sage collection “<u>Doing Research Online</u>” and come ready to discuss how it might be helpful to your work → <i>note you must be connected to USC VPN to access this collection</i> - <i>Ford</i>: “<u>Why I spent ten years studying one Wikipedia article</u>” <p>In-class activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building the spreadsheet - Studying a Wikipedia page as a Case, e.g., see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:Talk_pages → pick a Wikipedia page related to your project and propose how the study of it helps your project 	n/a
3	Sept 7	<p>Honing Your Project: Iterating your project statement, peer feedback, examining past examples</p> <p><i>(Class will be asynchronous this one week.)</i></p>	<p>Readings to do before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Mullaney & Rae</i>: Chapter 3 (“Designing a Project That Works”) & Chapter 4 (“How to Find Your Problem Collective”) - <i>Becker</i>: “Telling About Society” - <i>Didion</i>: “Why I write” - “Writing a Research Proposal” https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/assignments/researchproposal - Skim ANY TWO Comm undergrad theses from previous years (see Blackboard folder) <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read at least 2 people’s project statements and meet (in person / Zoom) to offer feedback (okay to do this in groups, please self-organize) - Email to me by Sunday, Sept 10, 11:59pm a <i>single</i> PDF that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A revised project description based on the feedback you received ○ A short reflection on at least one scholarly article related to your project and how that article has impacted your thinking about your project 	A1 [Sept 10]

PART TWO: EXPLORING & ITERATING

Meeting other researchers, choosing objects & sites & methods, honing your “why”

Wk	Date	Topic/Visitor	Readings & Activities	Due
4	Sept 14	Studying Online Communities & Networks <i>Visitor: Prof Marlon Twyman</i>	Readings to do before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Hargittai</i>: Introduction to “Connected in Isolation” - <i>Jackson, Bailey, Foucault Wells</i>: Introduction to “#Hashtag Activism” - <i>Twyman, Keegan, Shaw</i>: “Black Lives Matter in Wikipedia” - <i>Mullaney & Rae</i>: Chapter 5 (“How to Navigate Your Field”) 	
5	Sept 21	Studying Media by Making Media <i>Visitor: Prof Alison Trope</i>	Readings to do before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Kellner & Share</i>: “Critical media literacy, democracy, and the reconstruction of education.” - “Why Identity Matters”: https://criticalmediaproject.org/why-identity-matters/ - <i>Trope, Johnson, Demetrides</i>, “Media, making & movement: Bridging media literacy and racial justice through critical media project” - <i>Lucker</i>: Chapter 5 (“Reviewing The Literature”) 	A2
6	Sept 28	Studying Algorithms & Platforms <i>Visitor: Doctoral Candidate Chris Persaud</i>	Readings to do before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Hargittai, et al</i>: “Black box measures? How to study people’s algorithm skills.” - <i>Light, Burgess, Duguay</i>: “The walkthrough method: An approach to the study of apps.” - <i>Gillespie</i>: “Do Not Recommend? Reduction as a Form of Content Moderation” In-class activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practicing interviewing skills through the app walk-through method & black box measure method; identify platform objects and practices, and propose ways to study them. - If time: Ziewitz’s “Algorithmic Walk” exercise 	
7	Oct 5	Studying the Politics of Objects, Sites, & Practices: <i>Adopting empirical & normative stances</i> <i>Visitor: Doctoral Candidate Simogne Hudson</i>	Readings to do before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>King</i>: “The role of the behavioral scientist in the civil rights movement” - <i>Bloch</i>: “Shade” - <i>Irani</i>: “Justice for Data Janitors” - <i>Mattern</i>: “Mission Control: A history of the urban dashboard” - <i>Costanza-Chock</i>: “Design Justice, A.I., and Escape from the Matrix of Domination.” - <i>Davis</i>: Prison Reform or Prison Abolition from “Are Prisons Obsolete?” In-class activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find 1-2 objects and/or sites that you think show power relations among people. Come back to class ready to discuss why they have politics and how you would study them. (Use Nippert-Eng’s “Object Mapping” exercise) 	
8	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS			

9	Oct 19	Studying Social & Cultural Fields: <i>Observing, listening, noting, interpreting</i> <i>Visitor: Prof Colin Maclay</i>	Readings to do before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Nader</i>: “Up the anthropologist: Perspectives gained from studying up” - <i>boyd</i>: “A Response to Christine Hine” (from “Internet Inquiry: Conversations about Method”) - <i>Gray & Suri</i>: Introduction, Humans in the Loop, and Methods Appendix from “Ghost Work” - <i>Emerson</i>: “In the field: Participating, observing, and jotting notes” - (Recommended but not required: Nippert-Eng: “A different approach to fieldwork”) In-class activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflective watching and reporting (“War Games” opening exercise) - Place-based, situated observations (following Nippert-Eng’s “Open Observation” exercise) - If time: “<u>Digital Ethnographies of Social Media Pop Cultures</u>” (Abidin) 	
10	Oct 26	Interrogating Data: <i>Looking critically at ‘found’ data</i> <i>Visitor: Prof Andrea Hollingshead</i>	Readings to do before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Loukissas</i>: Chapter 1 (“Local Origins”) and Chapter 7 (“Local Ends”) from “All Data are Local: Thinking Critically in a Data-Driven Society” - <i>D’Ignazio & Klein</i>: Pick ANY TWO CHAPTERS of the book “Data Feminism” (available for free at https://data-feminism.mitpress.mit.edu/) and be prepared to discuss how they matter to your project. In-class activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find <i>two data sets</i> from <i>Data is Plural</i> (https://data.world/jsvine/data-is-plural-archive → click on “The original dataset is available here” to open the Google doc sheet of data sets) and—applying ideas from Loukissas & D’Ignazio+Klein chapters, discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o one data set that you think may be relevant to your thesis o one data set that you think is just interesting but that does not necessarily have to be related to your thesis. 	A3
11	Nov 2	Studying Social Media Cultures <i>Visitor: Prof Henry Jenkins (Zoom)</i>	Readings to do before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Williams</i>: “Culture is ordinary” - <i>Jenkins</i>: Introduction from “Spreadable Media” book - <i>Miltner</i>: ““One part politics, one part technology, one part history”” - <i>Zidani</i>: “<u>How to Conduct Internet Meme Research</u>” In-class activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examine memes and meme cultures on “Know Your Meme” following Zidani’s method. 	

PART THREE: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Identifying your terrain, convening new resources, communicating your project's shape & promise

12	Nov 9	Studying (With) Historical Archives & Doing Content Analyses	<p>Readings to do before class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Lucker</i>: Chapter 9 (“Historical-Comparative Methods”) - Pournara, M., (2022). How to Research Online Newspaper Articles to Conduct a Qualitative Media Content Analysis [How-to Guide]. Sage Research Methods: Doing Research Online. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529611311 - <i>Tucker</i>: Introduction from “Not Exactly Lying” (Chapter 1 optional) - <i>Driscoll</i>: Chapter 1 (“Recalling the Modem World”) from “The Modem World” <p>In-class activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examine newspaper archives (see USC Libraries) for historical news on your topic & experiment with ways to integrate historical archives into your project. - Peer feedback on thesis proposal outlines 	
13	Nov 16	Workshopping Proposals & Using Projects to Imagine Futures	<p>In-class working session / catch-up session as needed, to prepare for thesis proposal presentations and submission of thesis proposals by December date.</p> <p>In-class activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Thing from the Future” world-building exercise - Mockups card game exercise 	A5
14	THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS			
15	Nov 30	THESIS PROPOSAL PRESENTATIONS (advisors strongly encouraged to attend)		

Additional Readings & Resources

The following readings and resources connect to many of the class themes and may be further helpful background material for your projects. Review these titles and key words, see if they strike you as relevant, and let me know if you have any questions about their applicability. Most readings are available electronically through USC libraries / USC's InterLibrary Loan (ILL) system. It's also good practice to check who cites *these* pieces – you start to see the shape of scholarly conversations that way.

We won't have time to read or discuss all of these readings and resources, but they are good “extra” starting points for learning more about your topic, method, or research in general, beyond what we cover in class.

“Doing Research Online” → excellent collection of resources, starting points, methodological guides for online research: <https://methods.sagepub.com/doing-research-online>

USC Libguide “Writing a Case Study”: <https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/assignments/casestudy>

USC Libguide “Writing a Research Proposal”:
<https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/assignments/researchproposal>

Aldrich, H. E. (2014, November 27, 2014). Stand up and be counted: Why social science should stop using the qualitative/quantitative dichotomy. *Work in Progress - American Sociological Association*. Retrieved from <http://workinprogress.oowsection.org/2014/11/27/stand-up-and-be-counted-why-social-science-should-stop-using-the-qualitativequantitative-dichotomy-2/>

Ankerson, M. S. (2015). Read/write the digital archive: Strategies for historical web research. In E. Hargittai & C. Sandvig (Eds.), *Digital research confidential* (pp. 29-54). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

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Blumer, H. (1954). What is Wrong with Social Theory? *American Sociological Review*, 19(1), 3-10. doi:10.2307/2088165

Brown, B. (2013). Ethnographic Approaches to Digital Research. In S. Price, C. Jewitt, & B. Brown (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Digital Technology Research* (pp. 189-202). New York, NY: SAGE.

Bruckman, A., Luther, K., & Fiesler, C. (2015). When Should We Use Real Names in Published Accounts of Internet Research? In E. Hargittai & C. Sandvig (Eds.), *Digital research confidential* (pp. 243-258). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

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- Christin, A. (2020). Algorithmic ethnography, during and after COVID-19. *Communication and the Public*, 5(3-4), 108-111. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2057047320959850>
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Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the USC Student Handbook. All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

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.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class is prohibited without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is also prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via

email, on the internet, or via any other media. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Students and Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems

Annenberg Student Success Fund

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.

Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund

Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

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

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

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

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.

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

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

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101

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

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call

Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

TrojansAlert

TrojansAlert is an alert system that allows university officials to contact you during an emergency. It is your connection to real-time updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information. Visit the website to sign up.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on [Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness](#).

ITS Customer Support Center (CSC): (213) 740-5555

The ITS Customer Support Center (CSC) provides support to the USC community for connecting to the USC Network and using supported applications. For help with network connectivity and software, contact CSC. Walk-in support is available in Leavey Library's Information Commons.

Violence-Free Campus

Visit the website to read more about prohibited behaviors, reporting responsibilities and where to report.

Student-Athlete Travel Excuse Letters

Prior to a university-sponsored away competition, Student-Athletes are responsible for providing their Instructor with a Competition Excuse Letter (provided by their academic counselor) for the classes missed while on the road (i.e., excused absence). It is the responsibility of the Student-Athlete to provide the letter prior

to leaving on their trip and to make arrangements for a make-up of any missed assignments or exams. Please refer to the [SAAS site](#) where they detail travel and travel excuse letters.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

(15 weeks: 8/21/2023 – 12/1/2023; Final Exam Period: 12/6-13/2023)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20233/calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, September 8, 2023

Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund: Friday, September 8, 2023

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Friday, September 8, 2023 [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, September 12, 2023

Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, October 6, 2023 [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, November 10, 2023

About Your Instructor

Mike Ananny is an Associate Professor of Communication and Journalism and Affiliated Faculty of Science, Technology, and Society at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. He studies the public significance of networked news infrastructures and the politics of algorithmic systems. He is the author of numerous articles and the book *Networked Press Freedom* (MIT Press, 2018), co-editor (with Laura Forlano and Molly Wright Steenson) of the volume *Bauhaus Futures* (MIT Press, 2019), and is preparing a manuscript on the public power of silence and mediated absences (under contract with Yale University Press). He holds a PhD from Stanford University, a Masters from the MIT Media Laboratory, and a Bachelors of Science (Computer Science & Human Biology) from the University of Toronto.