

Fall 2023 – Wednesdays – 6:45-9:15 p.m.

Section: 21319R

Location: ANN 408

Instructor: Dave Quast

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30 p.m., or by request

Contact Info: quast@usc.edu

Course Description

We are entering a new era where knowledge extraction from data is a new norm in every sector of public relations and advertising. From media relations to issues management to creative testing, we rely on data, more precisely stories crafted from some forms of data. The ability to create compelling and accurate stories from a variety of data types and to overcome analytic challenges is a must. This course is designed to train students to obtain the skill sets and data-confidence in this new era of communication. This course will provide the foundations of quantitative research, the basics of storytelling with data, and critical thinking skills in public relations, advertising, and related fields. This course is a building block for the subsequent classes in our research track and professors in the subsequent research courses will assume that students have mastered all the knowledge and skills taught in this sequence.

There are three parts to the course: Introduction to fundamentals of storytelling with data intelligence, storytelling with traditional research methods, and storytelling with emerging research methods. In the first part, we will discuss the changing world of public relations, advertising, and related fields and how the paradigm is shifting to data-driven approach and what it means to professionals. We will also overview the basics of quantitative data analysis and what makes good research questions. In the second part, we will cover how to do storytelling with traditional research methods and get a hands-on experience by working in groups to develop a research-based storytelling project. In the third part, we will shift our focus to how to craft a story using emerging research methods such as web and social media analytics, location mapping as well as data visualization.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the role and importance of data literacy and storytelling in public relations, advertising, and related fields
- Being able to ask good questions and demonstrating appropriate problem-solving skills
- Have a fundamental understanding of basic statistics and data literacy
- Demonstrating an ability to evaluate and synthesize various data sets from traditional and emerging research, and to draw valid insights
- Demonstrating a basic level of proficiency with select data visualization tools
- Detecting stories in data and to draw contextually relevant insights
- Converting data/analytical results into compelling stories that should resonate with target audiences
- Effectively communicating data insights to target audiences
- Developing and practicing critical thinking skills

Course Notes

In addition to in-class lectures and activities, we will utilize various forms of media, including third-party websites, Blackboard, Zoom, YouTube and Qualtrics among others, as well as live, real-time guest lectures. Copies of lecture

slides and required supplemental readings will be posted weekly on Blackboard. Students will not be able to attend classes via Zoom except during the one class designated for Zoom (an online focus group exercise).

Description and Assessment of Assignments

All assignments will be discussed in class, and detailed written instructions for each assignment will be posted in a corresponding folder in the “Assignments” section on Blackboard.

Case of the Week (COW) (10%)

Each student will make a one “Case of the Week (COW)” presentation and lead a discussion with the class (around 10-15 minutes) discussing a contemporary issue related to data storytelling. Detailed parameters and the schedule for presentations will be discussed in class. *An extra-credit Case of the Week will also be offered.*

Digital Lounge Workshop/LinkedIn Learning (5%)

Students will be asked to participate in asynchronous workshops provided by the Annenberg Digital Lounge and/or LinkedIn Learning on Excel skills and data visualization, as well as live/recorded “guest lectures/lecturettes.” A detailed list will be provided.

Short Assignments (20%)

There are four short written assignments designed to evaluate your understanding of, and your ability to apply, course content. You’ll receive a handout describing the details of the task and a grading rubric that will explain how the assignment will be evaluated. In addition, quizzes and in-class projects will affect your participation grade.

Midterm Exam (20%)

The midterm exam will feature a variety of essay, short answer, and multiple-choice questions. It will be administered on Blackboard during our class session.

Quiz (5%)

There will be one in-class quiz on statistical reasoning during the second half of the semester.

Final Project: Group research project, presentation, and report (30%)

The final project in this course is a **group research project**. Together with your group, you will produce your own empirical study of some aspect related to a “client” that will be chosen during our second class meeting: a company, a product, a brand, a non-profit, or an issue. This project includes several components: 1) A 3-5 slide project plan/presentation including research objectives and ongoing individual contribution updates; 2) a persuasive final group presentation that tells a “client” a data-focused story that reflects analysis of primary quantitative research results (based on an original survey developed and conducted via Qualtrics) and primary qualitative research results, and 3) a sophisticated 15-20 page group research report advocating for a course of action for a “client” based on your group’s primary and secondary research, providing more detail and data than was possible in the client presentation.

Both the in-class presentation and the written parts of the assignment that will be graded both on the quality and thoroughness of information and thought presented as well as innovation and quality in presentation style (e.g., use of multimedia, PowerPoint/ Keynote/Prezi, clarity, visual impact). You will receive a single group grade for the project, however your individual grade on the project will factor-in evaluations of your individual contribution to the final projects. You will have an opportunity to evaluate your group members— each group member is expected to make a strong contribution.

Participation (10%)

All students are expected to participate in Class Discussions so as to contribute to one another's learning. Participation will be scored based upon the following:

- Demonstrating understanding of class materials
- Speaking with supporting ideas or facts

- Asking thoughtful or challenging questions that further the scale and/or scope of the discussion
- Showing respect for fellow students; disruptive behaviors will negatively affect participation grade
- Offering relevant, original, and/or thought-provoking ideas on the discussion topics

It is expected that students will make every effort to attend all classes/class sessions, although we recognize that personal circumstances may arise that preclude class attendance. In such circumstances, the student is responsible for notifying the instructor as soon as possible, obtaining the materials presented in missed classes and for submitting all assignments on time, regardless of attendance. When possible, the class lectures will be presented and recorded on Zoom so that students who are unable to attend live in-person can access the content.

Note that full engagement during class, and participation in class discussions and presentations, is essential and can significantly influence your final grade.

Grading

a. Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Case of the Week	100	10%
LinkedIn Learning/Digital Lounge Write-up	50	5%
Assignment #1 – Secondary Research: How Americans Use Time (Infographic)	50	5%
Assignment #2 – Developing Objectives and Situation Analyses Using Secondary Research	100	10%
Assignment #3 – Writing Effective Survey Questions in Qualtrics	25	2.5%
Assignment #4 – Focus Group Participation and Reflection	25	2.5%
Midterm Exam	200	20%
Quiz: Statistical Reasoning	50	5%
Final Group Presentation	100	10%
Final Group Report	200	20%
Class Participation	100	10%
TOTAL	1000	100%

b. Course Grading Scale

Letter grades and corresponding point value ranges.

Letter grade and corresponding numerical point range		
95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B- (B minus)	67% to 69%: D+ (D plus)
90% to 94%: A- (A minus)	77% to 79%: C+ (C plus)	64% to 66%: D

87% to 89%: B+ (B plus)	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D- (D minus)
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C- (C minus)	0% to 59%: F

c. Grading Standards

“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

Feedback and grades on Individual Assignments will be posted within one week after the submission deadline.

Assignment Rubrics

Presentations (Midterm and Final)

1. Evidence of presentation team’s preparedness and familiarity with content
2. Being on strategy/on-task/fulfills project objectives
3. Strategically Sound Situation Analysis, Cohesive Presentation, Data-supported Storytelling
4. Quality of slides (graphically appealing, brand-appropriate, error-free, appropriate use of data viz)
5. Quality of commentary (well-informed, thorough, compelling conclusions)
6. Professionalism of presentation team and appropriate engagement/rapport with audience
7. Quality of Q&A (demonstrating knowledge beyond slide content to answer questions)

Final Group Report

1. Appropriateness of the research questions and/or hypotheses
2. Sufficiently detailed findings
 - a. Use of appropriate data analysis and accurate results reporting
 - b. Compelling use of data visualization and storytelling techniques
3. Invigorating discussion of research findings and sound practical implications
4. Well-proofread and edited with no GSP (grammar, spelling or punctuation mistakes)

Assignment Submission Policy

- All assignments are due on the dates specified. ***Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F. This includes the final project.***
- Assignments must be submitted via email to quast@usc.edu
- **Written assignments should be delivered in Microsoft Word or a similar program** that allows the instructor to make comments in the document.
 - **Presentations**, including the individual COW, infographics assignment(s), and the Midterm and Final Group Presentations **should be submitted as PDF attachments.**
 - **NOTE:** even if a group chooses to host their presentation on a cloud-based system (i.e. Google slides, Canva, etc.), a PDF of the final materials should still be emailed as a physical attachment by the designated due date. Providing links without physical attachments will only delay grading feedback and may result in an overall lowered score for the respective assignment.
- **All documents must use the following naming convention: Studentlastname.AssignmentName**
- Written assignments will be graded for **content** (a demonstrated understanding of the material) **and for quality of writing**. It is recommended that you proofread your written work carefully before handing it in, and not rely only on apps (Word Spellcheck, Grammarly et. al) as grammatical and contextual errors may occur. Many graphics and survey software programs lack sufficient proofreading functionality, which is another reason to manually proofread your materials before submission. As noted in the previous section of this syllabus, typos or writing quality that makes reading the work difficult will result in a lower grade.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Required Text: Dykes, Brent. ***Effective Data Storytelling***. Available from: VitalSource Bookshelf, Wiley Professional Development (P&T), 2019.

Required Text: Weiner, Mark et. al. ***Communicator's Guide to Research, Analysis and Evaluation***, Institute for Public Relations Measurement Commission (2021). Provided gratis and posted on Blackboard.

Supplemental readings will be provided on the Blackboard course site in the week corresponding to their assignment.

Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [Annenberg Digital Lounge](#) for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's [Information Technology Services](#) website.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

(15 weeks: 8/21/2023 – 12/01/2023; Final Exam Period: 12/6-13/2023)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-0231/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

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

A weekly schedule of the topics, readings, and deliverables for the course.

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

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 8/23	<p style="text-align: center;">Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to the class and to each other ▪ Syllabus Review: The semester ahead ▪ The Importance of data literacy, research and storytelling in PR, Advertising, and Marketing Communication <p>Fun With Data: Brand Storytelling Exercise (in-class)</p>	<p>Introduction to Driving Change Through Insight (Effective Data Storytelling, Ch. 1 by Brent Dykes, 2020)</p> <p>Irreversible: The Public Relations Big Data Revolution by Institute for Public Relations (2016)</p>	Brand Storytelling Exercise report-outs
Week 2 8/30	<p>Principles of Brand Storytelling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Principles of Effective Storytelling ▪ Brand Personality and Persona ▪ Fun With Data: Brands' use of data for storytelling (in-class) ▪ Introduction to LinkedIn Learning Menu ▪ Presentation of selected infographics <p>▪ Final project groups assigned, first group meeting to determine project client</p>	<p>Dykes, Ch. 3</p> <p>Brand Personality (Building Strong Brands, Ch. 5 by David Aaker, 1996)</p> <p>Storytelling That Moves People by McKee (2003)</p> <p>The Essential Brand Persona: Storytelling and Branding by Herskovitz and Crystal (2010)</p>	<p>Assignment #1: Infographic</p> <p>Groups meet and select Final Project client</p>
Week 3 9/6	<p>Principles of Secondary Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Methods & Tools ▪ Identifying and Locating Data Sources; Synthesizing Data and Drawing Valid Conclusions ▪ How Research Influences Strategy & Tactics, Goal setting and Objectives <p>USC Library Resources</p> <p>Guest speaker: Chimene Tucker, USC Annenberg Librarian</p>	<p>Dykes, Ch. 2</p> <p>Brand–Consumer Storytelling Theory and Research: Introduction to a Psychology & Marketing Special Issue (2010)</p> <p>COW Preview</p>	<p>Assignment #1 DUE</p> <p>Assignment #2: Secondary Research & Situation Analyses</p>
Week 4 9/13	Ethical Considerations in Research	Dykes, Ch. 4	COWs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Critical Thinking, Data Literacy and Misinformation ▪ Sound vs. Unsound Research Approaches <p>Final Project group meetings</p>	<p>The Importance of Context in Storytelling (Storytelling with Data, Ch. 1 by Cole Nussbaumer, 2019)</p> <p>Building Brands Through Intrinsically Engaging Narratives by Brand Aviators (2016)</p>	
<p>Week 5 9/20</p>	<p>PART 2: STORYTELLING WITH TRADITIONAL RESEARCH METHODS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to/Comparing Quantitative and Qualitative Methodologies ▪ Introduction to Measurement (levels of data, etc.) <p>Quantitative Research Methods</p> <p>Quantitative Research Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose, Philosophy & Mechanics ▪ Survey Design & Writing Quality Questions ▪ Sampling Methodologies & Tools ▪ Probability & Nonprobability Sampling <p>Size Guidelines & Calculators; Sampling Myths</p>	<p>Dykes, Ch. 5</p> <p>“The Storytelling Power of Numbers,” The Frameworks Institute (2014)</p> <p>(optional): Qualtrics BDP articles posted on Blackboard</p>	<p>Assignment #2 DUE</p> <p>Qualtrics training (in-class)</p> <p>COWs</p> <p>Sign-up for Qualtrics Account</p>
<p>Week 6 9/27</p>	<p>Quantitative Research Methods, cont.</p> <p>Qualtrics walk-through</p> <p>Content analysis</p>	<p>PEW “How to Write Survey Qs” video http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/03/21/how-do-you-write-survey-questions-that-accurately-measure-public-opinion/</p>	<p>Assignment #3: Survey</p> <p>COWs</p> <p>In-class coding exercise</p> <p>Take the VALS Test and submit results to instructor</p>
<p>Week 7 10/4</p>	<p>Qualitative Research Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purpose, Philosophy & Mechanics 	<p>When Brands Take a Stand: The Nature of Consumers’ Polarized Reactions to Social Narrative Videos by Milfield & Flint (2021)</p>	<p>COWs</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Methods & Tools: Focus Groups, In-depth Interviews ▪ Netnography ▪ Discussion Guide Development ▪ Roles assigned for in-class focus group 	<p>(optional) Excerpts, The Facilitator’s Guide to Participatory Decision-Making by Kaner (2014)</p> <p>(optional) Excerpts, The Coding Manual for Qualitative Research by Saldaña (2009)</p> <p>Review instructions for in-class focus group</p> <p>Midterm Preview</p>	<p>Groups should have instructor-approved surveys in the field.</p>
<p>Week 8 10/11</p>	<p>In-Class Focus Group</p> <p>NOTE: THIS CLASS WILL (LIKELY) BE CONDUCTED OVER ZOOM</p>	<p>Students will be assigned as group members or as clients, each with distinct responsibilities to be explained only to the group assigned.</p>	<p>Work on Group Project</p> <p>Study for Midterm</p> <p>COWs</p>
<p>Week 9 10/18</p>	<p>Midterm Exam</p>		<p>In-class Midterm (on Blackboard)</p>
<p>Week 10 10/25</p>	<p>STORYTELLING WITH EMERGING TYPES OF DATA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures of Audience Engagement • Analytics: Web, Search and Social Listening • Using Google Analytics 	<p>The Brand Value Continuum: Countering Co-Destruction of Destination Branding in Social Media Through Storytelling by Lund et. al (2019)</p> <p>Empathy-based Marketing by Pedersen (2020)</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Ashley Baxter, Founder, Baxter Digital Media Group</p>	<p>Work on Group Project</p> <p>COWs</p>
<p>Week 11 11/1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Thinking and Drawing Conclusions • Principles of Sense-Making and 360-degree Thinking • Developing & Refining Insight-Driven Strategies • Location Mapping 	<p>When maps shouldn’t be maps by Matthew Ericson (2011)</p> <p>“Your apps know where you were last night, and they’re not keeping it secret” in NYT (2018, Dec 10)</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Kevin Hung, VP Marketing Solutions + Performance, Ticketmaster</p>	<p>Work on Group Project</p> <p>COWs</p>
<p>Week 12 11/8</p>	<p>Data Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyzing Survey Data in Qualtrics 	<p>Dykes, Ch. 7 & 8</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Su Jung Kim or Aimei Yang</p>	<p>Work on Group Project</p> <p>COWs</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confidence Levels & Projectability ▪ Interpreting & Presenting Data ▪ Exploring Storytelling Themes 	In-Class Quiz (Blackboard)	
Week 13 11/15	<p>Case Study: Data Storytelling in the Entertainment Industry</p> <p>Note: This class may be conducted via Zoom depending on guest lecturer logistics</p>	Guest speaker: Sandy Padula, fmr. VP of Research, WarnerMedia	COWs
Week 14 11/22	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY		
Week 15 11/29	<p>Course Evaluations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social Media Analytics: Overview ▪ Facebook/Twitter/Instagram/. YouTube Analytics ▪ PR Tools - Brandwatch/Cision ▪ Location Mapping 	<p>Your Apps Know Where You Were Last Night, And They're Not Keeping It Secret NYT (2018)</p> <p>Guest Speaker: Matthew Leveque, USC Annenberg</p>	<p>LinkedIn Learning Write-up Due</p> <p>Work on Group Project</p> <p>COWs</p>
Final Exam Period 12/6, 7-9 p.m.	<p>Group Presentations</p> <p>Summative Experience</p> <p>FINAL EXAM PERIOD</p>		Final Group Report Due

Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

- You are expected to be well prepared for each class meeting and to provide value to the class discussion.
- This course will feature robust in-class discussion, debate, simulations, and student presentations. The class will get to know each other as the semester progresses and a sense of camaraderie will hopefully emerge. You are encouraged to embrace the opportunity to share your professional goals and ambitions, as the class will be tailored to these needs as much as possible, particularly in the context of the final project.
- Expect to discuss a wide range of issues in class including those that are controversial and about which students (and the professor) may have strongly held, and possibly differing, views. There are virtually no topics off-limits as long as they advance understanding of the course material and as long as discussions are characterized by civility and mutual respect. You are expected to act as adults at all times, being courteous and sensitive to the interests of your fellow classmates.
- I do not wish to quell constructive conversation, drive groupthink or encourage homogenization of ideas or opinions. Sharing differing perspectives typically contributes greatly to personal understanding, growth and appreciation of similarities and differences, but the dialogue must remain as respectful and as inclusive as possible. I have a zero-tolerance policy on discussion that directly or indirectly endorses acts of racism, sexism, ageism, homophobia, or other behaviors against protected classes and/or that are in direct opposition to inclusiveness and a respectful learning environment.

- Students having any doubt or questions regarding assignments, schedules, etc. should consult this syllabus first, then check with fellow students and only then contact the professor if something remains unclear.

Communication

I welcome open and ongoing communication about with my students. You should feel free to contact me via email if you have questions or concerns. In almost all cases I will respond within 24 hours or less. **I always welcome constructive criticism or requests to explain material in a more accessible way based on a student's learning style or personal interests, in class or during office hours.**

Internships

The value of professional internships as part of the overall educational experience of our students has long been recognized by the School of Journalism. Accordingly, while internships are not required for successful completion of this course, any student enrolled in this course that undertakes and completes an approved, non-paid internship during this semester shall earn academic extra credit herein of an amount equal to 1 percent of the total available semester points for this course. To receive instructor approval, a student must request an internship letter from the Annenberg Career Development Office and bring it to the instructor to sign by the end of the third week of classes. The student must submit the signed letter to the media organization, along with the evaluation form provided by the Career Development Office. The form should be filled out by the intern supervisor and returned to the instructor at the end of the semester. No credit will be given if an evaluation form is not turned into the instructor by the last day of class. Note: The internship must be unpaid and can only be applied to one public relations or advertising class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

The USC Student Handbook (https://policy.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/USC_StudentCode_August2022.pdf)

Academic Integrity

USC's Unifying Value of integrity is a foundational principle that inspires the community to match its values to its actions. Academic integrity is ultimately the sole guarantor of the legitimacy of one's education, and therefore, is vitally important not just for oneself, but for the entire USC community. The value of all USC degrees is negatively impacted by violations of academic integrity. In the classroom, general principles of academic integrity include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles.

Academic Integrity violations (academic dishonesty) include, but are not limited to:

Plagiarism and Cheating

- The submission of material authored by another person but represented as the student's own work, whether that material is paraphrased or copied in verbatim or near-verbatim form.
- Re-using any portion of one's own work (essay, term paper, project, or other assignment) previously submitted without citation of such and without permission of the instructor(s) involved.
- Improper acknowledgment of sources in essays or papers, including drafts. Also, all students involved in collaborative work (as permitted by the instructor) are expected to proofread the work and are responsible for all particulars of the final draft.
- Acquisition of academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or other assignments, from any source and the subsequent presentation of those materials as the student's own work, or providing academic work, such as term papers, solutions, or assignments that another student submits as their own work.

- Failure to disclose the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools in completing assignments and assessments.

The USC Annenberg Public Relations and Advertising program views generative AI as an addition to USC's digital literacy tools that students are encouraged to experiment with and use inside and outside the classroom. Students may use generative AI tools such as Chat GPT to help complete their class assignments, **but must disclose such use in the bibliography section.** Students are solely responsible for the accuracy of their documents, regardless of whether they were completed with the aid of generative AI.

You should be aware that AI text generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses; thus they are not yet prepared to produce text that meets the standards of this course. To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Please review the instructions in each assignment for more details on how and when to use AI Generators for your submissions.

USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity

https://catalogue.usc.edu/preview_entity.php?catoid=16&ent_oid=3459

“Since its founding, the 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.”

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 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 is prohibited without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. 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:

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.

Annenberg Student Success Fund

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

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

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

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.

About Your Instructor

I have 30 years of experience as a public relations practitioner counseling clients in the corporate, legal, and political arenas. My expertise includes crisis and reputation management; corporate communications; public affairs; corporate positioning and messaging; litigation support; and media and presentation coaching.

I am currently an independent crisis management and strategic communications consultant. In the past 18 months, I have worked on more than 80 client engagements in the past 18 months, many of which involved existential threats to a business or reputation. I have led engagements in a variety of sectors including energy, industrials, professional services, financial services, health care, technology and non-profit.

In addition to work, teaching, and being a father of four (including triplets), I also serve on the Board of Directors of Planned Parenthood of Pasadena and the San Gabriel Valley, and I try to find time to improve my guitar playing when I can find it.

As a working public relations practitioner who has worked in almost every environment (corporate, agency, politics, government, etc.) on challenging and often-controversial assignments, I try to bring a "real world" perspective to my classes so that students understand how the concepts we discuss and skills we develop will apply after graduation.

I am passionate about teaching and in helping my students succeed.

I hold a B.A. in politics and government from the University of Puget Sound, an M.A. in British Government from the University of Essex (U.K.) and I attended the Georgetown University Law Center.