

**2 UNITS****SPRING 2024 – Wednesdays 6pm-8:50pm****Section: 21728****Location: Online****Instructor: Professor Houghton****Office Hours:** Wednesdays 9-10PM & by appointment**Contact Info:** [jdhought@usc.edu](mailto:jdhought@usc.edu)**Course Description**

This class examines the principles of communication in the beauty, personal care, and wellness industries through brand strategy, new product development, promotion, advertising, social media, and influencer marketing to more clearly understand how to tailor messages to target audiences. By building a foundation starting at the history of this area, this class will then move to understand today's landscape, and how the industry continues to struggle with many challenges including the importance of representation and inclusion in communication and business practices. Especially in these industries, social media influencers have emerged as a trusted source of content, giving power and a voice to consumers looking to break free from traditional, top-down media messages. Students will individually then craft a marketing communication analysis of an existing brand and use insights from the course to propose a new communication strategy.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

- Understand the recent history of communication in the Beauty, Personal Care & Wellness industry
- Apply key ideas from academic work to specific current examples
- Analyze identity, inclusion, and representation in communication messages
- Examine how Covid-19 has changed consumer behavior and communication in the Beauty, Personal Care & Wellness industries
- Assess different approaches to new product development, and how to communicate break through innovation
- Analyze the role of word of mouth and influencer marketing in persuading consumers in this category, especially in niche and underserved markets
- Design an integrated marketing communication plan for an existing Beauty, Personal Care or Wellness brand

**Course Notes**

This course will use Blackboard to distribute information during and after class. It is expected that you check your USC email at least once a day in case there are course announcements.

**Policies and Procedures**

Attendance at each class meeting is required. If you foresee missing a class please let your instructor know as soon as possible. Make-up assignments to account for the missing in-class participation should be submitted five-days post missed class. Contact the instructor for details about the make-up work.

Class consists of students from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures. Intellectual freedom is a priority in class discussions, but any form of sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia or other forms of discriminatory

behavior on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexuality or class will not be tolerated. Incidents will be reported to the university immediately.

Should you be offended or hurt by anything said in the classroom or require any form of trigger warnings, please let your instructor know.

The above naturally also applies to things said by your instructor, who is a human being, always learning, and can make mistakes. Do not be afraid to call out your instructor. If done in a respectful manner, this will not diminish your standing in class, but will improve it.

If you are not comfortable speaking up in class, you can contact the instructor privately to remedy the situation.

## **Communication**

Please don't hesitate to reach out to your instructor outside of class. If you can't attend office hours feel free to schedule a zoom call or start a conversation via email. All emailed will get a response within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on the weekends. You may send a follow-up email after this timeframe if you have not heard back from your instructor.

## **Zoom Etiquette**

The goal is to create an engaging and dynamic virtual classroom environment. Please keep your camera on, and if you will be unable to do so contact the instructor prior to class to inform them. Mute your microphone when you aren't speaking and be mindful of background noise around you as much as possible. Dress like you are coming to the classroom. Avoid multi-tasking and focus your attention on class.

## **Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

Please have a device in the classroom that can access Blackboard and other course materials such as videos and case studies.

## **Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

Readings will be available on Blackboard and through the Harvard Business coursepack. A link to purchase the coursepack will be posted on Blackboard, and is also below. One book is assigned in this class [can be purchased on Amazon]:

Tungate, M. (2011). *Branded Beauty: How Marketing Changed the Way We Look*. Kogan Page Limited, London.

Harvard Business coursepack: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1130142>

## **Description and Assessment of Assignments**

### ***Response Papers***

There are two response papers during the eight weeks which are two pages in length. In these papers you will cover both academic and popular press literature to examine:

- Communicating to underserved markets
- Analyzing the importance of social justice and activism in self care

### ***In-Class Application Presentations***

- Each student will sign up to present during one class meetings over the course of the semester. The student will lead the class through an outside example that is relevant to the week's topic and applies the course materials. They will bring in discussion questions and lead the class for a total of fifteen minutes.
- Please sign up for a presentation time [here](#)

### **Case Notes and Homework**

- Before many class meetings students will be asked to submit notes on the HBR case studies or other homework that helps prepare them for class. Case notes should be 1-2 pages of your observations and takeaways from the given case. They will be due at class time on Blackboard and not graded.

### **Final Paper and Presentation**

- Students will work in pairs to create a marketing plan for an existing self-care brand, leveraging insights from the class to determine how the brand can more effectively communicate & resonate with its consumers. The final project will include a minute presentation and situation analysis covering strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities for the brand as well as an overview of the consumer target that will be leveraged to create a 360-degree marketing plan recommendation.

### **Grading Breakdown of Grade**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>% of Grade</b>
Response papers	30
In-Class Application Presentations	10
Case Notes and Homework	10
Final Presentation	20
Final Paper	20
Participation	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **Grading Scale**

93% to 100%: A	80% to 83.99%: B-	67% to 69.99%: D+
90% to 92.99%: A-	77% to 79.99%: C+	63% to 66.99%: D
87% to 89.99%: B+	73% to 76.99%: C	60% to 62.99%: D-
83% to 86.99%: B	70% to 72.99%: C-	0% to 59.99%: F

### **Grading Standards**

All documents should be in Microsoft Word format. Papers must be type-written or word-processed, double-spaced, with 12 point font. Make sure you keep a copy of all submitted papers. Please ensure that each paper is written in APA style. Refer to the APA manual (6th Edition). Finally, typos and spelling errors are

unforgivable at this level and reflect poorly on you. All page length requirements are for double-spaced pages, with 1-inch margins, in 12-point Times New Roman font.

Letter Grade	Description
A	Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
B	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.
D	Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
F	Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.

## Grading Timeline

### Grading Timeframe and Missing or Inaccurate Score Inquiries/Disputes

For effective learning, students should receive timely feedback on assignments and exams. Therefore, every attempt will be made to grade assignments/exams and post grades within two weeks. Scores for all assignments and exams are regularly updated on Blackboard. You are responsible for notifying the Instructor **within one (1) week** of a score posting if you think a score is missing or inaccurate. Moreover, you only have this period of time to contest a score on an assignment/exam. If you fail to inquire/notify us of any discrepancy, missing score, or contest a score within one week of the date the score is posted, no further changes will be made.

### Assignment Submission Policy

- A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will be lowered 10% per day.
- B. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

### 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, events, and/or guest speaker availability, where relevant.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings/Preparations	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 1/10	Introduction to the course  Industry & communication landscape overview		

<p>Week 2 1/17</p>	<p>Launching and communicating value of new products in self care</p>	<p>HBR: Glossier Case</p> <p>Homburg, C., Schwemmler, M., &amp; Kuehnl, C. (2015). New product design: Concept, measurement, and consequences. <i>Journal of Marketing</i>.</p> <p>Priya, R (2023). How to Launch and Grow a Hero Product. <i>Business of Fashion</i></p>	<p>Case Study Notes</p>
<p>Week 3 1/24</p>	<p>Representation and the cultural construction of beauty and self care</p>	<p>HBR: Dove Real Beauty Case + Sketches Campaign</p> <p>Neil, L., &amp; Mbilishaka, A. (2019). “Hey Curlfriends!”: Hair Care and Self-Care Messaging on YouTube by Black Women Natural Hair Vloggers. <i>Journal of Black Studies</i>, 50(2), 156–177.</p> <p>Raun, T. &amp; Christensen-Stryno, M. B. (2022). We belong to something beautiful’: Julie Vu’s and Madeline Stuart’s use of minority identity as a popular feminist self-branding strategy on Instagram, <i>Information, Communication &amp; Society</i>, 25(12), 1790-1807.</p> <p>Denham, H. (2021). Unilever set to strip ‘normal’ from all its beauty products and advertising. <i>Washington Post</i>. <a href="https://washingtonpost.com/business/2021/03/09/unilever-beauty-normal-inclusion/">https://washingtonpost.com/business/2021/03/09/unilever-beauty-normal-inclusion/</a></p> <p>Ryan-Mosley, T (2021). How digital beauty filters perpetuate colorism. <i>MIT Technology Review</i>.</p>	<p>Response Paper #1</p>

<p>Week 4 1/31</p>	<p>Sales and Communication Channels: Mobile, Digital, MLM, Direct-to-Consumer, AI</p>	<p>Tunegate chapter 15</p> <p><i>Business of Fashion &amp; McKinsey (January 2023) The Year Ahead: Digital Marketing in the Age of Privacy.</i></p> <p>Tait, A. (2019). 'They Have You in a Cultish Grip': the Women Losing Thousands to Online Beauty Schemes. <i>The Guardian.</i></p> <p>Whang, J. B., Song, J.H., Choi, B., Lee, J.H. (2021). The effect of augmented reality on purchase intention of beauty products. The roles of consumers' control. <i>Journal of Business Research.</i></p> <p>Weil, Jennifer (2023). The AI Revolution. <i>WWD.</i> (page 19-22)</p>	<p>Final project proposals due</p>
<p>Week 5 2/7</p>	<p>WOM marketing, influencers, &amp; celebrities in self care</p>	<p>Findlay, R. (2019). Trust us, we're you. Aspirational realness in the digital communication of contemporary fashion and beauty brands. <i>Communication, Culture &amp; Critique.</i></p> <p>Keller, E., &amp; Fay, B. (2009). The role of advertising in Word of Mouth. <i>Journal of Advertising Research.</i></p> <p>Stugatz, R. (2020). Skin deep: The content creator who can make or break a skin care brand, The Gen Z whisperer Hiram Yarbro is not like the beauty influencers of the past. <i>New York Times.</i></p> <p>Strugatz, R. (2023). Hiram Yarbro and Addison Rae Didn't Need</p>	

		Beauty Brands. <i>Business of Fashion</i> .  Harvard Business Review (2023). <i>How Brands and Influencers Can Make the Most of the Relationship</i> .	
Week 6 2/14	'Clean' beauty, ethics, activism and cause-marketing communication	Seelig, M. (2022). Is it possible to create a favorable impression of greenness on skin care websites? <i>Journal of Marketing Communications</i> .  Fine, J. (2021). Wellness Watch: Beauty Companies Address Mental Health Concerns. <i>WWD</i> .  ElBoghdady, D. (2020). 'Clean' Beauty Has Taken Over the Cosmetic Industry, but That's About All Anyone Agrees On. <i>The Washington Post</i> .	Response Paper #2
Week 7 2/21	Global brands: Marketing and messaging	HBR: L'Oreal: Global Brand, Local Knowledge  Tungate chapter 5 & 12	Case Notes
Week 8 2/28	Final Project/Presentations Due		

## 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).

### **AI Policy**

Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated tools is prohibited in this course, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

### **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](https://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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: 1/8/2024 – 4/26/2024; Final Exam Period: 5/1-8/2024)**

**Link:**

<https://classes.usc.edu/term-20241/calendar/>

**Last day to add:** Friday, January 26, 2024

**Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund:** Friday, January 26, 2024

**Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit:** Friday, January 26, 2024 [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, January 30, 2024

**Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade:** Friday, February 23, 2024 [Mark of "W" will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply.]

\*Please drop any course by the end of week three for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Last day to drop with a mark of "W":** Friday, April 5, 2024