



**PR 529: Business and Economic
Foundations for Communicators
3 units**

Spring 2025 – Wednesdays – 6:30-9 p.m.

Section: 21539D

Location: ASC 240

Instructor: Dave Quast

Office: ASC classroom or lobby

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

Contact Info: quast@usc.edu

Course Description

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

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

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

Student Learning Outcomes

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

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

5. Developing corporate communication writing material to be incorporated in the student's writing portfolio.

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

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

Description and Assessment of Assignments

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

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

Classes begin promptly, so please arrive on time. If you are unable to attend class for some reason, please notify the instructor as soon as possible, and assume personal responsibility for gathering notes from other classmates. I will **not** zoom the class for students who are not physically present. At the end of the semester, points will be allocated to students based upon:

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

Participation in Class Discussion Grading			
CRITERION	EXEMPLARY 130-150 pts	SATISFACTORY 90-129 pts	UNACCEPTABLE 0-89 pts
Frequency	Frequent contribution to class discussion.	Regular contribution to class discussion	Seldom or no contribution to class discussion
Relevance	Contributions to class directly address key issues, questions, or problems related to the text and the discussion activity.	Contributions to class address key issues, questions, or problems related to the text and the discussion activity, but in some cases only.	Contributions to class do not directly address the question or problem posed by the discussion activities.

Insight	Contributions to class offer original or thoughtful insights, analyses, or observations that demonstrate a strong grasp of concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics.	Contributions to class offer some insight, analysis, or observation to the topic but may not demonstrate a full understanding or knowledge of concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics.	Contributions to class do not offer any significant insight, analysis, or observation related to the topic. No knowledge or understanding is demonstrated regarding concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topics.
Support	Contributions to class support all claims and opinions with either rational argument or evidence.	Contributions to class generally support claims and opinions with evidence or argument, but may leave some gaps where unsupported opinions still appear.	Contributions to class do not support their claims with either evidence or argument. The contributions contain largely unsupported opinion.

Following a Publicly Traded Company (25% of grade)

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

Topic Paper (5% of grade)

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

Midterm Project: Case Analysis (15% of grade)

Students will be assigned a major economic/business event to analyze and submit a video recorded presentation. Students will deduce how this particular issue had an economic/business impact on the parties involved and choosing the perspective of one of the parties involved, will develop key messaging and tactics to positively shape the outcome. Include citations and references (APA style).

Quizzes (15% of grade)

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

LinkedIn Learning Courses (5% of grade)

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

Final Project: Developing a Corporate Communication Campaign for an Industry Impacted By The Current Economic Climate (20% of grade)

Students will be divided into groups. Each group will be assigned an industry that has been impacted by the current economic climate. Groups will analyze the macroeconomic importance of your industry sector and the microeconomic implications of the detailed challenge. Then groups will develop a corporate communications plan. This is a 4-part project.

1. Part 1: Presentation Deck

2. Part 2: In-class presentation
3. Part 3: Paper
4. Part 4: Communication Material

Grading

a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Class Participation/Following the News	150	15%
Presentation on the company you follow	100	10%
Topic Paper	50	5%
First paper on the company you follow	75	7.5%
Midterm paper	150	15%
Quiz 1	75	7.5%
Second paper on the company you follow	75	7.5%
Quiz 2	75	7.5%
Final project	200	20%
LinkedIn Learning Courses (3 to be completed)	50	5%
TOTAL	1000	100%

b. Course Grading Scale

Description of assessments and corresponding points and percentage of grade.

Letter grade and corresponding numerical point range		
95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	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

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

“A” projects have near professional production quality; one or no mistakes; clearly error-checked and edited material. All required elements included (varied vocabulary; supporting facts/figures/graphics/videos/audio segments; quotes as required). Excellent organization and flow; original thinking. Showed creativity in

packaging/distribution method. High end of scale: publishable today as is; client-ready

“B” projects have two to five spelling, grammar mistakes. One or more required elements missing or poorly displayed (i.e., poorly illustrated graphic, confusing chart, misleading language, etc.). Shows potential as a good content producer. All elements are well organized. High end of scale will have at least one extraordinary element such as astonishing lead or little-known facts or stunning graphic element. Some creativity shown. Publishable with medium editing; nearly client-ready

“C” projects have more than five errors (spelling, grammar). Poor production quality, poorly edited and/or proofread. Confusing or uninteresting content. Little or no facts/figures included. Passive rather than active verbs become the norm. Little or no creativity shown. Publishable with major editing; not client-ready

“D” projects have more than ten errors (spelling, grammar). Needs to be completely rewritten/reproduced. Poorly organized with little or no understanding of public relations and advertising standards. Needs to work with an official writing coach.

“F” projects are not rewritable/reproducible, are late or not turned in. material show no understanding of PR/advertising approaches or standards. A grade of F also will be assigned for any submitted work that is found to be plagiarized, fabricated and/or uses AI tools in unattributed ways.

d. Grading Timeline

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

Assignment Rubrics

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

Assignment Submission Policy

- A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will receive a full grade deduction for each day they are late.
- B. Assignments must be uploaded to Brightspace/Turnitin before beginning of class on the day the assignment is due in a pdf, Word or PowerPoint format. They should also be emailed to the instructor at cherrym@usc.edu
- C. All papers must be 1.5 space, APA format with notes in bibliography page (including use of AI).

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

- Ragas, Matthew & Culp, Ron: *Business Acumen for Strategic Communicators*, New York 2021
- Other readings will include handouts and articles provided electronically by the instructor.
- Videos, podcasts and movies will also be part of the required materials. Details and/or link will be provided by the instructor.
- It is essential that students stay current with major economic and business events. Appropriate website and sources for this will be discussed in the first class.

Laptop Policy

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [Annenberg Digital Lounge](#) 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: 1/13/2025 – 5/2/2025; Final Exam Period: 5/7-14/2025)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20251/registration-calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, January 31, 2025

Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W,” except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund: Friday, January 31, 2025

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Friday, January 31, 2025 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of “W” and receive a refund or change to Audit: Tuesday, February 4, 2025

Last day to withdraw without a “W” on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, February 28, 2025 [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 11, 2025

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

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

Date	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework due for this week's class	Assignment Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 Jan. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Logistics • Introduction to Business • Economic Foundations • Economic Philosophy • Public Markets Introduction 	Reading: Ragas & Culp, R: 1- <i>Why Knowledge of "Business 101" Matters</i>	Assigned: First Paper
Week 2 Jan. 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics and Macroeconomic Indicators • Public Markets Introduction II 	Reading: Ragas & Culp, 2- <i>Growth, Innovation and Transformation</i> 3- <i>The Lean and Agile Enterprise</i> Video assignment: Watch 31 Days In March. The Month Coronavirus Unraveled American Business - A WSJ Documentary Plus video and reading assignments assigned by instructor	Topic Paper due before class
Week 3 Jan. 29	Macroeconomic Crisis: Recessions (From the Great Depression to the Great Recession to COVID 19)	Watch videos assigned by instructor	
Week 4 Feb. 5	Microeconomics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting and Financial Statements • Bankruptcy • Money, Crypto, NFTs 	Reading: Ragas & Culp, 8- <i>Financial Statements and Valuation Essentials</i> Plus video assignment assigned by instructor	Student Publicly Traded Company Presentation(s)

Week 5 Feb. 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intangible Assets <p>Financial Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Law of Corporate Disclosure SEC/Filings Investor Relations/Tools Insider Trading FTX 	<p>Reading: Ragas & Culp, 7- <i>Finance and the Capital Markets</i></p> <p>Ragas & Culp, 9- <i>Corporate Disclosure: Laws, Rules and Regulations</i></p> <p>Media as assigned by instructor</p>	<p>Follow a Company – Paper 1 due.</p> <p>Student Publicly Traded Company Presentation(s)</p>
Week 6 Feb. 19	The Roots of American Capitalism	<p>Asynchronous video assignment: Podcast: “The 1619 Project” The Economy That Slavery Built”</p> <p>LISTEN:]Episode 2, and Planet Money: Food and Farmworkers</p>	<p>Quiz 1</p> <p>Student Publicly Traded Company Presentation(s)</p>
Week 7 Feb. 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporations Corporate Governance Corporate Social Responsibility 	<p>Listen to the last earnings call for the company you are following.</p> <p>Reading: Ragas & Culp, 4- <i>The Purpose Driven Enterprise</i></p> <p>5- <i>Stakeholders and Society</i></p> <p>6- <i>The Board of Directors and the C-suite</i></p>	Student Publicly Traded Company Presentation(s)
Week 8 Mar. 5	Case Study I: Advising Public Companies in Bet-the-Company Situations	Guest Speaker: Ellen Barry , E M Barry LLC, EDQ Strategies	
Week 9 Mar. 12	<p>The Global Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade and Tariffs Supply Chain The EU Economics and Geopolitics 	Reading/video assignments will be assigned by instructor	<p>Midterm Case Analysis Video due.</p> <p>Student Publicly Traded Company Presentation(s)</p>
Spring Break Mar. 19	SPRING RECESS		
Week 10 Mar. 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Strategy: What is strategy and overview of key concepts Marketing Strategy: Market Segmentation, Target Selection, The “5 Cs” and the “4 Ps” 	Reading/video assignments will be assigned by instructor	<p>Student Publicly Traded Company Presentation(s)</p> <p>Final Project Assignment</p>
Week 11 Apr. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovation Theory Disruption, Innovator’s Dilemma Entrepreneurship Opportunity 	Reading/video assignments will be assigned by instructor	<p>Follow a Company – Paper 2 due</p> <p>Final Student Publicly Traded Company Presentation(s)</p>

	Recognition, Starting a Company, Entrepreneurial Finance		
Week 12 Apr. 9	Case Study (Retail/Consumer): Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Guest Speaker: Diego De la Vega Fernandez , Co-founder, Zomoz Mezcal	
Week 13 Apr. 16	The Business of PR and Advertising Agencies A Day in the Life	Guest Speaker: Micaela Stevens , Director of Digital Strategy, EDQ Strategies	Quiz 2
Week 14 Apr. 23	Case Study II (PR): Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Global Growth	Guest Speaker: Scott Pansky Co-founder, Allison Worldwide	
Week 15 Apr. 30	Final Group Presentations		
FINAL EXAM PERIOD May 7 7:00-9:00 p.m.	Recap and Summation. A.M.A.!		Final supporting element of Final Project are due.

Policies and Procedures

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 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).

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 journalism class.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

The USC Student Handbook (<https://policy.usc.edu/studenthandbook/>)

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.

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.

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

- The submission of material authored by another person or entity (such as an AI tool – see below) 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, articles 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, articles or assignments that another student submits as their own work.

Generative AI Policy

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 or notes section. Students are solely responsible for the quality and the accuracy of their submissions, regardless of whether they were completed with the aid of generative AI.

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.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the Financial Aid Office webpage for undergraduate- and graduate-level SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

Support Systems

USC Annenberg has an embedded student health counselor, Dr. Kelly Greco. Dr. Greco helps students prioritize their mental health and emotional well-being. In this video, she shares a few tips for how to "Fight On" every day. Students may schedule sessions with her through MySHR or by calling (213) 740-9355 (WELL). USC Student Health services are also available to support student's mental health journey by visiting: <https://sites.usc.edu/counselingandmentalhealth/>

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://annenbergscholarships.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-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://annenbergscholarships.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-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 nearly 30 years of experience as a public relations practitioner counseling clients in the corporate, legal, and political arenas. My expertise includes crisis management, issues and reputation management, strategic communications, public affairs, corporate positioning, litigation support, and media and presentation coaching.

I am the principal and founder of EDQ Strategies, a crisis response, reputation management, and strategic communications consultancy. 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 in college), I also serve on the Board of Directors of Planned Parenthood of Pasadena and the San Gabriel Valley, and I try to spend time trying 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. As such, 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.

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.