



**PR 486 Multimedia PR Content:  
Introduction to Digital Design Tools  
2 Units**

**Spring 2019 – Thursdays – 12-1:40 p.m.**

**Section:** 21314R

**Location:** ANN 309

**Instructor: Jenn de la Fuente**

**Office:** ASC G36 (East Wing, basement level)

**Office Hours:** By appointment only.

**Contact Info:** [jdelafulue@usc.edu](mailto:jdelafulue@usc.edu), cell (916) 538-2133

(Please do not call or text my cell phone on weekends or late at night.)

## **I. Course Description**

It's increasingly important that public relations professionals not only be good at writing for an array of audiences, but also have an understanding of basic design principles and a fluency in digital design tools, such as Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, and Adobe InDesign. While many organizations may employ outside designers, or have an art department of their own, sometimes the task of creating smaller design collateral, such as postcards, Infographics or posters, falls to the PR practitioner. For many smaller firms, an art department or contract design help may not be available, so it is even more imperative to have a basic understanding of how to design collateral and execute these designs in the above programs. These are also important skills to have when communicating with an art department or outside designer, so you can clearly and effectively work with these parties and understand their needs.

## **II. Overall Learning Objectives and Assessment**

There are two main learning objectives in this class: Learning the foundation for good design practice, and developing a basic proficiency in Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. This class will allow you to exercise a lot of creativity as well in the assignments. You will have to come up with your own design concepts and execute them. Each of the assignments will measure:

- Your ability to present a concept for a project. Public relations is all about devising ideas on how to promote a brand, a product, an issue or idea, and your ability to not only develop a concept but also to explain how and why it is appropriate for your target audience(s) is key in the industry.
- Your ability to execute a design idea. Is your design appropriate for the audience? Is it aesthetically sound? Can you explain why you made the design choices you did?
- Your ability to use the design programs that are industry standards: Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. You should be able to create basic collateral using any of these programs by the end of this class.
- Your ability to present your final idea to your peers. This will prepare you for client presentations, fielding questions asking why certain design or collateral decisions were made, and being able to explain your concept from beginning to how it was executed.

## **III. Description of Assignments**

All the assignments in this class will follow a semester-long theme: your own record company. Students will think of a concept -- including a name -- for their own company, and create collateral throughout the semester for this company.

Assignments are as follows:

- **Company pitch:** Students must devise a name for their own record company and decide what the theme and musical vibe for this company will be. For example, what genre of music would this company promote, and what are some examples of artists that would be represented by this record company? What is the target audience and demographic? What kind of look and feel does the student envision for this company?
- **Basic branding and business card:** Students will create a basic logo (can be type-based) for the record company. What color schemes and fonts will be used for collateral and why? Students will also design a business card (two-sided) for the company.
- **Promotional poster:** It's time to promote your record company with a poster. Imagine it will be plastered on the street, at music venues, at coffee shops, at record stores, or wherever it can get put up. How will the student quickly grab the attention of people and get them interested in your record company?
- **Social media graphics / promotion:** Now that you have a new company, you've got to get it out there on social media. You'll create avatars and banner graphics for Facebook and Twitter, and create a promotional graphic and copy that you can use for different social media platforms.
- **Final project - CD/package giveaway:** Students will create a final booklet (similar to the liner notes you find in CD cases) and a promotional item to give away to inform people about their record company. Students must write all the copy for the liner notes and design it. Students will also design a CD case or other promotional packaging for a sampler of music that the record company will promote. (Note: the package doesn't have to be for a CD -- sometimes it can contain a USB drive or a digital music sampler. It depends on how creative the student wants to be!)

## IV. Grading

### a. Breakdown of Grade

Assignment	% of Grade
Company Pitch	15%
Graphic Assignments (4 total)	35%
Final Project	40%
Class Participation	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

### b. Grading Scale

95% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 94%: A-	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C-	0% to 59%: F

### c. Grading Standards

**"A" projects** have writing near professional quality; one or no mistakes; clearly proofread and edited material. All required elements included. Excellent organization and flow; original thinking. Showed creativity in concept and

great design sense and needs little revision. High end of scale: publishable today as is. Physical product shows a high degree of craftsmanship: straight-cut edges, no smudges or unnecessary creases, high print quality and construction. Could be mass-produced 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 design, misplaced elements, etc.). Shows potential. Some creativity shown. Publishable with medium editing. Physical product may have minor flaws, such as uneven cutting on the edges, one or two crooked elements, small printing imperfections/smudges/blotches, and uneven color.

**“C” projects** have more than five errors (spelling, grammar, AP style). Poorly edited and/or proofread. Hackneyed elements such as trite headline or clichés. Passive rather than active verbs become the norm. Little or no creativity shown. Mediocre concept or no real design concept at all. Publishable with major editing. Physical product is of mediocre quality and may be printed on low-quality stock. Physical product has major flaws, such as discoloration, fading, poorly cut edges, obviously crooked elements, obvious printing imperfections and smudges and appears hastily constructed without any attention to craftsmanship.

**“D” projects** have more than 10 errors (spelling, grammar). Needs to be completely rewritten. Poorly organized with little or no understanding of journalistic style and design standards. Needs to work with writing coach. No coherent or discernible design concept, no thought given to what design elements were used, such as color or typeface. Unable to explain design choices. Physical product needs to be completely reprinted and reconstructed.

**“F” projects** are not rewritable, printed in an unacceptable fashion, late or not turned in.

## V. Assignment Submission Policy

- A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be dropped one grade. Assignments that are two weeks late will be dropped two grades. No late assignments will be accepted after two weeks.
- B. Assignments must be submitted via email or Dropbox. For the business card, poster, and final project, you will turn in BOTH a digital version of your project, and a physical copy of your project. Exact printing specifications will be provided for each project. Your instructor will provide instructions on how to submit your files via Dropbox for projects that are too large to send via email. Digital versions are due before the class date specified; you must bring your printed version to class and turn it in during class. **BOTH THE PHYSICAL VERSION AND DIGITAL VERSION MUST BE TURNED IN BEFORE THE SPECIFIED DUE DATE TO BE CONSIDERED ON TIME.** If either portion is turned in late, the entire assignment is considered late.

## VI. Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

You can find tutorials for the Adobe programs here. Feel free to practice all you want!

Photoshop: <https://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/tutorials.html>

Illustrator: <https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/tutorials.html>

InDesign: <https://helpx.adobe.com/indesign/tutorials.html>

Please note that this class does require printing and some paper/container construction, particularly for the final project. Some costs may be associated with getting projects printed, or costs associated with buying containers or materials to construct projects. The instructor can accommodate some printing requests and will have some cutting and crafting equipment available for students, but do be aware that you must pay the cost of printing and putting together your assignments for this class out of your own pocket.

## VII. 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 Virtual Commons](#) for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's [Information Technology Services](#) website.

## VIII. Add/Drop Dates for Session 001 (15 weeks: 1/7/19 – 4/26/19)

**Friday, January 25:** Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

**Friday, January 25:** Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund for Session 001

**Tuesday, January 29:** last day to drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund for Session 001

**Friday, February 22:** Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on the transcript. [Please drop any course by the end of week three (or the week three equivalent for short sessions) to avoid tuition charges.]

**Friday, April 5:** Last day to drop a class with a mark of "W" for Session 001

## IX. 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.*

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Date: 1/10</b>	Introductions, explanation of syllabus and class requirements.  Basic design concepts: What makes good design?  Learning which tool is best for the job: Photoshop, Illustrator, or InDesign.	Design slides / handouts.  Start thinking of your record company name and concept.	Make sure you have Adobe Creative Suite installed and have working versions of Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign. If you are not an Annenberg student, contact TechOps and at least have the 30-day trial installed. Please have this done by the end of Week 2 at the latest.  Record company pitch due before the next class. Turn in a Word doc/Google doc via email before 11 a.m. on 8/30.
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Date: 1/17</b>	Give a brief oral presentation about your record company and what it's all about.  Identity basics: How to think about creating simple logo/word mark. The importance of sketching.	Look ahead to Photoshop. Browse some tutorials: <a href="https://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/tutorials.html">https://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/tutorials.html</a>	
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Date: 1/24</b>	Photoshop basics: creating documents, setting up grids, working with fonts.	Photoshop cheat sheet handout. Become familiar with what the Photoshop tools do and	

	<p>Resolution and why it's important.</p> <p>More Photoshop basics: Importing images and using images and where to find stock images/proper image usage. Basic photo adjustments and layers.</p> <p>Style / branding guides: What are they and why are they important?</p>	<p>some handy keyboard shortcuts.</p> <p>Start sketching some ideas for your logo and think about colors and typefaces.</p> <p>Style guide sample handout.</p>	
<p><b>Week 4</b> <b>Date: 1/31</b></p>	<p>Illustrator basics: creating documents, learning the important tools, creating basic shapes. The pen tool and combining basic shapes to create more complex shapes. An explanation of vector vs. raster.</p> <p>Learning how to embed files from Photoshop into Illustrator and vice versa.</p> <p>If you can't draw a logo, what are your alternatives (such as Google tools or finding stock vectors)? If you prefer to draw on paper, how can you transfer your drawings for use in Illustrator?</p>	<p>Illustrator cheat sheet handout.</p> <p>Illustrator logo tutorial. <a href="https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/how-to/logo-design.html?playlist=/cc/v1/collection/product/illustrator/segment/designer/explevel/beginner/applaunch/orientation/collection.ccx.js">https://helpx.adobe.com/illustrator/how-to/logo-design.html?playlist=/cc/v1/collection/product/illustrator/segment/designer/explevel/beginner/applaunch/orientation/collection.ccx.js</a></p> <p>Illustrator pen tutorial/handout. Not due in class, but do it for practice.</p> <p>Handout explaining how you will format your branding/business card project.</p>	<p>Branding/business card due on 2/7. Turn in digital elements via Dropbox by 11 a.m. on 2/7. Bring logo, basic style guide, and business card to class for presentation.</p>
<p><b>Week 5</b> <b>Date: 2/7</b></p>	<p>Oral presentations. You will show your branding work and business card in class. Be prepared to</p>		

	<p>explain your color choices, font choices and why you decided to create the logo and business card you created.</p> <p>Poster design: What works? What doesn't? What elements do you need to have in order to make an effective poster?</p>		
<b>Week 6</b> <b>Date: 2/14</b>	<p>More Photoshop skills: Selections and the art of cutting things out of photos. Basic touch-up tools.</p> <p>A basic discussion of printing.</p>	<p>Start thinking about your poster concept and what assets you need to put it together (for instance, photos or drawings)</p> <p>Handout explaining printing and sizing guidelines for poster.</p>	
<b>Week 7</b> <b>Date: 2/21</b>	<p>More Illustrator skills: Creating complex shapes and an explanation of the Pathfinder tool. Working with paths.</p> <p>Patterns in Illustrator: How to make your own and use imported ones.</p>		<p>Poster due before class on 2/28. Turn in digital version on Dropbox by 11 a.m. on 2/28. Bring printed poster to class. (Does not need to be mounted on museum board or foam core, but it's helpful to keep it from getting creased or damaged!)</p>
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Date: 2/28</b>	<p>Oral presentation about your poster and why you designed it the way you did.</p>		
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Date: 3/7</b>	<p>Social media graphics: Size guidelines, what you need for Twitter accounts and Facebook pages. What works for best practices? How can you use graphics/campaign ideas across different formats?</p>	<p>Handout explaining different sizes needed for online media, guidelines for social media graphic assignment.</p>	<p>Social media graphics assignment due 3/21. Please turn in all assets by 11 a.m. via Dropbox on 3/21. No printouts needed for class, turn in your digital files only.</p>

<b>Date: 3/14</b>	<b>NO CLASS – PLEASE ENJOY YOUR SPRING BREAK!</b>		
<b>Week 10</b> <b>Date: 3/21</b>	InDesign basics: Setting up a document and grids, and important tools. Importing large chunks of text. Importing Photoshop and Illustrator assets, and importing images.	InDesign slides/handouts.	Start thinking about what you will do for your final project. What kind of information has to go into your liner notes/booklet? Will you design a CD case or something to hold a digital version of your music? Will you brand a thumb drive instead? What other things might you include in your promo package (for instance, stickers, small giveaways, postcards)? How will you package your promotional giveaway? (Remember, it should be a reasonable size so people can walk away with it easily.)  Showing your instructor sketches or early digital versions of your final project is encouraged. It will only make your final project better!
<b>Week 11</b> <b>Date: 3/28</b>	InDesign continued. Text wraps and more complex layouts. Paragraph and character styles. Grids and tabs.	Handout explaining how you will need to package your digital assets for final project and printing guidelines.	
<b>Week 12</b> <b>Date: 4/4</b>	InDesign: Working with multiple page documents. Basic book design. Pamphlet design (or something that has to be folded a specific way, like an accordion).		
<b>Week 13</b> <b>Date: 4/11</b>	Beyond class: Showing your work. Working with designers and the importance of communication when it comes to explaining concepts and what you want for larger branding and design projects.		
<b>Week 14</b> <b>Date: 4/18</b>	Workshop time! All questions regarding your final projects and troubleshooting.		Digital version of final project due by 11 a.m. on 4/25. Project must be properly packaged (fonts, assets, etc.) as a zip file and

			uploaded to Dropbox. Final constructed project must be brought to class for presentation.
<b>Week 15</b> <b>Date: 4/25</b>	Class survey!  Presentation of final projects.		
<b>Final Exam Period</b> <b>5/8, 2-4 p.m.</b>	Summative experience		

## **X. Policies and Procedures**

### **Additional Policies**

If you must miss a class, please give ample notice to your instructor via email. You will be responsible for catching up on any missed material and make any arrangements you need to catch up in class.

No late assignments will be accepted unless you have a medical emergency or other excused absence. Documentation for any excused absence must be provided.

Please make sure to check your USC email regularly. It will be the primary means of communication between you and your instructor. If you have any questions, please feel free to email your instructor or come speak to your instructor before or after class, or make an appointment.

### **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 journalism or public relations class.

## **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

### **a. Academic Conduct**

#### *Plagiarism*

Presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words - is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct (<http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>).

#### *USC School of Journalism Policy on Academic Integrity*

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

"Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an 'F' on the assignment to dismissal from



the School of Journalism. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism school administrators.”

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.

## **b. Support Systems**

*Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. [engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255*

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. [engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)

*Sexual Assault Resource Center*

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: [sarc.usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu)

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086*

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support)

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

*Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710*

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa)

*Diversity at USC*

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. [diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

*USC Emergency Information*

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

*USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.* Provides overall safety to USC community. [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

## **XI. About Your Instructor**

Jenn de la Fuente is a web developer with a graphic design background. She has run her own business, Rosebud Designs, since 2009 and developed a variety of print and web collateral for a range of clients, from nonprofits to

small businesses. Her specialty is creating custom WordPress websites, and she has teamed up with other design firms and design businesses to create solutions for clients such as Rancho La Puerta, Heal the Bay, 826 Los Angeles, and 826 National. Before starting her business, Jenn worked in sports journalism as a reporter, copy editor, page designer, and web producer for a variety of newspapers: the Orange County Register, The News Journal (Wilmington, Delaware), and The Sacramento Bee. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Print Journalism from USC Annenberg, graduating in 2000, and has taught at Annenberg since 2014. She is an avid sports fan, longtime Trojan football season ticket-holder, a huge L.A. Kings fan, as well as a hockey player and curler.