

School of Journalism – Master of Arts in Strategic Public Relations Graduate Application Guidelines and Instructions for Fall 2012

Degree Program Overview

The M.A. in Strategic Public Relations equips its graduates with the skills and competencies needed to succeed and lead in organizations and industries of all types. This highly applied, professionally-oriented program emphasizes strategic planning and problem solving, applied research and analysis, specialized writing, ethics, a global perspective, and all types of digital, social and mass media.

Application Deadline

Admission to the M.A. in Strategic Public Relations is limited to the fall term. The application deadline for U.S. citizens and permanent residents is **January 3**. International students should apply by **December 1** to ensure that their applications are complete for scholarship consideration.

Application Process

- 1) Go to www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/apply/ and complete the online USC Graduate Admission Application. You must upload the following materials before submitting your application:
 - Statement of Purpose
 - Writing Sample
 - Professional Résumé
- 2) After you submit your application, you will pay your application fee with a credit card or request a waiver
- 3) Request letters of recommendation
 - Three letters of recommendation required
- 4) Mail the following materials (include USC-ID) to:
**University of Southern California
Office of Graduate Admission
3601 South Flower Street, Room 112
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0911**
 - Official transcripts from all colleges/ universities attended, including from study abroad programs
 - Confidential statement of financial support (international applicants only)
- 5) Request to have your admission tests reported electronically to USC (institution code 4852)
 - Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test
 - TOEFL scores (international applicants only)

Admission Testing

All applicants must submit Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test scores.

International applicants must demonstrate English language proficiency. USC will waive the English proficiency requirement for international applicants who hold a recognized Bachelor's degree from the following countries: United States, United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, or Canada (except Quebec).

Students who have studied in other countries are not exempted from the English-proficiency requirement, even if English was the medium of instruction at their previous school. If the English proficiency requirement is not waived, applicants must submit TOEFL scores; the minimum recommended score is 114-115 (IBT). For more details pertinent to international students, refer to www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/international/application.html.

Plan to complete all admission testing at least one month prior to the application deadline.

Statement of Purpose

This statement, which should convey your passion for the field, should be two to four pages long, typed and double spaced. Care should be taken to submit a clear, concise and well-written essay. The statement should address the following questions:

1. What are your thoughts about public relations as a profession?
2. What are your thoughts about the future of public relations?
3. Why are you interested in studying public relations at the graduate level?
4. If you know, what area or type of public relations interests you?
5. How would you describe your ideal job as a public relations practitioner?
6. What is it about you that makes you an exceptional candidate to study public relations at USC Annenberg?
7. What is it about USC Annenberg's Masters in Strategic PR that inspired you to apply?

Writing Sample

Upload a sample of your writing (e.g. press release, news clipping, college/university research paper, etc; this should not be redundant with your Personal Statement).

Résumé

Submit a current resume listing positions held, including internships, nature of work and dates of employment. Include academic and professional awards, honors, association memberships, teaching experience, subject matter expertise, language(s) other than English, and your familiarity with any research or communications technologies, i.e. software for design, audio/video production, blogging, data analysis, presentations, etc.

Indicate your proficiency level for each skill and area of expertise (E = expert, C = competent, F = familiar).

Letters of Recommendation

Three letters of recommendation are required, and faculty recommendations are preferred. However, one internship or employment recommendation may replace one faculty recommendation. If you provide recommenders' e-mail addresses on the online application, they will receive online recommendation forms.

Estimated Cost of Attendance 2011-2012

\$ 28,400	Tuition and fees (8 – 14 units per semester)
\$ 15,800	Room and board
\$ 1,008	Books and supplies
\$ 1,828	Personal and miscellaneous
\$ 2,295	Transportation
\$ 35	USC Orientation Fee for your first semester
\$600	Mandatory fees
\$ 49,931	Total

Financial Aid

Departmental scholarships, assistantships and project associate assignments are awarded competitively to domestic and international applicants based on the completed graduate admission application. **Note: Since scholarship review begins in mid-January, it is essential that you complete and submit your online USC Graduate Admission Application by the deadlines (January 3 for U.S. citizens and permanent residents; December 1 for international students) to ensure full consideration for admission and merit scholarship.**

Although we offer departmental scholarships and awards, more than 80% of the incoming graduate class is self-funded. Plan to seek and apply for outside scholarships and loans; begin researching opportunities at

www.fastweb.com. Visit the USC Financial Aid Web site at

www.usc.edu/admission/fa/applying_receiving/graduates2/ for info about need-based federal financial aid.

International applicants must provide proof of ability to pay tuition and living expenses before an I-20 can be issued. For more information, refer to the USC Graduate & International Admission Web site at

www.usc.edu/admission/graduate/international/application.html.

Prospective Graduate Student Campus Visits

Graduate information sessions are held on campus throughout the academic year. In addition, the Annual Prospective Graduate Student Visit Day program will be held on November 11, 2011. For other dates and to make a reservation, visit our Web site at www.annenbergl.usc.edu/Prospective/VisitandSched.aspx.

Questions

Contact Annenberg Admissions at ascadm@usc.edu or 213.821.0770.

USC Annenberg Admissions Office
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Los Angeles CA 90089-0281
ATTN: M.A. in Strategic Public Relations