

## SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION: HONORS PROGRAM 2020-2021

The Annenberg School of Communication Honors Program offers an exciting opportunity for students with outstanding academic records and serious intellectual curiosity. Participation in this program prepares and guides students in the pursuit of original, independent research under the supervision of Annenberg faculty members. Producing an honors thesis is a challenging academic experience that can reap many benefits, including close mentorship from a faculty member, the opportunity to further explore a specific intellectual question or issue that piques your curiosity, and the development of strong research, writing, and critical thinking skills that can strengthen your portfolio for future career endeavors (e.g., professional or graduate school). A program of this caliber often represents the most defining and culminating experience of one's undergraduate study and can synthesize the knowledge developed over the course of the major. In the fall, the thesis seminar (COMM 495) will bring together independent minded, project-inspired honors students to address shared research and project design strategies. In the spring, you will work with an Annenberg faculty mentor (COMM 497) to see project completion, dissemination, and publicity.

### **1. PROCESS TO APPLY**

Please submit your application to Annenberg Advisement and Academic Services via email [ascjadv@usc.edu](mailto:ascjadv@usc.edu) by or before **May 1, 2020**. Selection is merit based and you will be notified about admission by email by May 15, 2020.

### **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

The Catalogue requires that you meet the following requirements:

- 1.1 Must be a declared Communication major.
- 1.2 Must have a 3.5 cumulative USC GPA and a 3.5 in all Communication courses taken.
- 1.3 Must have completed the core and methods requirements. Core courses are based on the catalogue year you entered USC. Please refer to the USC catalogue for specific list of courses.

Note: Students who are completing the core and methods requirements in spring 2020 are eligible to apply.

### **2. WHAT TO DO?**

Sign this form (see below), write a short paper and turn in via email by May 1, 2020.

**Write a two to three-page paper that address 3 questions below.**

2.1 Please identify the course area of our department in which you would like to concentrate. Identify 3 professors as potential mentor/advisors with whom you may wish to work in the spring. Explain why the working relationship would be productive based on the professor's area of research or teaching.

2.2 Please write a page describing the proposed areas of study for your project. Below are key terms/areas to consider. Use these and/or add your own. In the paragraph, explain how your area is relevant to the honors experience you have in mind.

- Cultural Studies of sports, fashion, comics, film, games, music and other forms of popular culture, including a focus on gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, religion, class, and generation
- Political communication, organizing, participation, imagination, mobilization, argument, and public deliberation
- Media and communication technologies as they relate to communities, markets, publics, audiences, and fandoms
- Communication between people, within groups, within ecologies, among geographies, as transport or tour, or with diasporic or subaltern cultures
- Narrative, story-telling, performance, address, production within and across media
- Networks, political economy, and social dynamics of communication
- Communication as material infrastructure, artificial intelligence, work or labor, and cognitive resource (brain, mind, affect)
- Memory, nostalgia, place & space
- Orientation to social justice, critique, diversity, feminism and difference, trauma, renewal and joy

2.3 Please write a page that describes how your interests, training, experience, and curiosity have brought you to the point of pursuing an extended project for your senior year. Tie in your own drives, thinking and ambitions to a **project area** that you imagine needs to be pursued—both for your own curiosity and to your peers.

2.4 **OPTIONAL.** If you feel that your application or GPA has been compromised by the COVID-19 crisis, please include a one paragraph explanation and list a faculty reference, who knows and can vouch for your work.

### 3. COMPLETION REQUIREMENT:

3.1 COMM 495– Honors Seminar (4 units, fall)  
Recommended Preparation: COMM 301

The seminar will meet weekly. Discussions will be oriented to a range of topics and include gathering information, archiving artifacts, designing projects, conducting secondary research, positioning research questions, placing the project within field methods and literature, evolving research structures, projects, collaboration, and outcomes. By the end of the fall term, students will develop a proposal, research plan, and schedule for consideration by prospective advisors.

3.2 COMM 497– Honors Thesis (4 units, spring)

Honors Program Director, Mike Ananny, will arrange productive relationships with faculty mentors to assure best prospects for successful completion, and will direct honors theses as needed. Typically, a final honors project will match a written thesis with a ‘making’ outcome. “Making” outcomes may include short-films, archives, sound, oral interviews, f[r]ictional narratives, activist programs.

Note:

- Required courses cannot be taken concurrently.
- Students may also work with a professor to customize a 400-level COMM course for honors status in place of COMM 495. This will be addressed after the applicant is admitted to the program and chooses to pursue this option.
- Students must receive at least a B+ or higher in the two honors courses.
- Completion of these courses does not guarantee departmental honors. You must also maintain a 3.5 cumulative and COMM GPA in order to graduate with Communication honors.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student I.D. #: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Graduation Date: Fall / Spring / Summer 20 \_\_\_\_\_

This application form and your essay should be turned in to Annenberg Advisement and Academic Services via email [ascjadv@usc.edu](mailto:ascjadv@usc.edu) by May 1, 2020.