

USC CENTER ON PublicDiploacy

USC Annenberg School for Communication Announces New Dean

LOS ANGELES – April 24, 2007 – C.L. Max Nikias, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs recently announced the appointment of Dr. Ernest James Wilson III to succeed Geoffrey Cowan as dean of the USC Annenberg School for Communication, effective July 1, 2007.

During this academic year, Wilson has been a Visiting Professor at the USC Annenberg School, teaching two courses on public diplomacy. He has also been a valuable partner in a number of programs and projects coordinated by the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, and he has initiated several more.

“I've had the pleasure of working with Ernie for the past four years. He was one of the earliest and most helpful advisors to the USC Center on Public Diplomacy,” said Joshua Fouts, Director of the Center. “His unique breadth of experience in academics, organization building, international affairs and public diplomacy has provided a critical strategic and creative vision for the Center. One of his earliest theoretical contributions to the field was his 'Smart Power,' theory, which has become a central research project at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy. I am looking forward to working with him closely as Dean to move the Center to the next level.”

Professor Nicholas Cull, director of the Masters in Public Diplomacy program which is jointly administered by the USC Annenberg School and the USC School of International Relations, said "Ernie has already made a first rate contribution to the Masters program in Public Diplomacy as a much admired visiting professor and teacher. He has a reputation for clarity of thought and a willingness to engage the difficult issues in an original way, but the students have been especially impressed by his openness to their ideas and his insistence on thinking of them as colleagues. It is wonderful to know that the wider Annenberg community will now have a chance to work with Ernie, and we hope that we might be able to tempt him back into the MPD classroom again before too long."

A native of Washington, D.C., Wilson has served in several policy positions at the national level: among them director of international programs and resources on the National Security Council at the White House (1993-94); director of the policy and planning unit in the Office of the Director, U.S. Information Agency (1994), and deputy director of the Global Information Infrastructure Commission (1994-95).

Wilson is the ranking senior member of the board of directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, having been named to the board under President Bill Clinton and

renamed by President George W. Bush. In addition, he has been a pioneering author and researcher on the Internet and digital communication in developing countries.

Wilson joins USC from the University of Maryland, College Park, where he holds a joint appointment as a professor in the Department of Government and Politics and in the Department of African-American Studies. Wilson's current scholarship focuses on the politics of global sustainable innovation in high-technology industries; on China-Africa relations; and the role of culture in U.S. national security policy. In 2006 Wilson published *Negotiating the Net in Africa: The Politics of Internet Diffusion*, co-edited with Kelly Wong. He is also the author of *Information Revolution and Developing Countries* (2004, MIT Press) and *Diversity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (2004, Routledge Press).

The USC Center on Public Diplomacy was established in 2003 as a partnership between the USC Annenberg School for Communication and USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences' School of International Relations. It is a joint research, teaching and professional training center dedicated to furthering the study and practice of public diplomacy in the United States and around the world.

For more information, please visit <http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org>

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