



Dr. Ernest J. Wilson III
Professor of Communication and Political Science
Former USC Annenberg Dean
Founder of the Annenberg Center for Third Space Thinking
USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism

Ernest J. Wilson III, Ph.D., professor of communication and political science, is founder and director of the **USC Center for Third Space Thinking**, devoted to research, teaching and executive education on soft skills in the digital age. Through the Center for Third Space Thinking, Dr. Wilson's most recent research focuses on critical workforce competencies and talent and skills development in the 21st Century. He was a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University (2017–2018), and he currently is writing a book on soft skills via the framework of Third Space Thinking. He was on the board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting from 2000–2010, the last year as chairman, and served as dean of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism from 2007–2017.

Dr. Wilson's experience at the intersection of communication and public policy spans the private and public sectors. He has served as a consultant to international agencies such as the World Bank, the FAO, UNDP, and the Economic Commission for Africa. He was an advisor to the governments of China, Nigeria, and Poland on economic policy, and led research centers and academic departments at premier institutions of higher education.

With an academic focus on the convergence of communication and information technology, public policy, and the public interest, Dr. Wilson is a student of the "information champions," the leaders of the information revolution around the world.

In addition to his most recent books — ***Governing Global Electronic Networks*** and ***Negotiating the Net: The Politics of Internet Diffusion in Africa*** — Dr. Wilson co-founded and co-edited the MIT Press series ***The Information Revolution and Global Politics*** and the journal ***Information Technologies and International Development***.

Dr. Wilson's other government experience includes service as director of International Programs and Resources on the National Security Council at the White House (1993–94) and director of the Policy and Planning Unit, Office of the Director, U.S. Information Agency (1994). He advised President Obama's transition team on matters of communication technology and public diplomacy.

Formerly a professor and senior research scholar at the University of Maryland, College Park, Dr. Wilson was director of that university's Center for International Development and Conflict Management from 1995 to 2002. He previously served on the faculties of the University of Michigan and the University of Pennsylvania.

In May, Dr. Wilson addressed a session of the Annual Forum of the OECD in Paris, on workplace readiness, and also prepared a paper on the importance of interactive soft skills for the future trajectories of the diffusion of Artificial Intelligence.

Dr. Wilson is the recipient of numerous research fellowships and awards, including the Distinguished Scholar Award from the International Communication section of the ISA, an International Affairs Fellowship from the Council on Foreign Relations and a postdoctoral fellowship at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Originally from Washington, D.C., Dr. Wilson earned a Ph.D. and M.A. in political science from the University of California, Berkeley, and a B.A. from Harvard College. He is married to Francille Rusan Wilson, Ph.D., a labor and intellectual historian. They have two sons.