

## **SSCI 490x, Directed Research**

Spring 2021

**Units:** 1- 8

**Term — Day — Time:** Online asynchronous

**Location:** Off-campus

**Instructor:** Laura C Loyola, PhD

**Office:** AHF B55A

**Regular Office Hours:** Tues 11 am-12 pm and Wed 2-3 pm PT.  
Also available most days and times by appointment via email.

**Contact Info:** [loyola@usc.edu](mailto:loyola@usc.edu), 213-740-5612;  
323-457-3504 (remote office)

**Library Help:** Andy Rutkowski

**Office:** VKC 36B

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 10 a.m.-12 p.m. PT

**Contact Info:** [arutkows@usc.edu](mailto:arutkows@usc.edu)

**IT Help:** Richard Tsung

**Office:** AHF B56

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Contact Info:** [ctsung@usc.edu](mailto:ctsung@usc.edu), 213-821-4415

## **Course Description**

The purpose of a Spatial Sciences Directed Research is for a student to gain practical research experience to apply and further his/her/their understanding of the principles presented in his/her/their degree program. The research must be completed with a Spatial Sciences faculty or Affiliate faculty member.

Students may register for 1.0 - 8.0 units per semester, commensurate with number of hours dedicated to research. No more than 12 units of SSCI 490 are allowed for credit towards a single degree.

During the semester, the student will remain in contact with the professor who has agreed to supervise him/her/them and will report regularly as agreed upon between the student and the professor.

By the end of the semester, the student will produce a report of his/her/their research activity, problems investigated, significant results, and any follow-up projects in which the student may have engaged. If a different format is used other than a report, that format must meet the same intellectual standard as that described here. In this case, the faculty supervisor will document the definition of an alternative deliverable of intellectual merit equivalent to a report.

In the course of the research project, the student must not violate the University's policies on intellectual property and/or confidentiality and must abide by all other relevant policies.

## **Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- articulate the relevance of the research project in the context of the broader discipline;
- describe a scope of the research project and his/her/their individual contribution;
- demonstrate application of principles and concepts learned in the academic program to research protocols; and
- produce documentation as to the benefits of the research experience.

## **Requirements for Enrollment**

To enroll, students must be in good academic standing (cumulative and degree GPA of at least 2.50). On a case-by-case basis, students with a cumulative or major GPA below 2.50 may be permitted to take this course. The student must provide the faculty supervisor with a verifiable research offer/agreement from an SSI faculty or Affiliate faculty member. The student may not receive any University or outside funding for the research simultaneously.

**Prerequisite(s):** None  
**Co-Requisite (s):** None  
**Concurrent Enrollment:** None  
**Recommended Preparation:** None

### **Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

None required. Readings and materials may be recommended by the faculty supervisor.

### **Description and Assessment of Assignments**

The student and supervising professor must agree upon the format, schedule, and content for the two semester reports and the final paper/report.

By drop/add deadline of the relevant semester, the student must obtain the approval of the supervising professor for the proposed research in writing.

The student is expected to fulfill the terms of the research.

### **Final Report**

The format and requirements of the final report will be determined by the supervising professor, as agreed to by the student.

The recommended minimum length of the report is 2-3 pages single-spaced, exclusive of a cover sheet, table of contents, charts, figures, or tables.

The final report is due by date listed on the syllabus, unless otherwise noted by the supervising professor.

The report must be the student's authorship, without merely replicating research materials or deliverables. If materials from the research group are relevant, those materials must be properly cited and can be included as appendices. Define any acronyms.

The final report should follow an outline such as:

Introduction to the project:

- Describe the broader research project goals and how the student's work contributed to the broader project
- Describe the organization of the directed research and the role in the broader discipline

Description of the project:

- What were the project goals? What were the specific activities that the student undertook and specifically accomplished? How many hours in the semester were dedicated to the research project?

- What problems or challenges were encountered in this project and how did the student address or resolve them?
- Describe the over-arching project results
- Describe the importance of the directed research project to the scientific community

Value of directed research:

- What was learned in this directed research, focusing especially what was new or provided exposure beyond what has been covered in a USC course?
- How did this research add value to the student’s degree experience?
- How does the student anticipate translating the experiences from this directed research into his or her career trajectory?

Appendices:

- Students may list significant deliverables (such as a literature review, conference presentation, or manuscript draft) from throughout the semester as Appendices.

### Grading Breakdown

This course is graded on the standard University letter grade scale (A, A-, B+, B, B-, etc.) and based on these deliverables and research faculty evaluation.

Assignments	Points	% of Grade
Preliminary research proposal with approval of research director	15	15
Mid-semester project report 1	15	15
Mid-semester project report 2	15	15
Final report	55	55
Evaluation of research faculty		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### Tentative Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Deliverables/Due Dates
<b>Week 1</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 2</b>	Defined by research proposal	Preliminary research proposal
<b>Week 3</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 4</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 5</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables

<b>Week 6</b>	Defined by research proposal	Mid-semester research report 1
<b>Week 7</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 8</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 9</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 10</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 11</b>	Defined by research proposal	Mid-semester project report 2
<b>Week 12</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 13</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 14</b>	Defined by research proposal	No deliverables
<b>Week 15</b>	Defined by research proposal	Final report

## Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

### 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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://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>.

### 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)*

### **Academic Accommodations**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP and it should be delivered to me early in the semester. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday (213-740-0776; [study@usc.edu](mailto:study@usc.edu)).