SSCI 490 (35737), Directed Research

Summer 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: loyal@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

IT Help: Richard Tsung
Office: AHF B56
Office Hours: By appointment
Contact Info: ctsung@usc.edu, 213-821-4415
**Course Scope and Purpose**

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
Class Conduct

Harassment, sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence, and stalking are not tolerated by the university. All faculty and most staff are considered Responsible Employees by the university and must forward all information they receive about these types of situations to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for assisting students with supportive accommodations, including academic accommodations, as well as investigating these incidents if the reporting student wants an investigation. The Title IX office is also responsible for coordinating supportive measures for transgender and nonbinary students such as faculty notifications, and more. If you need supportive accommodations you may contact the Title IX Coordinator directly (titleix@usc.edu or 213-821-8298) without sharing any personal information with me. If you would like to speak with a confidential counselor, Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) provides 24/7 confidential support for students (213-740-9355 (WELL); press 0 after hours).

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

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

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Initial Research Proposal/Summary – The student will submit a 1-2 page project proposal/summary via Blackboard. By drop/add deadline of the relevant semester, the student must obtain the approval of the supervising professor for the proposed research in writing, preferably affixed to the project proposal submission.

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

Mid-semester Reports – Throughout the semester the student will submit, via Blackboard, written reports on the research progress, specific research methods or analytical processes that have been completed thus far, and for those working in research groups their individual contributions to the larger project thus far.

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?

References:
• All works must be properly cited and referenced.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary research proposal with approval of research director</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-semester project report 1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-semester project report 2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final report</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation of research faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
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## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Deliverables/Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Defined by research proposal</td>
<td>No deliverables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Defined by research proposal</td>
<td>Preliminary research proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Defined by research proposal</td>
<td>No deliverables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Defined by research proposal</td>
<td>No deliverables</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Defined by research proposal</td>
<td>Mid-semester research report 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Defined by research proposal</td>
<td>Mid-semester project report 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
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<td>No deliverables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Defined by research proposal</td>
<td>Final Report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## 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](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

### Support Systems

**Counseling and Mental Health** – (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call [engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call
www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-9355 (WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call
studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) – (213) 740-5086 | Title IX Compliance – (213) 821-8298
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment – (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs – (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention – (213) 821-4710
campussupport.usc.edu
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC – (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call dps.usc.edu*

Non-emergency assistance or information.