

# USC Iovine and Young Academy

*Arts, Technology and the Business  
of Innovation*

**ACAD 499: Special Topics**  
**The Community & Web3 Playbook for Brands & Businesses**

**Units: 2**  
**Spring 2023**  
**Monday 5-6:50pm PST**

**Location:** Hybrid & IYA room 111 IYA

**Instructor:** Tina Sharkey  
**Office:** Zoom  
**Office Hours:** by appointment  
**Contact Info:** tsharkey@usc.edu

**Grader and/or Classroom Assistant/s:** TBD  
**Office Hours (if applicable):** by appointment  
**Contact Info:** TBD

**IT Help:**  
<https://uscedu.sharepoint.com/sites/IYAStudent/SitePages/IT-Resources.aspx>  
**Hours of Service:** 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.  
**Contact Info:** iyahelp@usc.edu

**USC Technology Support Links**  
[Zoom information for students](#)  
[Blackboard help for students](#)  
[Software available to USC Campus](#)

## **Course Description**

In this course taught by Tina Sharkey, students will learn the playbook for how to architect authentic communities and why it is fundamental to building a loyal following and scaling a business. We will explore the Creator Economy, the metaverse, NFTs, tokenization tactics, blockchain economics, and more.

They will hear from leaders and innovators from companies like Nextdoor, Slack, Twitter, Jib Jab, Hi Ho, Sundance, BlogHer, Cowen, Peloton, Mighty Networks, Roblox, Greenhouse, eBay, and many more. Students will learn why Community is the new omnichannel and the impact it has on building cost-effective, loyal, and differentiated brands and businesses. They will learn how to identify, nurture and scale purposeful, loyal relationships with customers, glean insights and practical skills on how to co-create your product, content, and brand narrative, and spotlight and engage your customers and employees. This class will prepare students for roles in startups and scaled enterprises alike. They will be able to apply the insights and lessons for roles in brand marketing, growth and product management, social and community management, entrepreneurship, and much more.

Framework, strategies, and tactics for, building and nurturing scaled communities and authentic engagement in startups/corporations. Features world-class guests and mentors, company analysis, and project builds.

## **Learning Objectives and Outcomes**

Community is serious business, and this class provides both our student and future entrepreneurs and aspiring corporate innovators alike the essential Community and Web3 playbook. They will learn to analyze, design, execute and scale company engagement strategies, network effects, and product roadmaps. Students will practice loyalty love loop design to support acquisition and retention for all of their stakeholders including their team, customers, partners, and collaborators. It will enable them to articulate, design, and execute purpose informed value propositions. Throughout the semester, students will apply the Community Playbook factors to product/service design. They will learn to express and dimensionalize the brands, roadmaps, and experiences they manifest, iterate, build and scale.

More specifically, by the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Understand and be able to apply the Community Playbook
- Practice building effective teams and collaboration skills through playing to each other's strengths
- Understand how to translate community and social integration into business acquisition retention
- Explore and brainstorm innovative ways to create communities both in real life and in a remote setting
- Present project concepts verbally, textually, and visually to diverse audiences
- Study the opportunities and tokenization strategies of Web3 companies and applied technologies.
- Understand how to unlock a brand's narrative and architect a word of mouth narrative
- Integrate purpose, meaning, and origin stories into the soul of a brand
- Identify, engage, and unlock your community's co-creation potential
- Honing SWOT analysis skills of existing and mature businesses' community playbooks
- Cold start creation of new (hypothetically-realistic) companies and their go-to-community strategies and mock execution

**Prerequisite(s):** none

**Co-Requisite(s):** none

**Concurrent Enrollment:** none

**Recommended Preparation:** none

**Course Notes:**

This course will be using blackboard as its main means of student communication and assignment announcements and submissions. Additionally, students are expected to use the class Slack channel for updated class announcements and messaging.

The class will be a hybrid online and live class. Students will be a mix of both undergraduate and masters students and is open to IYA and all USC schools.

This class includes hands-on individual and team based projects to facilitate reinforcement and application of learning modules. Team communication dynamics and agreements, building activities and assignments are also a critical part of the learning experience.

**Communication:**

- Please see course notes above for details about Blackboard and Slack platforms.
- Communication with instructor and teaching assistant may be done via email (details on page 1).
- Any circumstances for assignment extensions require advance communication with instructor and teaching assistant to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- (Virtual or Physical) Attendance during class time is mandatory.

**USC Technology Rental Program**

The university realizes that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in your classes, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university's equipment rental program. To apply, please submit an [USC Technology Rental Program Application](#).

**HOW TO PURCHASE SOFTWARE AT THE DISCOUNTED ACADEMY RATE**

For classes that require them, the following software are available for purchase **online** through the USC Iovine and Young software catalog at the Academy discounted rate:

Software	IYA Short-Term License at USC Bookstore
Adobe Creative Cloud	\$70 2019–2020 annual license
Apple Logic Pro	\$35 semester licenses
Solidworks	\$35 semester license
Apple Final Cut Pro	\$35 semester license

To purchase:

- Visit: <https://commerce.cashnet.com/IOVINE>
- Select the software license(s) you would like to purchase by clicking “View Details” or the software title, and make your purchase
- You will receive an order confirmation receipt at the email address you provided
- You will be notified by email when the software license has been activated

If you have any questions about this process, please do not hesitate to contact Academy IT Support at [iyahelp@usc.edu](mailto:iyahelp@usc.edu).

**Required Materials**

N/A

**Optional Materials**

N/A

## **Description and Assessment of Assignments**

### **Midterm - Project 1: 30%**

The midterm project will consist of completing a SWOT and Community Playbook analysis of a chosen business within a group of fellow students. The team will create a presentation where they present recommendations on how this company can continue to create community and advance the business.

### **Final - Project 2: 45%**

In the final project, teams will apply “The Playbook” to a new company of their conceiving. Using the skills developed all semester, they will build out their brand narrative and community playbook of their own and present on how they will effectively manifest the experience.

### **Quizzes: 15%**

There will be a few pop quizzes based upon prior material presented in class and pre-class assignments (videos and readings). These are opportunities to demonstrate mastery of course concepts.

### **Participation: 10%**

Students are expected to ask questions, comment, respond and engage both live and in Zoom chat during class discussions and lectures.

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## Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Quizzes	30	15%
Participation	20	10%
Midterm project	60	30%
Final project	90	45%
<b>TOTAL</b>	200	100%

## Grading Scale (Example)

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

## Course-specific Policies (Assignment Submission, Grading Timeline, Late work, and Technology)

Include this section and details if your class has any policies that differ from standard university. Common course-specific policies the instructor will need to create cover communication, in-class work, late work, and technology. See the CET website for resources on policies.

### Assignment Rubrics

Details for specific assignments will be provided via Blackboard as assignments are introduced during the semester.

### Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments should be submitted on Blackboard by midnight of the due date unless otherwise specified.

### Grading Timeline

Grades for assignments will be published every couple of weeks at the latest on Blackboard.

### Late work

Unless otherwise communicated or special circumstances, late submissions will be penalized on a sliding scale based on when the work arrives past the due date.

## Academy Attendance Policy

The Academy maintains rigorous academic standards for its students and on-time attendance at all class meetings is expected. Each student will be allowed two excused absences over the course of the semester for which no explanation is required. Students are admonished to not waste excused absences on non-critical issues, and to use them carefully for illness or other issues that may arise unexpectedly. Except in the case of prolonged illness or other serious issue (see below), no additional absences will be excused. Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the final grade by  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a grade (e.g., an A will be lowered to A-, and A- will be lowered to a B+, etc.). In addition, being tardy to class will count as one-third of an absence. Three tardies will equal a full course absence.

Students remain responsible for any missed work from excused or unexcused absences. Immediately following an absence, students should contact the instructor to obtain missed assignments or lecture notes and to confirm new deadlines or due dates. Extensions or other accommodations are at the discretion of the instructor.

Automatically excused absences normally may not be used for quiz, exam or presentation days. Using an excused absence for a quiz, exam or presentation, such as in the case of sudden illness or other emergency, is at the discretion of the instructor.

In the case of prolonged illness, family emergencies, or other unforeseen serious issues, the student should contact the instructor to arrange for accommodation. Accommodation may also be made for essential professional or career-related events or opportunities. Additionally, students who need accommodations for religious observations should provide advanced notice to instructors and student athletes should provide Travel Request Letters. All accommodations remain at the discretion of the instructor, and appropriate documentation may be required.

### *Fall 2022 addendum:*

- Unless students provide an accommodation letter from USC's Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) or a letter from IYA Student Services detailing visa or travel restrictions, attendance and active participation is expected in the classroom. Any student with such accommodations should submit their accommodation document to the instructor as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations. Either classroom recordings or live remote access to the class via Zoom will be provided.
- Students who are experiencing illness should not attend class in person. Please inform the instructor in advance of any class sessions that you can't attend for medical reasons, and accommodations will be arranged to view recorded lectures and submit alternatives to any missed class participation. Students will not be penalized for not attending class in person under these circumstances.
- In the event that you find yourself experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, in keeping with university recommendations, you should Stay home! This is the best way to prevent spreading COVID-19 as supported by scientific evidence; Please do not come to an in-person class if you are feeling ill, particularly if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

## Iovine and Young Hall Cleanout

The Academy is unable to store student projects and materials beyond the end of the semester. Students must remove all projects and personal materials from the Creators Studio, lockers/locker room, and other classrooms by the end of each semester. **All projects and materials left in Iovine and Young Hall will be discarded two days after final exams end. No exceptions**

### Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown\*

I am shifting around some of our weeks due to some speaker and new content coming in. We will have materials posted a week in advance in most cases. I will be using our SLACK Channel for updates and posting on blackboard.

<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Topics/Daily Activities</b>
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Jan 9, 2023</b> <b>IN PERSON</b>	Introduction/Core Concepts / The Community Playbook Overview  Kickoff
<b>Week 2</b> <b>JAN 16</b> <b>MLK</b> <b>NO CLASS</b>	NO SCHOOL
<b>Week 3</b> <b>JAN 23</b> <b>IN PERSON</b>	<b>Community is Serious Business</b> <b>SWOT prep &amp; Mid term project assignment</b> Authenticity, Shared Values, and Intentions: To Defend or Defriend?
<b>Week 4</b> <b>JAN 30</b> <b>REMOTE</b>	<b>Neuroscience and Receptional Design</b>
<b>Week 5</b> <b>FEB 6</b> <b>IN PERSON</b>	<b>Nurture Your Tribe and Ambassadors</b> <b>Creator Economy</b> <b>Spotlights, IRL/IVRL aned collab and Co-create</b>
<b>Week 6</b> <b>FEB 13</b> <b>REMOTE</b>	Midterm Presentation
<b>Week 7</b> <b>FEB 20</b> <b>NO CLASS</b> <b>PRESIDENT</b> <b>S DAY</b>	NO SCHOOL
<b>Week 8</b> <b>FEB 27TH</b> <b>IN PERSON</b>	<b>Network Effects</b>



<b>Week 9</b> <b>MARCH 6</b> <b>REMOTE</b>	<b>Web3 &amp; Decentralized Ownership</b>
<b>Week 10</b> <b>MARCH 13</b> <b>USC</b> <b>VACATION</b>	NO SCHOOL
<b>Week 11</b> <b>MARCH 20</b> <b>IN PERSON</b>	<b>The Creator Economy</b>
<b>Week 12</b> <b>MARCH 27</b> <b>REMOTE?</b> <b>TBD</b>	<b>Final Initial Pitch and Feedback</b>
<b>Week 13</b> <b>APRIL 3</b> <b>REMOTE</b>	<b>Loyalty Love Loop</b>
<b>Week 14</b> <b>APRIL 10</b> <b>IN PERSON</b>	Speaker TBD
<b>Week 15</b> <b>APRIL 17</b> <b>REMOTE</b>	Final Projects workshops and Prep. For the date and time of the final for this class, consult the USC <i>Schedule of Classes</i> at <a href="https://classes.usc.edu/">classes.usc.edu/</a> .
<b>Week 16</b> <b>APRIL 24TH</b> <b>IN</b> <b>PERSON??</b>	Final Projects workshops and Prep.

**FINAL PROJECT TO BE PRESENTED DURING FINAL WEEK DUE TO MISSED CLASSES FROM MONDAY HOLIDAYS**

<https://classes.usc.edu/term-20231/finals/>

**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 [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

## **Students and Disability Accommodations:**

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University’s educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [osas.usc.edu](http://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu).

## **Support Systems:**

***Counseling and Mental Health*** - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.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  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://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](http://Studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

***Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX)*** - (213) 740-5086  
[eeotix.usc.edu](http://eeotix.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](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

***The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)*** - (213) 740-0776  
[osas.usc.edu](http://osas.usc.edu)

OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

***USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710***

[campussupport.usc.edu](http://campussupport.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

***Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101***

[diversity.usc.edu](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

***Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323) 442-0382 (HSC)***

[ombuds.usc.edu](http://ombuds.usc.edu)

A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

***Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-3340 or [otfp@med.usc.edu](mailto:otfp@med.usc.edu)***

[chan.usc.edu/otfp](http://chan.usc.edu/otfp)

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.