

COMM 322: Argumentation and Advocacy 4 Units

Fall 2023 – T/TH – 11:00 am-12:20 pm PST

Section: 20517

Location: ASC 240

Instructor: Professor Kiran Dhillon

Office: Online via Zoom

Office Hours: M 8:00am-10:00am PST; 1:30pm-2:30pm PST;
Also by Appointment

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Land Acknowledgement

The University of Southern California's (USC) University Park campus is located on the traditional land of the Tongva People. Learning more about the history of Indigenous peoples in Los Angeles and [reading stories shared by the Tongva community](#) is essential. I encourage you to learn about [the Indigenous land on which your remote learning location resides](#). Thank you to my colleagues Daniel Durbin, Nick Cull, and Randy Lake for their labor in drafting a land acknowledgment and their willingness to share their knowledge.

Labor Acknowledgement

I owe tremendous gratitude to Kathryn Olson, whose generous mentorship has informed the structure and teachings of this course. Thank you to Carlos Godoy and Carmen Lee, whose labor and knowledge sharing have better informed my practices as an educator.

Course Description

Argumentation is a process of give-and-take. While arguing involves disagreement, it need not—and should not—be disagreeable. Being a good arguer is not synonymous with being argumentative or quarrelsome. On the contrary, an effective arguer is open-minded, a good listener, respectful of the opinions of others, and able to fashion arguments in a way that others will find reasonable. Thus, it is crucial that you be present and prepared to participate appropriately in each class, not only as an advocate but also as an audience. This course covers a wide array of approaches to advocacy, including basic argumentation theory, analysis, discursive and visual argument, and diverse fields of advocacy, including law, politics, organizations, and interpersonal relations. Debates are a significant component of this course to test argumentation theory and analysis. For debates, we will be researching and debating topics related to social justice and sustainability, as referred to by the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Understand the parts of an argument
- Identify, synthesize, and apply fundamental theories and techniques from argumentation and advocacy studies through written and oral arguments
- Conduct research and present evidence to support their arguments
- Identify what evidence is, know how to use it to support a claim, and how to evaluate opposing evidence
- Critically analyze and evaluate own arguments and the arguments of others
- Understand the process of debate, including research, preparation, and evaluation of debates, including refutation and cross-examination
- Develop critical, constructive, and compassionate listening skills as audience members

- and practice critical evaluation of classroom debaters
- Create and deliver arguments that are accessible, inclusive, and ethical
 - Identify and evaluate arguments throughout mass media, government, corporate, and other institutional discourses
 - Understand the importance of argument and advocacy in everyday communicative practices

Course Notes

Course information and materials will be posted on Blackboard. Please note that this syllabus may change based on student feedback, the progress of the class, and/or events. I will communicate any syllabus and content changes via email and Blackboard. Digital learning resources and information about accessing and navigating Blackboard and Zoom can be found through [USC Keep Teaching](#) and the [Annenberg Digital Lounge](#). I use Canva for class lectures and share slides on the day I give a lecture. Lecture slides can be found under the “PowerPoint Lectures” tab on Blackboard.

Technology & Laptop Policy

You will use technology (i.e. Zoom & Blackboard) and a laptop for this course.

All undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors are required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the [Annenberg Digital Lounge](#) for more information. To connect to USC’s Secure Wireless network, please visit USC’s [Information Technology Services](#) website.

If you have trouble with your personal device, please consult with the [USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program](#).

For USC Technology support please see: [Zoom information for students](#), [Blackboard help for students](#), [Software available to USC Campus](#).

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Thomas A. Hollihan and Kevin T. Baaske, *Arguments & Arguing* (4TH Edition) (2022). Available at the USC Bookstore. Use prior editions at your own risk; they are not the same material. All class assignments, including exams, presume students are using the assigned textbook.

Announcements, Content, Discussion Postings, Links, Etc. on Blackboard.

Optional Readings and Supplementary Materials

Public Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Your Instructor will provide more details regarding the specifics of each class assignment at the appropriate time. Here is an overview of some general guidelines and expectations for coursework.

Grading Standards

Each assignment has stated requirements. This is an upper-level course, and the standards are high. Careful preparation and dedication will be necessary to earn even a C grade. Merely “getting through” a debate speech is not the same as delivering a successful one. Only work that demonstrates success at achieving beyond the basic requirements will earn higher grades, and work which does not demonstrate successful completion of the assignment objectives will earn less. This class is not merely about giving debate speeches; it’s about allowing you to learn how to use the power of language to understand, shape, and impact the world you share with your audience. Debate speeches focusing on the critical elements of thoughtfulness and decision-making will help you make the most of this opportunity.

Papers

There are two papers – a issue analysis paper and a judge’s ballot for this class. Each provides an opportunity to demonstrate your creativity and mastery of class concepts.

Issue Analysis Paper – 50 points – Please make sure to review your textbook for suggestions on developing well thought analysis of an issue. This assignment should include an introduction where a clear thesis and preview sentence are structured. The paper should then turn to an analysis of the issue you have selected in the following format: Blame/Inherency, Ill/Significance/Harms, and Cure/Solvency. There should be a section in the paper for each of these stock issues. Please be sure to articulate a practical, solvable, and feasible solution to the issue you have selected. Remember, this will most likely be the most difficult part of the paper to articulate. Please plan accordingly. The paper should end with a conclusion paragraph with a review of the thesis. This assignment needs to be in Times New Roman 12 point font, printed, 2-3 pages double spaced, and brought to class on the due date. In addition, an example of this paper can be found on your Blackboard site.

Judge’s Ballot – 50 points – Pick one final debate to write your ballot on (the debate you participated in is excluded) and prepare a 2-3 page paper. Each ballot should be your argument for why a team won and lost where you identify your claim and provide supporting evidence explaining why you voted the way that you did. Each of your ballots will be graded on your ability to demonstrate an understanding of arguments in debate, argumentation theory, the quality of your argument(s) as a judge, and the quality of feedback you provide. Your ballot should be in Times New Roman 12 point font, 1 inch margins, structured, focused on specific arguments, must be written with a formal style, have qualified sources, include evidence, should be cited appropriately.

Debate Speeches

There are three required debates – a one-on-one issue debate (**120 points**), a practice group debate (**150 points**), and a final group debate (**200 points**) -- for this class. Each provides an opportunity to demonstrate your creativity and mastery of class concepts. To qualify for a passing grade in this class, you must give, for a grade, a speech in ALL THREE debates. Students who do not participate in all debates will receive a failing grade for the course, regardless of their performance on other class tasks.

Time Limits on Debate Speeches

It is scarce in the professional world that a person is given unlimited time and other people’s attention to accomplish a task. The same is true of debating. Your audience’s time and attention are a precious and finite resource you must manage carefully. As such, it is crucial in a speech to figure out what to say and how to do so in a timely fashion. Debate speeches have strict time limits, and you must stay within them.

Speaking Materials

The basic rule for speaking materials during debates is they should never be a distraction. You can read during your speech but remember that your speech document is not your audience. Visual aids are discouraged unless you can make the case that they are essential to your presentation (the final decision rests with the instructor, and permission must be secured before the speech date). Your debate grade will be negatively impacted if your speaking materials are deemed inappropriate and/or distracting.

Exams

There are two exams (**100 points each**) in this class which test your knowledge of concepts covered in the lecture and reading. Exams will be given during class and are closed-book.

Participation – 30 points

The nature of this course necessitates stringent attendance and participation requirements. A common mistake is for students to think that when they are not participating in a debate, there is nothing for them to do in class. Quite the contrary. A significant part of what you will learn in this class is how to be an engaged audience member – how to listen and understand the language strategies involved in a good argument and debate. The dynamic of argumentation and debate in a functional society is that speakers and audiences need each other not just to be

present but to be engaged. A portion of your grade for this class will be earned by productive participation in class sessions, as determined by your Instructor. The lectures, textbook, class activities, exams, and other coursework provide essential insight into how to be an engaged speaker and audience member. As such, attendance at all class activities is mandatory and will be factored into your overall grade. Not participating productively will negatively impact your participation grade. Each class period your class participation will be evaluated. In each class, you have the potential to earn 1 point toward your overall class participation grade.

A-Level Daily Participation (1-.09 point(s))

Engages in class discussion by frequently doing the following:

- voluntarily and frequently offering creative or original responses/interpretations/observations beyond the obvious,
- involving others in class discussion by asking questions, seeking others' responses, etc.
- eagerly and intelligently attempting to answer questions,
- offering follow-up responses,
- actively engaging and taking part during classroom activities/small group discussion,
- using technology responsibly (For example, your cell phone never went off in class, you were never on your phone during class, and if you brought in your laptop you were only using it to take notes), and
- treating classmates and the professor respectfully (For example, listening while the person is talking, not having side conversations, etc.).

Eagerly treats class discussion as a conversation among students and professor.

B-Level Daily Participation (.08-.07 points)

Participates in class discussion by doing the following:

- offering consistently appropriate and occasionally creative or original responses/interpretations/observations
- answering questions frequently,
- actively, taking part in classroom activities/small group discussion
- using technology responsibly (For example, your cell phone never went off in class, you were never on your phone during class, and if you brought in your laptop you were only using it to take notes), and
- treating classmates and the professor respectfully (For example, listening while the person is talking, not having side conversations, etc.).

Treats the class discussion as a conversation among students and professor.

C-Level Daily Participation (.06-.05 points)

Only sometimes participates in class discussion by doing the following:

- occasionally offering responses/interpretations/observations but nothing that really challenges the class to think beyond the obvious,
- answering questions every now and then,
- demonstrating overall competence in comments or raising good questions in response to discussion, but rarely actively or voluntarily contributes to discussion,
- occasionally engaging in classroom activities and small group discussion, but sometimes not involved,
- using technology responsibly (For example, your cell phone seldom went off in class, you were rarely on your phone during class, and if you brought in your laptop you were only using it to take notes), and
- treating classmates and the professor respectfully.

Many comments are merely factual statements or merely entertaining comments, neither of which demonstrates careful and intelligent responses to class content.

D-Level Daily Participation (.04-.03 points)

Rarely participates in class discussion, and then primarily by doing the following:

- offering a few instances of response/interpretation/observation,
- answering a couple of questions or offering one-word responses to discussion,
- rarely participating in group activities/small group discussions,
- occasionally disrupting class by coming to class late, failing to contribute to the learning environment by blankly staring off into space/out the window or working on something else during class, talking with someone while

someone else is speaking, being off topic, or being merely entertaining with little purpose beyond clowning around,

- using technology somewhat irresponsibly (For example, your cell phone went off in class, you were on your phone during class, and if you brought in your laptop you were not only using it to take notes), or
- treating classmates or the professor disrespectfully, disrupting the learning environment. Primarily a non-participant in topics relevant to class discussion.

F-Level Daily Participation (.02-0 points)

Does not participate in class discussion in a constructive manner, doing the following:

- never offering responses/interpretations/observations,
- constantly did not participate in class activities or small group discussion,
- actively disengaging from class so that others may not know what this person's voice sounds like, much less what his or her opinions/interpretations/observations might be, or what his or her face looks like when looking directly at them, participating only at the level of snide comments,
- constantly used technology disrespectfully within the classroom, or
- treating classmates or the professor disrespectfully, disrupting the learning environment. Never involved in class discussions, or serves as a disrupting voice in discussion.

On the Days You Are Scheduled to Debate: Due to the difficulty of verifying excuses and the possibility that some students may be less than honest, virtually no excuse will be accepted for being absent on your debate day. If you do not show up on the day you are assigned to debate and/or are not prepared to debate, you will get a zero for that assignment. You know when class meets, and you will be told in advance when you are scheduled to debate. Being both physically and mentally present for your debates is your obligation. All scheduled debaters for a day must be present at the start of class. Arriving late on the day you are debating will incur a 10% grade penalty for that debate. Suppose you have a truly compelling and verifiable reason for needing to delay your debate, and you contact your Instructor in advance. In that case, it may be possible to reschedule your debate, but this is not guaranteed.

Grading Breakdown

Description of assessments and corresponding points and percentage of grade.

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points
One v One Debate	120
Practice Group Debate	150
Exam 1	100
Issue Analysis Paper	50
Final Group Debate	200
Judge's Ballot	50
Exam 2	100
Participation	30
Total	800

Course Grading Scale

Letter grades and corresponding point value ranges.

Letter grade and corresponding numerical point range		
800-744: A	663-640: B-	559-536: D+
743-720: A-	639-615: C+	535-504: D
719-696: B+	614-584: C	503-480: D-
695-664: B	583-560: C-	479-0: F

Classroom Policies

The backbone of any argumentation and debate situation is formed by civility and decorum. In other words, there are rules of conduct and the willingness to abide by those rules. At their most basic, these rules are the promise by speakers that they will be prepared and engaging and the promise by audiences that they will be attentive and engaged. Making that happen requires a few extra steps to be taken by both debaters and audiences. Students in this class are expected to adhere to classroom decorum by observing commonsense, traditional rules of behavior in the classroom setting. Speakers and audience members should remember that they are part of a large public institution in a culture that values freedom of expression, intellectual creativity, and diversity of beliefs and opinions. It is important to remember that different people have different views of the world, and a speaker's job, in part, is to be aware of and work with this diversity. The audience must listen earnestly and remember that speakers have a right to express themselves. Discourteous behavior will be dealt with appropriately, including by imposition of grade penalties as warranted. In addition, to foster a supportive learning environment, I expect students to:

- attack arguments, not people
- are individually responsible for the accuracy, quality, and complete citations of ALL evidence or reasons that they use orally or in writing to support claims
- speak for themselves, not for others
- support equality of access to opportunities in the course
- show respect for differences based on gender, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and physical challenges

A "Chat" area can be provided on our Blackboard site for any debate group that requests one. It is expected that these civility standards will be observed there as well.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken at every class session, and students with more than six unexcused absences will be penalized 20 points per absence. These points are deducted from your overall grade, and there is no limit to the deductions. If you have **no more than two unexcused absences**, you will receive a **bonus of 40 points** to your final grade at the end of the semester. Excused absences include religious holidays, jury duty, military service, and attendance at a university-sponsored event (i.e., student-athlete or debate team). Student athletes should provide approved Travel Request Letters in advance of absence. Students with religious observation should give the Instructor advanced notice. If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to get missed information from a classmate and any materials distributed by your Instructor.

Grading Standards

What each letter grade demonstrates.

Letter Grade	Description
A	Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
B	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.
D	Marginal; minimal knowledge and understanding of subject matter; more than one significant shortcoming; deficiencies indicate only the most rudimentary level of understanding.
F	Failing; unacceptably low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter; deficiencies indicate lack of understanding.

Grading

Grading Timeframe

For effective learning, students should receive timely feedback on assignments and exams. Therefore, every attempt will be made to grade assignments/exams and post grades within two weeks. Scores for all assignments and exams are regularly updated on Blackboard.

Grade Reconsideration

All students must wait 24 hours from the time they receive their grade before contacting their Instructor about the grade, whether face-to-face or through email. When contacting your Instructor with a request for a grade reconsideration, students are expected to be extremely professional and rational. Rude, aggressive and/or threatening behavior toward your Instructor absolutely will not be tolerated and will be reported to the appropriate University authority for further action. Requests for grade reconsideration must make a positive argument based on the facts of the assignment and feedback. Simply "wanting" or "feeling" a higher grade is due are not satisfactory arguments, and such requests will be rejected. Requests for grade reconsideration are not guaranteed to be granted. Additionally, all grade reconsiderations must be initiated within seven days of receipt of the grade. After that time, the grade is final. Ultimately, the grade you receive in this class is the grade you have earned. If you desire a higher grade, seek out ways of improving your academic progress by taking advantage of the numerous class and University resources available to you.

Assignment Submission Policy

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the Instructor, late individual assignments will automatically be given a 20 point deduction per day past the assignment due date. Late group work will automatically be given a F.

B. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard's Assignment Submission Portal. All assignments will also be screened by Turnitin. Any assignments with a Turnitin rate of 30% or higher will automatically be given an F.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

(15 weeks: 8/21/2023 – 12/1/2023; Final Exam Period: 12/6-13/2023)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20233/calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, September 8, 2023

Last day to drop without a mark of "W" and receive a refund: Friday, September 8, 2023

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Friday, September 8, 2023 [All major and minor courses must be taken for a letter grade.]

Last day to add/drop a Monday-only class without a mark of "W" and receive a refund or change to Audit: Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, October 6, 2023 [Mark of "W" will still appear on student record and STARS report and tuition charges still apply.]

*Please drop any course by the end of week three for session 001 (or the 20 percent mark of the session in which the course is offered) to avoid tuition charges.]

Last day to drop with a mark of "W": Friday, November 10, 2023

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

A weekly schedule of the topics, readings, and deliverables for the course.

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, news events, and/or guest speaker availability.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 1 Dates: 8/21-8/25	Welcome & Course Introduction	Syllabus	One-on-One Impromptu Debates (While impromptu debates are not graded, they are considered part of class participation)
Week 2 Dates: 8/28-9/1	What is Argument Propositions & Stock Issues	T: Chapters 1 & 2 Key Concepts: Arguments, Arguing, individual decision making, democratic decision making, values, ethics, narrative, and the narrative paradigm. TH: Chapters 5 & 11 Key Concepts: proposition, types of propositions, techniques for analyzing propositions, and stock issues,	

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
		affirmative, negative, burden of proof, prima facie case, presumption, cross-examination, topicality, ill, blame, cure, solvency, disadvantage, uniqueness, link and, impact, and flowing.	
Week 3 Dates: 9/4-9/8	The Grounds for Argument, Building Arguments, and Types of Arguments Refutation	T: Chapters 6, 7 & 8 Key Concepts: inductive arguments, deductive syllogism, the Toulmin Model, claims, warrants, grounds, and rebuttal , grounds, proofs, premises, examples, statistics, and all tests. TH: Chapter 9 Key Concepts: refutation process, evaluating reasoning, formulating a response, preparation for refutation, and cross examination.	[Labor Day: Monday, September 4] One v One Debates Workshop
Week 4 Dates: 9/11-9/15			One v One Debates *All debate briefs, regardless of the day you are assigned to debate, are due to the Instructor on this day at the beginning of class
Week 5 Dates: 9/18-9/22			One v One Debates Review for Exam 1
Week 6 Dates: 9/25-9/29	Audience and the Art of Argument	TH: Chapters 3 & 4 Key Concepts: audience, objective facts, objective truths,	Exam 1 on Tuesday, September 26 Group Practice Debate Workshop

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
		presence, universal audience, abstraction, and epistemic function of metaphor.	
Week 7 Dates: 10/2-10/6	T: Topicality and Answering Topicality on the Affirmative TH: Disadvantages and Answering Disadvantages	Class Activity on Topicality Class Activity on Disadvantages and Answering Disadvantages	Group Practice Debate Workshop By 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 5, each AFFIRMATIVE GROUP needs to post a PLAN for enacting its resolution to the appropriate Blackboard Discussion entitled "Affirmative Plan for implementing the Resolution (one for entire debate group)." Once posted, this PLAN cannot be changed, except in consultation with both the professor and the opposing team. The Affirmative team may unilaterally change the stock issues CASE it uses to support the posted plan right up until the final debate, however. So, Affirmatives, do NOT post your case outline of stock issues claims, just the specific provisions of the plan or "bill" by which you will implement the resolution.
Week 8 Dates: 10/9-10/13	Argumentation in Politics: Campaigns and Debates	T: Chapter 13 Key Concepts: political myths, image, character, and historical narratives.	[Fall Recess: Thursday, October 12 and Friday, October 13] Group Practice Debate Workshop
Week 9 Dates: 10/16-10/20			Practice Group Debate 1 on Tuesday, October 17 *All groups are to submit their final debate materials to the Instructor on this day at the beginning of class Practice Group Debate 2 on Thursday, October 19
Week 10 Dates: 10/23-10/27	Argumentation and the Law	TH: Chapter 14 Key Concepts: precedent, burden of proof, reasonable doubt, discovery, and cross- examination.	Practice Group Debate 3 on Tuesday, October 24 Issue Analysis Paper Workshop on Thursday, October 26

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
Week 11 Dates: 10/30-11/3	Argumentation in Interpersonal Relationships Argumentation in Business and Organizations	T: Chapter 16 Key Concepts: argument style, adjacency pairs, self-esteem, and empathetic listening. TH: Chapter 15 Key Concepts: organizational culture, power, coalitions, and compromise.	Issue Analysis Paper Due Thursday, November 2 By 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 2, each AFFIRMATIVE GROUP needs to post a PLAN for enacting its resolution to the appropriate Blackboard Discussion entitled "Affirmative Plan for implementing the Resolution (one for entire debate group)." Once posted, this PLAN cannot be changed, except in consultation with both the professor and the opposing team. The Affirmative team may unilaterally change the stock issues CASE it uses to support the posted plan right up until the final debate, however. So, Affirmatives, do NOT post your case outline of stock issues claims, just the specific provisions of the plan or "bill" by which you will implement the resolution.
Week 12 Dates: 11/6-11/10	Visual Arguments	T: Chapter 10 Key Concepts: dominant reading, oppositional reading, and negotiated reading.	[Veterans Day : Friday, November 10] Final Group Debate Workshop
Week 13 Dates: 11/13-11/17			Final Group Debate Workshop Final Group Debate 1 on Tuesday, November 14 *All groups are to submit their final debate materials to the Instructor on this day at the beginning of class
Week 14 Dates: 11/20-11/24			[Thanksgiving Break : Wednesday, November 22 – Sunday, November 26] Final Group Debate 2 on Tuesday, November 21
Week 15 Dates: 11/27-12/1	TH: Final Exam/Exam 2 Review		Final Group Debate 3 on Tuesday, November 28 Judge's Ballot Due on Thursday, November 30

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/Due Dates
STUDY DAYS Dates: 12/2-12/5		Note: No final examinations may be scheduled on Study Days.	
FINAL EXAM PERIOD Dates: 12/6-12/13		Note: All classes must have a scheduled exam or equivalent summative experience (paper/project) due on the scheduled date of the final exam.	Final Exam/Exam 2 on Tuesday, December 12 at 8:00am-10:00am PST

Policies and Procedures

Additional Policies

Zoom etiquette for Office Hours

Although you are not obligated to turn your camera on, we highly recommend it. Please wear **appropriate clothing**. Please use **appropriate backgrounds**.

Communication

If you cannot attend office hours and would like to chat, please email me to arrange a meeting time. In your email correspondence, please send all your available dates and times for the week you request a meeting. In addition, please allow for replies to emails to be within 48 working hours.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#)

The School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication. There are no exceptions to the school's policy.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class is prohibited without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is also prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Student Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Academic Work Policy

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is part of our everyday reality. We may be finding it to answer the most basic of questions, such as "What is the weather today?" to help make our day a little bit easier and more accessible. While I understand the benefits of AI, it is essential to remember that AI is not flawless. AI has biases and limitations that must be reflected on critically. Such biases have material impacts on the lives of citizens. Therefore, it is vital to think about our use of AI ethically. While I do not discourage using AI for this course, I ask that you use it responsibly. AI cannot conduct research like this course will teach you. It cannot think critically about argumentation and social justice. AI is susceptible to inaccuracies and falsehoods. With this said, I encourage you to use AI to assist with citation generating and editing your work. Such tools as Scribbr, Citation Machine, MyBib, and Grammarly. If you choose to use AI in assisting with your assignments, please submit a form (which can be found on Blackboard) documenting your use.

Please ask me if you are unsure about what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Collaboration. In this class, you are expected to submit work that demonstrates your individual mastery of the course concepts.

Group work. Unless specifically designated as a 'group project,' all assignments are expected to be completed individually.

Computer programs. Plagiarism includes the submission of code written by, or otherwise obtained from someone else.

If found responsible for an academic violation, students may be assigned university outcomes, such as suspension or expulsion from the university, and grade penalties, such as an “F” grade on the assignment, exam, and/or in the course.

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. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086

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

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 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) 740-0411

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

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

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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call
Non-emergency assistance or information.

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

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) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu

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

Annenberg Student Success Fund

<https://annenbergscholarships.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-and-awards>

The Annenberg Student Success Fund is a donor-funded financial aid account available to USC Annenberg undergraduate and graduate students for non-tuition expenses related to extra- and co-curricular programs and opportunities.

Annenberg Student Emergency Aid Fund

<https://annenbergscholarships.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenbergscholarships-and-awards>

Awards are distributed to students experiencing unforeseen circumstances and emergencies impacting their ability to pay tuition or cover everyday living expenses. These awards are not intended to cover full-tuition expenses, but rather serve as bridge funding to guarantee students' continued enrollment at USC until other resources, such as scholarships or loans, become available. Students are encouraged to provide as much information in their application, as well as contact their academic advisor directly with questions about additional resources available to them.

About Your Instructor

Dr. Dhillon is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Communication. She was formerly the director of debate and forensics for USC's nationally recognized Trojan Debate Squad from 2017-2019. The Trojan Debate Squad includes intercollegiate competition, community debate programming and initiatives, and facilitating public and civic debates. In her spare time, she likes to make memories with her family, be outdoors, gardening, cooking, and baking.