



ARCH 554

Heritage Conservation Practicum Advanced Documentation: Communicating for the Built Environment

3 Units

Spring 2024—Wednesday—2:00-4:50pm

Location: MHC tables (Watt Hall 3rd Floor, SW corner); Blackboard
(blackboard.usc.edu)

Syllabus (Final, 3/17/24)

Instructor: Cindy Olnick

Office: Watt Hall 327

Office Hours: By request

Contact Info: olnick@usc.edu, (323) 363-2133, will respond within two business days unless notified otherwise

Course Description

Regardless of how you work with the built environment, you will need to express ideas clearly and communicate in different ways with different people to meet different goals. This course applies basic communications principles to heritage conservation, architecture, urban planning, and related fields.

We will explore the ever-changing landscape of tools and tactics (including AI), along with enduring truths about how humans perceive information. You will practice different types of writing and learn when and how to use jargon (if ever). You'll learn how to connect with different audiences, create and repurpose content, and use images effectively—all through a lens of equity and accessibility. You'll analyze how public narratives influence issues like housing. You might even conquer your fear of public speaking.

Through individual and group exercises, and a project based on your professional interests, this course will help you build or strengthen essential skills that will serve you well throughout your career.

Learning Objectives

1. Develop basic communications strategies for different audiences.
2. Write more clearly and concisely, with and without the use of AI.
3. Create compelling content and repurpose it for different goals and audiences.
4. Deliver presentations using clear language and visuals, within specified time frames.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

You do not need to purchase any reading materials. You will receive all required, optional, and supplementary materials in class or on Blackboard.

See the course schedule and bibliography below for specific preparation materials (readings, podcasts, videos). These materials are subject to change; any changes will be announced in class and on Blackboard.

Assignments

You will complete three projects, culminating in a basic communications campaign on a topic of your choice. Overall, you will:

1. Choose a campaign topic (e.g., mobilizing support for a threatened place; bidding on a project; creating design guidelines).
2. Use the projects noted below to build the campaign.
3. Present highlights from the campaign to the class (and perhaps visitors).
4. Revise project work based on feedback; combine it into a report with strategy, content, self-evaluation, and insights to inform future work.

Campaign Topic (Due January 31)

See #1 above.

Project 1: Campaign Plan (Due February 21)

Apply fundamental communications principles to create a basic plan with specific goals, audiences, strategies, and tactics.

Project 2: Campaign Content (Due April 10)

Based on your plan, develop key messages and content tailored to each audience and medium.

Project 3: Campaign Presentation (Due April 24)

Deliver a brief presentation summarizing the campaign: what you did, what you learned, and other insights that can inform your future work.

Final Project: Campaign Report (Due May 1 at 2 pm)

On the day and time of the final exam, submit a report with the content from all three projects, revised based on feedback from the instructor and classmates.

Written Responses to Prep Materials

For ten weeks, you will also write a brief response to the assigned prep material of your choice (reading, podcast, video, etc.). Choose just one material for your response (or two, if they're closely aligned). Write up to 150 words, without the use of AI, in response to one or two (not all) of these questions:

- What stood out?
- What (if anything) do you disagree with?
- How does the topic apply to your field?
- What issue(s) or question(s) would you like to discuss in class?

Responses are due by **9 am** on class day to help inform discussion. Please note anything in a response that you don't want mentioned in class.

Each written response is worth 1 point, with deductions as follows:

- 0.25 point if submitted 9am – 2pm Wed. (after deadline but before class)
- 0.5 point if submitted 6pm Wed – 9am Thurs.
- 0.75 point if submitted after 9am Thurs
- 1 point if never submitted
- 0.25 point if unclear (if I need clarification)
- 0.25 if just a summary without a point of view
- Starting Week 4: 0.25 if more than 150 words (not including prompts)

Time Commitment and Assignment Submission

You are expected to spend nine hours per week on this course: three hours in class and six hours on assignments.

Please submit assignments on Blackboard or in class (e.g., presentations). If you have any technical issues submitting to Blackboard, please email the assignment to me at olnick@usc.edu.

Submitting an assignment after the deadline will lower your grade; not submitting it at all will reduce your grade to 0 for the assignment.

Course Schedule

The schedule below is subject to change based on guest availability and class learning (e.g., more or less time needed for specific topics). The overall workload and time commitment will not change substantially.

Class will take place in person, at the table next to Watt Hall 327 unless otherwise noted. As the exception, if circumstances prevent in-person gathering, class will meet on Zoom.

Date	Topics/Activities	Prep Materials (Blackboard > Content)	Assignments Due
Week 1 1/10	Welcome: Introductions, syllabus review, class norms / expectations	None	None
Week 2 1/17	<p>The Big Picture: Common communications types / channels; defining goals and audiences</p> <p>Guest speaker: Frances Anderton, writer / broadcaster / speaker on L.A. design and architecture</p>	<p>Story: “Amaza Lee Meredith: Love and Home” (podcast)</p> <p>“Stop Raising Awareness Already”</p> <p>“The Only Question That Really Matters to Your Audience”</p> <p>NAPC guide 5-8, 21-25</p> <p>“Remembrance of Things Past”</p> <p>“To Build or Not to Build?”</p>	<p>9 am: Prep response 1</p> <p>Without the use of generative AI* (e.g., ChatGPT), write around 150 words about any assigned prep material. Answer one or more of these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What stood out? • What (if anything) do you disagree with? • How does the topic apply to your field? • What questions (if any) do you have? <p>*If you’re concerned about your English skills, please let me know.</p>

Date	Topics/Activities	Prep Materials	Assignments Due
Week 3 1/24	Anatomy of a Communications Plan	Story: "Building the Metropolis" (video) "Back-of-the-Envelope Communications Strategy" Cause Communications, pp. x-xi, 12-15 "A Quick Guide to Owned, Earned, and Paid Media"	9 am: Prep response 2 (See instructions above)
Week 4 1/31	Framing / Narratives	Story: "9 Stories of Inspiration ..." "Framing for Social Change" "Asset Framing" Frame[s] of Mind on affordable housing "Historic Preservation Board denies ..." "I Want a City, Not a Museum" "Princeton's Master Plan ..."	9 am: Prep response 3 2 pm: Campaign topic

Date	Topics/Activities	Prep Materials	Assignments Due
Week 5 2/7	Writing/Clarity	Story: "Surf, Sand, and Self-Determination" (podcast) k. Whithers prep "Actively Passive" (podcast) "Black History Month ..." "Problems of Language ..." "Passive Voice ..." "Active vs. Passive Voice" Slave Codes/Black Codes "White Fragility"	2 pm: Questions for Kennedy Whithers (No topic-specific prep materials/responses)
Week 6 2/14	Language Guest speaker: k. Kennedy Whithers, AIA Location: WAH 102	Story: "Whittier Cafe ..." (video) "Conscious Communication ..." NAPC guide pp. 16-20 (PDF: 17-21) "Reserve," Telling Our Twisted Histories (podcast)	9 am: Prep response 4
Week 7 2/21	Design Guest speaker: Mel Isidor, Isidor Studio Location: WAH 102	None	2 pm: Project 1, Campaign Plan

Date	Topics/Activities	Prep Materials	Assignments Due
Week 8 2/28	Storytelling	Story: "Oscar Jacobsen, the Kiowa Six ..." "Stewarding Native American Stories" "People + Places" (video) "Storytelling for Impact" (podcast) "People, Presence, and Perspective" "Stop Telling Your Whole Story"	9 am: Prep response 5
Week 9 3/6	Creating and Repurposing Content	Story: "First Street North" (video) "Historic Cleveland Street" (video) Instagram feeds "11 Easy Ways to Repurpose Your Content" "Interviewing an AI Chatbot about Architecture & Historic Preservation"	9 am: Prep response 6
Spring Recess 3/11 – 15			

Date	Topics/Activities	Prep Materials	Assignments Due
Week 10 3/20	Campaign Workshop	Cindy's comments on your campaign plan	9 am: Prep response 7
Week 11 3/27	Public Speaking	<p>Story: "Fast Food and Car Culture" (video)</p> <p>"TED's secret to great public speaking" (video)</p> <p>"How to Prepare a Great Presentation" (video)</p> <p>"13 Most Common Mistakes People Make When Giving a Speech"</p> <p>"Let's Talk Taboo & City Design" (video)</p> <p>Optional: "Architecture Presentation Tips" (video)</p>	9am: Prep response 8
Week 12 4/3	Community Engagement	<p>Stories: Equity-Based Preservation Plan Promos (3 videos)</p> <p>Equity-Based Preservation Plan website</p> <p>"Most Public Engagement Is Worse than Worthless"</p> <p>"Effective Community Engagement: A Case Study in San Francisco" (webinar)</p>	9 am: Prep response 9
Week 13 4/10	<p>Communications in Action</p> <p>Field trip: Hung Sa Dahn, with Katherine Jungmee Kim</p>	None	2 pm: Project 2, Campaign Content

Date	Topics/Activities	Prep Materials	Assignments Due
Week 14 4/17	Grab Bag/Workshop (anything we need to cover in more depth, or final campaign workshopping)	<i>L.A. Landmarks: Lost and Almost Lost</i>	9 am: Prep response 10
Week 15 4/24	Project 3: Campaign Presentations Course evaluations	None	2 pm: Project 3, Campaign Presentation
Study Days 4/27 – 30			
FINAL 5/1	Campaign Report	None	2 pm: Campaign Report

Participation

Active participation is essential to the success of this course and accounts for fifteen percent of the course grade. Students’ knowledge, perspectives, and experiences will shape class discussion and enhance learning by making coursework directly relevant.

Participation includes, but is not limited to:

- Completion of in-class exercises
- Active listening
- Substantive questions, comments, responses to others

Since full engagement requires full attention, please use devices (phones, laptops, tablets) only for work in this class or in an emergency.

To encourage participation, we will create a safe, supportive, and respectful environment (see “Classroom Norms,” below). This includes making course work accessible to all students (see “University Policy on Student Disability Accommodations,” below).

Attendance

In general, you are expected to attend every class in person, arrive in class by the start time, and stay for the entire class. As in the professional world, you are expected to build in enough travel time to account for transportation and other delays. Life happens, of

course, and I will make every effort to accommodate your needs and circumstances without compromising learning.

Arriving to class on time shows respect and prevents disruption. Arriving after class starts counts as lateness. **Arriving more than ten minutes after class starts may count as an unexcused absence.** Because participation is so important to the course, repeated lateness and/or unexcused absence will affect your grade.

Excused absences include (but are not limited to):

- Personal illness
- Family emergency
- Religious observance, with advance notice to the instructor
- Relevant academic event (e.g., conference), with advance notice to the instructor

If you will be late or miss class altogether, please contact me as soon as you know (olnick@usc.edu, 323-363-2133), or I might count your absence as unexcused.

Unexcused absences include (but are not limited to):

- Vacations
- Appointments, unless for emergency medical care
- Academic work on other courses or subjects

You are responsible for completing all of your coursework, even if you miss class. If you have any question about whether a potential absence would count as unexcused, please contact me for clarification.

University Policy on Student Disability Accommodations

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all 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.

Classroom Norms

To create a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment, everyone in the class (instructor, students, guest speakers, visitors) is expected to:

- Respect different perspectives, backgrounds, experiences, interests, and values.
- Work toward shared understanding by listening actively and building on one another's comments.
- Challenge ideas, not people.
- Keep the tone and language respectful and productive.
- Encourage and support participation by everyone.
- Foster open and honest dialogue.
- Communicate with care, empathy, and humility.
- Acknowledge and take responsibility for mistakes, including the expression of implicit (or explicit) biases.
- Pay attention and avoid distractions.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

You need access to word processing software (e.g., Google Docs, Microsoft Word), basic graphics software (e.g., Canva, Adobe Photoshop), common social media apps (e.g., Instagram), and a generative AI tool (e.g., ChatGPT). If you need to acquire software or create accounts, you can use whichever versions are widely available at no cost. We will have in-class exercises that benefit from the use of personal laptops/tablets but can be conducted without them if needed.

For access to hardware and software, please see the [USC Software Website](#) and the USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program. A [Student Toolkit](#) has information about all commonly used apps (e.g., Blackboard, Zoom, Turnitin, Office 365) and other resources for technology access, security, and support.

Use of AI Generators: Permitted on Specific Assignments

In this course, I encourage you to use artificial intelligence (AI)-powered programs to help you with assignments that indicate the permitted use of AI. You should also be aware that AI content-generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses. To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Please review the instructions in each assignment for more details on how and when to use AI generators for your submissions.

Grading

Type: Letter

You can expect grading and feedback within three weeks of submission (and sooner if needed, based on course schedule requirements).

Specific factors in grading include:

- Is it clear that you understood the assignment?
- Did you complete all the assigned work as specified?
- Does your work apply the relevant skills and concepts from the course?
- Does your work reflect critical thinking?

Please let me know if you have any questions about grading criteria.

Grading Breakdown and Scale

Assessment Tool/Assignment	Points	% of Grade
In-class exercises/participation	15	15
Written responses to prep materials (10)	10	10
Project 1: Campaign Plan	15	15
Project 2: Campaign Content	15	15
Project 3: Campaign Presentation	15	15
Final Report	30	30
TOTAL	100	100

Letter grade	Corresponding numerical point range
A	93-100
A-	90-92
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

Academic Conduct

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](#).

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. Recording a university class 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. 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).

Support Services

[Emergency Information](#) UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7

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

Non-emergency assistance or information.

[TrojanSupport](#)

Peer support for students, by students; [this chart](#) summarizes on-campus, academic, and other resources.

[Crisis Text Line](#): Text “TROJAN” to 741741 – 24/7, also on WhatsApp

National 24/7 support for anyone in crisis; services can be used anonymously. CTL is a recognized support partner of [USC Student Health](#) but is not a psychotherapy service. No individual patient data is collected or shared through this line.

[Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): Call 988 or (800) 273-8255 – 24/7

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Through [USC Counseling and Mental Health Services](#).

[Trojans Care 4 Trojans](#)

USC Trojans Care for Trojans (TC4T), in the Office of Campus Wellbeing and Crisis Intervention, empowers USC students, faculty and staff to take action when they are concerned about a fellow Trojan challenged with personal difficulties. This private and anonymous request form provides an opportunity for Trojans to help a member of our Trojan Family.

[USC Counseling and Mental Health Services](#) (213) 740-9355 (WELL), 24/7

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

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services](#) (213) 740-9355 (WELL), 24/7

Or send a secure message through [MySHR](#)

Free and confidential advocate services, including arranging transportation to a specialized SART center for medical care and forensic exam. Confidential advocates are here for you, for any matter you wish to discuss related to intimate partner violence, survivorship, stalking, and other forms of intimate harm.

[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) 740-2500 or (800) 348-7454

USC Report & Response offers a range of resources and support for reporting concerns, including incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions.

[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. See the site for a schedule of virtual drop-ins. If you need immediate support, contact the front desk at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu or (if you're registered) email your OSAS Specialist.

[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.

[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.

Bibliography

Stories

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