

COMM 339: Communication Technology and Culture (4.0 Units)

Spring 2024 – Tue/Thu 12:30-1:50pm

Section 20540R

Location: ANN 210

Instructor: Dr. Morten Bay

Contact Info:

E-mail: mortench@usc.edu

Office Hours:

By appointment between 10am-12pm and 12.45-1.45pm on Wednesdays. To make an appointment, book a time here:

<https://calendar.app.google/LgYUE6N4bc682jRL9h>

Location: Zoom - <https://usc.zoom.us/my/mortenbay>

Course Description

From the catalog: This course examines philosophies and popular representations of technology from the origins of Western culture to the present and identifies the complex attitudes toward technology.

COMM 339: Communication technology and Culture takes the description from the course catalog quite literally. We will explore communication technologies, primarily viewed as *media* technologies, from a variety of philosophical and theoretical approaches. As such, the course is divided into five sections, each of them a discipline in philosophy: **Metaphysics, Ontology, Epistemology, Phenomenology** and **Ethics**. This is mostly to give the course some structure – this is not a philosophy class! Rather, the course is an intellectual deep dive into the tensions between humans and communication technologies that have helped define Western culture over the last two centuries. We will ask and discuss questions such as:

- “What *is* communication/media technology, even?” (Metaphysics)
- “How does communication/media technology exist in our world?” (Ontology),
- “What do computing-based media technologies actually know?” (Epistemology)
- How do media technologies change how I experience the world? (Phenomenology)
- “How do we make and use communication/media technology in a good way?” (Ethics)

Along the way, we will explore how communication/media technologies touch so many aspects of our lives and our culture, from the environment and the economy to politics and social justice.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe how media technologies represent humans, things, and concepts and how this shapes culture and reality perceptions

- Identify the sociocultural, environmental and political-economic implications of communication/media technologies
- Recognize similar challenges from emerging and future communication/media technologies
- Break down and recontextualize industry practices and promotional narratives about technologies to evaluate their true impact
- Evaluate their own relationship to communication/media technologies and potentially change it
- Recontextualize established communication/media technology perceptions to enhance understanding
- Critically analyze these conditions through discussion and produce strategies for improving them

Course Notes

The weekly class meetings are structured such that Tuesdays are “lecture days” and Thursdays are “discussion days”. This means that you should prepare to do all the weekly readings before Tuesday’s class, so that you have a chance to understand what the lecture is about and ask questions about the readings. On Thursdays, we will discuss the reading AND Tuesday’s lecture. Before the Thursday classes (with a few exceptions), all students will complete a Qualtrics survey about the readings and the Tuesday lecture, and the responses from these surveys will form the basis for the class discussion (see below).

PLEASE ASK COURSEWORK-RELATED QUESTIONS IN CLASS RATHER THAN WAIT TO TALK TO ME AFTER. OTHER STUDENTS MAY WANT TO KNOW THE SAME THING. If you feel uncomfortable about asking in front of the class, please send the question to me via email.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

There is no textbook in this course. All readings and other instructional material that must be read, watched, or listened to will be available on Blackboard.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Weekly Survey Assignment (20%)

Beginning in week 2, the Thursday classes will be dedicated to discussions of the week’s readings and the lecture from Tuesday’s class. To help get these discussions going, everyone in the class must complete a survey (link can be found in the same folder/module as the readings). The surveys consist of a few questions that must be answered with short answers (2-3 sentences). The responses from all students will be accumulated to form the basis of Thursday’s discussion, for example in the shape of a word cloud.

Note that the responses will not be graded in themselves, the weekly assignments will be graded as pass/fail. In other words, if all the surveys are completed throughout the semester, the student receives full points for the weekly assignments. **HOWEVER**, the participation grade below **WILL** depend on your engagement in the discussions that emerge from these weekly response surveys.

Midterm exam – March 7 (20%)

Final exam - May 8 (20%)

This class has two exams, a midterm and a final. These consist of online tests that you can take from anywhere that has a working Internet connection. You **must** take this on a laptop, desktop or hybrid-tablet computer (Surface, iPad Pro, etc.) Smartphones and some tablets have been shown to produce problems, so do not attempt to take the test on those. Please note that **you are responsible for ensuring that your Internet connection and the computer you use for the exams are working.**

You will be able to take the exams between 7am and 11:59pm on the day of the exam, but you must complete the exam once you start. Both exams will consist of a number of multiple-choice/multiple-answer questions and a small number of short essay questions which must be completed within a given timeframe.

The exam is open-book, open-note, open-Google, open-ChatGPT, etc. You may use any source you like, but you may NOT use a fellow student or their work. Be advised that the test system provide analytics data that reveals if you have been using another student's answers or are taking the exam while in correspondence with another student. **If it is discovered that you have broken this rule, your score for the exam will immediately be reduced to zero, and you will fail the class.**

A week before each of the exams, there will be a review of the exam in class. I will briefly go over all the main points that have been discussed in class, and if you take effective notes on that day, you will have a good study guide for the exam.

Class Participation (15%)

Attendance is mandatory and your participation grade thus depends on what you contribute to the class discussion. It is not enough just to show up. On Tuesdays, you will be **expected to come to class prepared, to have read the assigned readings, and to bring any questions you might have about the text.** On Thursdays, if you want to ensure you receive a high participation grade, **you should volunteer your thoughts, ideas, and responses verbally in class each week.** This demonstrates both your engagement and your preparation (It also makes class more interesting for everyone!). We will be using a messaging client in the classroom as well to accommodate anyone who is uncomfortable speaking in class.

Final Paper (25%) due April 25

A final paper is also required. This paper must be minimum 4, maximum 7 pages long, excluding references. As with the rest of the class submissions, APA style formatting is required (this means double-spacing!)

In your paper, you will expand your thoughts about a weekly topic (for example from the weekly survey) to a full essay. A prompt with thorough guidelines and guide questions will be provided in week 12. Overall, the paper should discuss your chosen topic by viewing it from several angles and presenting the opposing perspectives involved. You must connect the discussion closely to the reading material from the class. **Once you have exhausted the class materials, you may use sources not found in this syllabus.**

You may include what you wrote in your survey response, but it must be integrated into your full-length essay in a seamless manner.

Note: ALL writing assignments in this class must follow APA formatting guidelines.

Assignment Submission Policy

All submissions are due at 11:59pm on the due date (unless otherwise stated.) The final paper must be submitted through Blackboard/TurnItIn in .DOC or .PDF format.

Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Weekly Survey Assignments	100	20
Midterm Exam (Mar 7)	100	20
Class Participation	100	15
Final Paper (due April 25)	100	25
Final exam (May 8)	100	20
TOTAL	500	100%

Course Grading Scale

Letter grade and corresponding numerical point range		
94% to 100%: A	80% to 83%: B-	67% to 69%: D+
90% to 93%: A- (A minus)	77% to 79%: C+	64% to 66%: D
87% to 89%: B+	74% to 76%: C	60% to 63%: D-
84% to 86%: B	70% to 73%: C- (C minus)	0% to 59%: F

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.

Letter Grade	Description
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 Timeline

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. If you think a score or a grade is missing or inaccurate, you are responsible for notifying the Instructor via email **within one (1) week** of a score posting. The email must include a compelling reason/argument for why you believe your score or grade is inaccurate. Do NOT sign up for office hours to discuss your grade before having completed this step. After reviewing your email, any further action is at the discretion of the instructor. Moreover, you only have this period of time to contest a score on an assignment/exam. If you fail to inquire/notify us of any discrepancy, missing score, or contest a score within one week of the date the score is posted, no further changes will be made.

Course Policies and Procedures

Modality

This is an in-person class. However, the course has been designed to transition to fully online, should the need arise due to local, state, or federal guidelines. The instructor may also change the modality of singular class sessions to online, but only as an absolute exception in cases of illness or other instances where the only alternative is the cancellation of the session. In the event that the delivery method is altered, please be assured that the learning goals and outcomes of the course will not change; however, some aspects of the course will change in terms of the mode of delivery and participation. Please see recording notice below.

Slide decks and other materials

Every attempt will be made to post the instructor's slide decks and other materials before class, but at the latest, these will be made available the day after the session.

A respectful learning environment

This class consists of students with diverse identities from a very wide range of backgrounds and cultures. Intellectual freedom is a priority in class discussions, but **any form of sexism, racism, xenophobia, homophobia, ableism or other forms of discriminatory behavior on the basis of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability or class will not be tolerated. Incidents will be reported to the university immediately.**

Should you be triggered, offended or hurt by anything said in the classroom or require any form of trigger warnings, **speak up**. If you are not comfortable speaking up in class, contact the instructor privately to remedy the situation. Know that you are almost certainly not alone in feeling the way you do.

The above **naturally also applies to things said by your instructor**, who is a human being, always learning, and can make mistakes. Do not be afraid to call your instructor out in class sessions on these grounds. If done in a respectful manner, this will **not diminish** your standing in class, but **will improve it**.

Please see below for instructions on how to contact the Office of Equity and Diversity, the Title IX Office, The Office of Disability Services and Programs and how to report incidents of harassment and/or bias.

Pronouns and names

You have an absolute right to demand that your chosen pronouns are respected. Since it is still not standard to list preferred pronouns on university rosters, please enable your instructor to respect any specific pronoun choices by submitting this information via email before classes start or as early as possible after that. Your instructor's pronouns are He/him/his.

If your preferred name does not match the name in the university's registration system, please inform your instructor in a similar manner.

Faith/Belief-based accommodations

Please inform your instructor as early as possible if the suggested schedule in this syllabus conflicts with your faith or belief system so accommodations can be made.

Honoring Native Lands

By participating in this course, you implicitly accept the land acknowledgment below. If you are not comfortable with this for any reason, please notify your instructor as quickly as possible.

This course acknowledges the Gabrielino-Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (the Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands), and pays respect to the Honuukvetam (Ancestors), 'Ahihirom (Elders) and 'Eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging. Along with the Tongva, we also recognize the Chumash, Tataviam, Serrano, Cahuilla, Juaneno, and Luiseno People, for the land that USC also occupies around Southern California. The course is taught in respectful consideration of the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that preceded its establishment as an opportunity for students.

Communication Policy

Feel free to email me anytime with any concerns or questions. Please allow for 24 hours response time on weekdays, 48 hours on weekends. Due to ongoing research work, I am more inundated with emails than usual. If you have NOT heard back from me within 48 hours of sending your email, it may have been caught by an overzealous spam filter or drowned in a sudden wave of unrelated email, and you should follow up with me. This is helpful to me and will not be seen as an annoyance. Also, feel free to use any DM mechanism on the social media accounts mentioned above, however I make no guarantees for response time on those.

A Note on Paying Attention and In-Class Use of Electronics

It is in your own self-interest that you pay attention in class. It is both self-evident and supported by research that listening to the instructional lecture and taking notes will give you a better recall of the material and will let you internalize it properly, leading to success in the class, including a good

grade. Experience from this particular class shows that those who do not pay attention and do the readings receive poor grades. It is that simple.

Research also shows that it is impossible for anyone to pay attention to one thing for 75 minutes straight. The occasional mental break is permitted, but try to return to attention as soon as you can. Relatedly, the use of laptops in the classroom is allowed, even if it means the instructor's inability to check if a student is on social media or doing work unrelated to the class. **However, please note that the in-class use of smartphones (unless instructed to do so) is prohibited. The use of smartphones in class will result in a lower participation grade!** This also applies to the use of smartwatches for any other purpose than timekeeping.

A Note on the Use of Generative AI in Deliverables and in the Classroom

Students are allowed to use generative AI apps and services (such as ChatGPT, Copilot, Claude, Google Bard, Bing Chat, DALL-E, Midjourney, etc.), as long as they are aware of the following:

- As a general rule, generative AI should be used to support your work, not to do it for you. You should not let an AI write your entire assignment, but the occasional sentence or short paragraph can be AI-generated. Any such exaggerated use of AI detected by the instructor will result in a low grade.
- It is recommended that you use Grammarly and similar AI-enabled services to improve your work, and using ChatGPT or AIs provided by Microsoft or Google in their word processors for inspiration and to help you write better is absolutely acceptable. Be advised, however, that if you ask an AI to rewrite your own words in a better way, it may show up in the instructor's AI detection system as if you have let the AI write the whole thing from scratch. Use this function at your own risk.
- Use of Generative AI to produce text for written assignments must be followed by strict fact-checking and editing by the student. YOU are responsible for the factuality and content of your work and if you include unfactual AI hallucinations, it will result in a poor grade. Similarly, ensure that any short paragraphs generated by AI do not refer to other paragraphs that don't exist, repeat something you have already written elsewhere, etc.
- Important: If you use an AI that requires elaborate prompts (e.g., ChatGPT and Google Bard rather than the assistive AI functions built into Microsoft Word, Google Docs, etc.) you must provide a log of the prompts as an appendix to your written assignments. Think of this as a necessity similar to a References list.
- AI-assisted information search in the classroom is permitted, but students are responsible for avoiding AI hallucination.

Use of generative AI to produce your verbal responses on-the-fly as part of your in-class participation is not permitted.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Important note to students: Be advised that this syllabus is subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, events, and/or guest speaker availability. Students should consult the University [Registration Calendar](#) for dates associated with add/drop deadlines, fees, and grading options.

Note on readings: The readings are mandatory. If a student does not reference the class readings at all when discussing a relevant topic in class or in a written assignment, this will be regarded as if

the student hasn't done the reading work, which will impact the student's course grade. In other words, if you want to succeed in this course: READ THE REQUIRED MATERIALS BEFORE CLASS!

WK		Topic	Reading/Activity
1	Tue Jan 9	Introductions	
	Thu Jan 11	<p style="text-align: center;">Metaphysics: What are communication technology and media? What is culture?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Couldry, N. (2020) Introduction. In <i>Media - Why it matters</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Watch: Stuart Hall (1997). <i>Representation and the Media</i> (46 mins).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Read: Hall, S. (1997) The Work of Representation (excerpt). In <i>Representation. Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices</i>. (Read the short version as a supplement to the video. The full chapter is also available if you get curious.)</p>	
2	Tue Jan 16 Thu Jan 18	<p style="text-align: center;">Metaphysics: How do media technologies shape our lives...if at all?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Slack, J.D. and Wise, J.M. (2014) Determinism. In <i>Culture+Technology</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hepp, A. (2020): <i>Deep Mediatization</i> p. 1-7</p>	
3	Tue Jan 23 Thu Jan 25	<p style="text-align: center;">Metaphysics: Media tech, the self and the social</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chayko, M. (2021) The Practice of identity. Development, expression, performance, form. In <i>The Routledge Handbook of Digital Media and Communication</i></p>	
4	Tue Jan 30 Thu Feb 1	<p style="text-align: center;">Ontology: The materiality of media</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Taffel, S. (2022). AirPods and the earth: Digital technologies, planned obsolescence and the Capitalocene. <i>EPE: Nature and Space</i>.</p>	
5	Tue Feb 6 Thu Feb 8	<p style="text-align: center;">Ontology: Neo-coloniality in today's tech</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thorat, D. (2019). Colonial Topographies of Internet Infrastructure. <i>South Asian Review</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jackson, L. M. (2017) <u>We need to talk about digital blackface in reaction GIFs</u>. <i>Teen Vogue</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Frankel, T.C. and Whoriskey, P. (2016) <u>Tossed aside in the 'white gold' rush</u>. <i>The Washington Post</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Attwood, J. (2023) <u>Why Chile's Lithium Plan Matters Globally</u>. <i>Bloomberg</i>.</p>	

6	Tue Feb 13 Thu Feb 15	<p style="text-align: center;">Ontology: Media materiality: Infrastructures</p> <p>Watch: Blum, A. (2012). <u>What is the Internet, Really?</u> <i>YouTube</i>.</p> <p>Watch: Map Men (2023). <u>Internet vs Ocean: the essential wires we never think about.</u> <i>YouTube</i>.</p> <p>Read: Philip, K. (2021) The Internet will be decolonized. In <i>Your Computer is on Fire</i>.</p>
7	Tue Feb 20 Thu Feb 22	<p style="text-align: center;">Epistemology: Technosocial imaginaries Silicon valley psychics - tech imaginaries and the politics and practices of prediction</p> <p>Hong, S. (2022) Predictions Without Futures. <i>History and Theory</i>.</p> <p>Jasanoff, S. And Nordmann, A. (2023) Technology in the Imagination of Society – A Conversation. In <i>Hermeneutics, History, and Technology: The Call of the Future</i></p> <p>Andreessen, M. (2023). <u>The Techno-Optimist Manifesto.</u> <i>A16z.com</i></p> <p>Kelly, J. (2023). I read Andreessen’s ‘techno-optimist manifesto’ so you don’t have to. <i>Financial Times</i>.</p>
8	Tue Feb 27	<p style="text-align: center;">Epistemology: The epistemic data gap – Internet and social media vs reality and authenticity</p> <p>Cunningham, S. and Craig, D. (2017). Being ‘really real’ on YouTube: authenticity, community and brand culture in social media entertainment. <i>Media International Australia</i>.</p> <p>Noble, S. (2018) <u>Google has a striking history of bias against black girls.</u> <i>Time</i>.</p>
	Thu Feb 29	Midterm Review
9	Tue Mar 5	<p style="text-align: center;">Epistemology: Algorithmic reality, AI bias and hallucinations</p> <p>Orr, W. and Crawford, K. (2023). The social construction of datasets: On the practices, processes and challenges of dataset creation for machine learning. <i>New Media and Society</i>.</p>
	Thu Mar 7	Midterm Exam
	Tue Mar 12 Thu Mar 14	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK

10	Tue Mar 19 Thu Mar 21	<p style="text-align: center;">Phenomenology: Constructing your world with digital media</p> <p>Couldry, N. and Hepp, A. (2020). Media and the Social Construction of Reality. <i>The Oxford Handbook of Digital Media Sociology</i>.</p>
11	Tue Mar 26 Thu Mar 28	<p style="text-align: center;">Phenomenology: Experiencing the world through news, representation and misinformation</p> <p>Till, C. (2021) Propaganda through ‘reflexive control’ and the mediated construction of reality. <i>New Media and Society</i>.</p>
12	Tue Apr 2 Thu Apr 4	<p style="text-align: center;">Post-phenomenology Does media technology get in the way of understanding the world?</p> <p>Watch: SorrowisKnowledge (2022). Heidegger - Philosophising with a Hammer. <i>YouTube</i>.</p> <p>Then & Now (2018). <u>The Question concerning Technology (And Social Media)</u>. <i>YouTube</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">THEN read:</p> <p>Rosenberger, R. and Verbeek, P. (2015). A field guide to postphenomenology. In <i>Postphenomenological investigations – Essays on human-technology relations</i>.</p>
13	Tue Apr 9 Thu Apr 11	<p style="text-align: center;">Ethics: Utilitarian, Deontological and Virtue-based approaches to tech</p> <p>Ess, C. (2021). Chapter 6. <i>Digital Media Ethics</i>.</p>
14	Tue Apr 16 Thu Apr 18	<p style="text-align: center;">Ethics: Gender and race in gaming</p> <p>Nakamura, L. (2019). Gender and Race in the Gaming World. In: <i>Society and the Internet: How Networks of Information and Communication are Changing Our Lives</i>.</p>
15	Tue Apr 23	<p style="text-align: center;">Ethics: AI and automated media</p> <p>Pasquale, F. (2020) The Alien intelligence of automated media. In <i>The New Laws of Robotics</i></p>
	Thu Apr 25	<p style="text-align: center;">Final paper due. Final exam review and wrap-up</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FINAL EXAM: MAY 8</p>

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the

entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, 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. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity 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.

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://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-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://annenberg.usc.edu/current-students/resources/annenberg-scholarships-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.

Add/Drop Dates for Session 001

(15 weeks: 1/8/2024 – 4/26/2024; Final Exam Period: 5/1-8/2024)

Link: <https://classes.usc.edu/term-20241/calendar/>

Last day to add: Friday, January 26, 2024

Last day to drop a class without a mark of "W," except for Monday-only classes, and receive a refund: Friday, January 26, 2024

Last day to change enrollment option to Pass/No Pass or Audit: Friday, January 26, 2024 [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, January 30, 2024

Last day to withdraw without a "W" on transcript or change pass/no pass to letter grade: Friday, February 23, 2024 [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, April 5, 2024