COMM 366: Designing Media for Social Change
Spring 2024, T/Th 2-3:20
Section 20567, 4 units

Professor: Alison Trope, Ph.D. (she/her)
ANN 310A or via Zoom
Office hours: by appointment; contact: trope@usc.edu

The University of Southern California's (USC) University Park campus is located on the traditional land of the Tongva People. You can visit https://mila.ss.ucla.edu/ to learn about the history of Indigenous peoples in Los Angeles and read stories shared by the Tongva community. To learn about the Indigenous land on which your learning location resides, you can visit https://native-land.ca.

Course Description:

This course examines media and social change at the intersection of theory and practice. We will investigate and analyze the way social change is catalyzed and communicated through various media platforms. We will gain an historical and multi-media perspective on a variety of design and communication strategies tied to a range of social and cultural issues (including the environment, the arts, medicine and science, education, identity politics, social justice, etc.). We will also look at and hear from organizations and their leaders to gain a real-world perspective on these issues. Throughout the semester, we will learn the basics for designing a communication campaign. We will discuss social marketing, audience research, modes of storytelling and campaign design, and the significance of outreach and evaluation. Over the course of the semester, we will work to research and create strategic communications for topics and areas that tie into current political and social discourse and **your interests** (e.g., environment/climate crisis, immigration rights, policing, criminal justice reform, workers' rights, gender equity, health reform, gentrification, etc.). The syllabus is a "living document." While the course will tackle **three interconnected frames,** we will add/change readings based on your collectively chosen research topic(s).

THEORIZING SOCIAL CHANGE & STRATEGY: We will explore how social change is defined and has been theorized in a number of arenas—from government to nonprofits, NGOs, and advocacy organizations to business/industry and their use of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to individuals, grassroots communities and activism. We will establish a foundational understanding of the various institutional structures, models (issue specific change, individual change, systems change), and policies that create barriers and/or avenues toward social change.

MEDIA AS SOCIAL CHANGE TOOL: We will explore various media institutions, practices and sites of social change, looking at case studies to understand how narratives get constructed for particular target audiences. We will consider the value of different genres of media and visual culture used for social change (from poster art to documentary to street art to transmedia and social media) storytelling, and counter-narratives specifically in the context of local and disenfranchised communities.

PRACTICE & IMPACT: We will consider how theoretical, storytelling and visual skills can apply in practice through social change and campaign building. Students will apply research in order to develop, design and pitch a campaign that is engaging, relevant, and has potential impact in relation to a specific social problem.

Student Learning Outcomes

Every student comes into our class with different abilities, passions, priorities, lived experiences, and ways of learning. I invite you to begin where you are—to listen and learn from course content and discussions, to critically contemplate, question, and critique. To that end, the learning outcomes below are fluid, and work in collaboration and dialogue with my teaching, course content, and class discussions. What students take away will depend on where they start, how they engage, and how they tap into their capacities to learn and grow. It is my hope that this course provides an opportunity for you to:

- **Analyze** social change theories and their impact on social, cultural, political problems
- **Evaluate** media's role and impact as a tool for social change (specifically looking at assigned case studies).
- **Assess** the role and value of different media in shaping and instigating social change
- **Synthesize and integrate** media, communication, and social change theory in the context of a specific social/political/cultural problem
- **Research, develop and design** the building blocks of a social change campaign/project that will address and potentially impact a specific systemic social/political problem

Course Requirements, Attendance and Participation:

Students are required to do all course reading, attend all classes, complete all assignments, and participate actively in this course. Please note: simply showing up to class does <u>not</u> guarantee a perfect attendance/participation score. Participation can encompass many things, including speaking in class, emails to your professor, sharing media or other examples relevant to class with your professor, office hours, attentive listening during class, engaged collaborative work with classmates. Participation grades will start at 85—the threshold—and then move up or down based on the factors above.

<u>Attendance is IMPORTANT:</u> you will be **regularly working and collaborating DURING CLASS TIME**. Missing class time may impact your progress. However, if circumstances prevent you from attending class or actively participating, please inform me by email ASAP. Regardless of the reason for missing, you should always keep me informed. If you need to miss class for a religious or university-sanctioned activity, please let me know at the beginning of the term. You are responsible for accessing and staying abreast of course content in cases where you miss class, and for communicating with me in a timely manner if you have any obstacles impacting your work and successful completion of the course. I will make every attempt to listen and understand what is going on in your academic and personal life that may be impacting your progress in this class; however, it is up to you to **be proactive in your communication**.

Our Classroom and Shared Learning Experience:

All students are encouraged to use the classroom as a safe (and brave) space in which to speak and voice their opinions. We all come to the classroom with different backgrounds and experiences—defined by race, ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, class, ideology, even personality. This diversity can be our greatest strength and an asset as we learn together. My expectation is that you respect not only me and any guests that may visit, but also your classmates/peers when they participate in discussion. We may not truly understand another person's perspective, but we can/should listen with acceptance and empathy. Every student should feel comfortable participating and being part of a productive, engaging dialogue. Given the course content, this class and the discussions we have may make you feel some discomfort. You may not always agree with me or your peers. This is normal, and part of the learning. If you ever feel that I or one of your classmates has misspoken or misrepresented something or you have an emotional response to the material or to something someone in class has said, please

reach out to me to discuss. You may also use this google form to anonymously address your concerns. Above all, please be flexible (and forgiving) with me, your peers and yourself as we navigate the topics and course content together.

Communication:

You may reach me by email (trope@usc.edu), and I will respond typically within 24 hours. If I don't respond, feel free to nudge me. I receive many emails and sometimes things do fall through the cracks. It's nothing personal. If you want to chat with me informally, you are welcome to catch me before or after class, or you may set up a time for a one-on-one appointment. For questions, concerns, or constructive criticism of class at any time during the semester, you may use this anonymous google form. We also will do course evaluations at the end of the term.

Classroom Technology:

I recommend that notetaking be done by hand to maintain attention and engagement during the course, and enhance your learning. To that end, **we will NOT have laptops during lectures**, though you may use them for small group work. During class, you should **avoid** multitasking on mobile phones or web surfing. This is especially true when we have guests! [To understand the reasons for this guidance, you may want to read "laptop "and "The Myth of Multitasking."] Being present and focused on our collective learning can help create a sense of community. Please remember that USC policy **prohibits sharing** of any course content outside of the learning environment. As a student, you are responsible for the appropriate use and handling of these recordings under existing SCampus policies regarding class notes. These rules will be strictly enforced, and violations will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction. If there are reasons you need to use your laptop, please let me know.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

Generative AI (such as ChatGPT, Bard, Claude and many others) is a tool which offers opportunities and raises concerns. As the technology rapidly evolves and as students of communication we need to be thoughtful and ethical consumers/users of the technology. For our class, there may be times when it is appropriate, even required, to use AI, such as for brainstorming topic ideas. But please keep in mind some important notes when using generative AI:

> 1. You must **give credit** to the specific AI used in your assignment. Check Blackboard and the specific assignment instructions for information about how to do that appropriately. Failing to cite AI use is an academic integrity violation and will be treated as such, with potentially serious consequences. There will also be instances where the use of AI tools are explicitly not allowed.

> 2. Generative AI often is incorrect and gives **misinformation.** You cannot rely on AI output; you must check for accuracy.

> 3. The **quality and nature of the prompts** shapes the quality of the output of generative AI. As these tools develop, our skills in "conversing" with them will need to change and grow too.

> 4. AI should never be a substitute for your own **thoughtful, critical contributions** to the subject matter. ***Expressing oneself through writing is an important part of learning, refining thought, and demonstrating understanding that cannot be ceded to AI tools.***

These are just a few of many considerations that are important for us to collectively ponder and consider. If you have questions or thoughts on any of these policies, please share them. Please see USC's Using Generative AI in Research for information on citations, limitations and warnings and ethical considerations.

Course Readings/Required Texts:

All readings will be posted on Blackboard as PDFs or weblinks. In addition to articles and chapters from books, we will regularly draw from *Beautiful Trouble: A Global Toolbox for Change Makers* (referenced as **BT** in schedule below). If you have trouble opening or reading any of the articles, let me know ASAP.

Course Grading

The final course grade will be based on the following distribution:

In class exercises / co-learning / co-researching	20%
Theory of Change Paper tied to a case study (1500-2000 words)	20%
Formative research assignment	20%
Vision statement/story + media draft	20%
Final project/media deliverable	20%

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A   outstanding, thoughtful and insightful work and analysis, showing an ability to
              think beyond the basic course material.
                        <A grade of A+ (97-100) *may* be given to *individual* assignments in *rare* instances
                        where expectations are exceeded.>
A-/B+   above average work, demonstrating effort and keen understanding of
              conceptual ideas and their relation to work in the community site
B/B-   average work, needs improvement on ideas and argument
C+/C   shows little effort, lacks clarity and/or argument
C- and below   fulfilling the bare minimum and showing little understanding of the
                        material

Every effort will be made to return assignments within two weeks from the due date (or date received).

Each assignment will be worth 100 points and will be converted to a percentage score depending upon the weight assigned to each. Your percentage scores on the assignments will be totaled and translated to a letter grade as per the scale shown below:

A+	= 97-100 (only possible on individual assignments, NOT final course grade)		
A	= 96-94	C	= 76-74
A-	= 93-90	C-	= 73-70
B+	= 89-87	D+	= 69-67
B	= 86-84	D	= 66-64
B-	= 83-80	D-	= 63-60
C+	= 79-77	F	= 59-00

If you have concerns regarding a grade on a given assignment, you must first wait 24 hours (cooling off period) before appealing it in writing, stating the reasons why you feel the grade is inaccurate. All concerns should be addressed within 10 days of receiving the graded assignment. After that, no appeals will be accepted for review and the grade will be considered final.

Course Schedule

As noted above, this syllabus and course schedule is a "living" document. Be advised that readings are subject to change - and probably will change - based on the progress of the class, events, and/or guest speaker availability. Students should consult the Registration Calendar for dates regarding add/drop deadlines, fees, grading options, etc.

A a class we will collectively choose 1 or 2 topics to focus on. These topics will be researched during weeks 4-6 to set you up to do your final project.

Topics/Key Questions In-Class Work/Guests	Readings	Deliverables/ Due Dates
Week 1 **Defining Change** *How do we understand how change happens? What is a theory of change? And how does it help? Can we visualize change?*	1/9 course introduction 1/11 Robert Hornick, "Why Can't We Sell Human Rights Like We Sell Soap?" Oxfam blog, "What Is a Theory of Change and How Do We Use It?" Wesley Morris, "The Reconciliation Must Be Televised" ***Beautiful Trouble (BT)*** *Cultural Hegemony; Anti-Oppression; Theory of Change* **EXPLORE** *the site structure: principles, theories, methodologies, tactics, etc.*	**Introductory survey due by 1/14**

Week 2 **Social Movements & Social Change—Thinking About the Power of the Collective** *How does change operate at an individual vs. collective level? How can (should) we situate our discussion of change in the context of broader social movements? Why is the collective frame valuable? Why is change an ongoing struggle?*	**1/16** Deana Rohlinger, Christian Vaccaro, "Media and Social Movements" Jen Schradie, "Bringing the Organization Back In: Social Media and Social Movements" LISTEN: "I Want to Report a Theft" (Resistance podcast) EXPLORE: Four Quadrants of Change *Beautiful Trouble (BT)*: The Commons; Consensus is a Means, Not an End; Challenge Patriarchy as You Organize OPTIONAL/SKIM: *Making Waves: A Guide to Cultural Strategy* (report) **1/18** Robin D.G. Kelley, "Black Study, Black Struggle" Ethan Zuckerman, "Effective Civics"	**Assign Theory of Change paper**
Week 3 **The Power of Systems Change** *How does change operate in different contexts: individual, organizational, systems change etc.? What are the strategic + structural elements of social change campaign planning?*	**1/23** David Peter Stroh, excerpt from *Systems Thinking for Social Change* (pp. 13-43) **1/25** Steve Duncombe and Steve Lambert, "A/Effect" Ella Saltmarshe, "Using Story to Change Systems" *BT* Power mapping; Pillars of Power; Points of Intervention; *SWOT*	

Week 4 **Preliminary Research** *Based on your topic choices, we will find articles to assign and report on this week.*	**1/30** TBD **2/2** TBD	
Week 5 **Framing the "Problem": Creating Emotional Resonance** *How do problems get articulated and framed? Who/what does the framing? Which ideas/ perspectives get amplified? How are emotional responses elicited? What are the pitfalls and ethical considerations in eliciting emotion or working to change behavior?*	**2/7** Charlotte Ryan & William Gamson, "The Art of Reframing Political Debates" D.M. McLeod & James Hertog, "Social Control, Social Change and the Mass Media's Role in the Regulation of Protest Groups" **2/9** Steve Duncombe and Steve Lambert, "Cognition" *BT*: Choose Tactics That Support Your Strategy; Choose Your Target Wisely;	**Theory of Change Paper Due by 2/9 11:59pm** **Formative Research assigned**
Week 6 **Deepening Research via Framing and Power Mapping** We will apply week 5 lessons to further the research on class topics	**2/14** TBD **2/16** TBD	
Week 7 **Visual Culture, Art & Social Change** Why are visuals so powerful as mechanisms for social change? What visual and design elements are effective and why?	**2/21** Steve Duncombe and Steve Lambert, "Culture" **2/23** T.V. Reed, "ACTing UP against AIDS: The (Very) Graphic Arts in a Moment of Crisis" Nicolas Lambert, "Liberation Graphics" from *A People's Art History of the United States* *BT*:	

	Think Narratively Balance Art and Message.	
Week 8 **Ethics of Representation** How is representation and positionality taken into account? How do we ethically handle the representation of the problem, the oppressed/victims, and the solution?	**2/27** Lilie Chouliaraki, "Distant Suffering in the Media" *BT Principles*: Lead with Sympathetic Characters **2/29** Jessica Hatrick and Olivia Gonzalez, "Watchmen, Copaganda, and Abolitionist Futurities in U.S. Television" Laurie Ouellette, Canceling COPS	**Formative Research Due by 2/29 11:59 pm** **Distribute Final Project Assignment (2 parts)**
Week 9 **Power of Narrative, Storytelling, and Character** What is the power of story and character in developing and executing a social change campaign? What makes a "good"/effective story?	**3/5** "Kiva and the Power of Story," Stanford Business Case Annie Neimand, "How to Tell Stories About Complex Issues" Annie Neimand, et al, "Why Intersectional Stories Are Key to Helping the Communities We Serve" **3/7** Brett Davidson, "What Makes Narrative Change So Hard?" Erica L. Rosenthal, et. al. "A Strategic Framework to Guide Investments in Narrative Change" (Lear Center)	
Spring Break (3/11-3/15)		

Week 10 **Media Channels & Target Audiences** How do you distribute your campaign and messaging? How do you identify and narrow your target audience? Which media channels are the best fit for your campaign? Why?	**3/19** Steve Duncombe, Steve Lambert, "Persuasion" REVIEW: *Disclosure* Curriculum Guide **3/21** Clemencia Rodriguez, "From Alternative to Citizens Media" Excerpt from *#Hashtag Activism: Networks of Race and Gender Justice* John Herrman, "Tik Tok is Shaping Politics, But How?" Fortesa Latifi, "TikTokers Who Use Their Platforms To Make Change Offline" *BT Principles*: Consider Your Audience; Play To the Audience That Isn't There.	
Week 11 **Publics, Public Space and Occupation as Resistance** How are public spaces used in the context of social change? What types of sites? What types of actions? Why is occupation of space an effective tactic?	**3/28** W.J.T. Mitchell, "The Violence of Public Art: *Do The Right Thing*" Erica Doss, "Contemporary Public Art Controversy: An Introduction **3/30** Nicolas Lambert, "The Battleground Over Public Memory" + "No Apologies: Asco, Performance Art, and the Chicano Civil Rights Movement" Jesikah Maria Ross, "Pop-Up Public: Participatory Design for Civic Storytelling" Penelope Fergison, "'Hazards' and Home: Mapping Pico Neighborhood, Circa 1940" *BT Tactics*: Occupation; Public Filibuster; Mass Street Action.	**Strategic Vision Assignment (Final Stage 1) due 3/30 by 11:59 pm**

Week 13 **Social Impact Entertainment** What is "social impact entertainment"? How do different facets of the entertainment industry work toward making social change? What types of entertainment products can have social impact?	**4/2** Arvind Singhal, Hua Wang, Everett Rogers, "The Rising Tide of Entertainment Education in Communication Campaigns" Rose Pacatte, Bonnie Abaunza, "Hollywood and Hope: Looking at Social Justice and Human Rights Through a Critical Media Literacy Lens" OPTIONAL LISTEN: Storytelling and Social Change (SSIR) **4/4** Fran Blumberg, Debby Almonte, Jared Anthony, Naoko Hashimoto, "Serious Games: What Are They? What Do They Do? Why Should We Play Them?" EXPLORE: Games For Change	
Week 13 **Networking + Partnerships** Why are partners important in developing a social change campaign? How do you choose the "right" partner? How can partners supplement and enhance your work?	**4/9** David Peter Stroh, "Building a Foundation for Change" **4/11** Samantha Wright & Annie Neimand, "The Secret to Better Storytelling for Social Change: Better Partnerships" Annie Neimand, Samantha Wright, Max Steinman & Ann Christiano, "How to Build Better Calls to Action" SKIM: Michael Allen, "Breakdown of *Contagious: Why Things Catch On* by Jonah Berger" SKIM: Partnerships: Frameworks for Working Together (esp. pp 4-12)	

| Week 14
Measuring Evaluation & Impact

What are the tools to evaluate the impact of a social change campaign? How can we measure social change? | **4/16**
Beth Kanter & Katie Delahaye Paine, Measuring the Networked Nonprofit

Klee Benally, "Accomplices Not Allies: Abolishing the Ally Industrial Complex"

4/18
Review: Media Impact Project (Norman Lear Center)

"From the Sofa to the Streets: Strategies to Ignite Social Change" (Media Impact Project)

SKIM ONE:
Measuring Impact from The Impact Field Guide

Fledgling Fund, "Impact paper abridged" | |
| **Week 15**
Final presentations

Study Days

Designated Exam Time
5/2, 2-4pm
ALL students must attend! | **4/23**
Final presentations

4/25
Final presentations

5/2, 2-4pm
Final presentations | **ALL FINAL PROJECTS DUE 4/22**

FINAL PRESENTATIONS will be by lottery 4/25, 4/27, 5/2, 2-4 pm (in lieu of final exam)

ALL students must be present for all presentation days. |

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).

AI Policy
see above

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
Annenberg Student Success Fund
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
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.

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.

TrojansAlert
TrojansAlert is an alert system that allows university officials to contact you during an emergency. It is your connection to real-time updates, instructions on where to go, what to do, or what not to do, who to contact and other important information. Visit the website to sign up.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis
In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a

combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university's site on [Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness](#).

[ITS Customer Support Center](#) *(CSC):* (213) 740-5555
The ITS Customer Support Center (CSC) provides support to the USC community for connecting to the USC Network and using supported applications. For help with network connectivity and software, contact CSC. Walk-in support is available in Leavey Library's Information Commons.

[Violence-Free Campus](#)
Visit the website to read more about prohibited behaviors, reporting responsibilities and where to report.

Student-Athlete Travel Excuse Letters
Prior to a university-sponsored away competition, Student-Athletes are responsible for providing their Instructor with a Competition Excuse Letter (provided by their academic counselor) for the classes missed while on the road (i.e., excused absence). It is the responsibility of the Student-Athlete to provide the letter prior to leaving on their trip and to make arrangements for a make-up of any missed assignments or exams. Please refer to the [SAAS site](#) where they detail travel and travel excuse letters.

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