

## COMM 412: Comm & Social Movements 4 Units

**Spring 2024 – Tues/Thurs – 3:30-4:50**

**Section:** 20628

**Location:** ANN 406

**Instructor: T Delfín, Ph.D.**

**Office:** TBD

**Office Hours:** In-person, Zoom, or phone. By appointment

**Contact Info:** [tdelfin@usc.edu](mailto:tdelfin@usc.edu); cell: 510.219.5554 (text first)

### Course Description

This course will explore the rhetoric of contemporary political social movements. We will consider movements such as Black Lives Matter, Women’s Marches, Immigration Reform, and Environmental Justice, among others. We will study the theories and that have informed these movements and the movements that inform theories. We will study the methodology that helps launch social movements, as well as those that teach us how to make sense of them. Throughout, we will delve into histories and case studies with the aim of engaging with the field in a meaningful and well-rounded manner. Participation is a major component of this course and students will be responsible for developing discussion questions to guide our seminar and presentations that help unpack theories and methods.

### Student Learning Outcomes

Throughout this semester, students will study a range of social movements to learn about the events themselves, but also to learn about how social movements are modeled, studied, compared, and written about. Class meetings will focus consistently on two primary areas: 1) case studies and 2) theories and methods. Students will learn how to ask excellent and constructive questions, which will be the basis of our seminar discussions. We will also work collaboratively to model theories and methods throughout the semester with the goal of developing fluidity in their use on the final project, a group case study. Much of our learning will be collaborative, so there is a high expectation that students should participate meaningfully and with mutual respect. By the end of the semester students should be able to analyze and present major elements of rhetoric related to social movements.

Registration is limited to students with junior or senior standing.

### Course Notes

The syllabus is subject to change. Any updates will be posted in “Announcements” on Blackboard. Many assignments will be “shared” on Google but “turned in” on Blackboard.

### Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

This course will meet in person on campus with few exceptions. The following links provide information that may be beneficial to you during the semester. [USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program](#), [Zoom information for students](#), [Blackboard help for students](#), [Software available to USC Campus](#).

### Laptop Policy

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.

## Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

- The Rhetoric of Social Movements (Nathan Crick)
- Social Movements: The Structure of Collective Mobilization (Paul Almeida)

Both books are available in the bookstore and electronically through the library  
Additional articles will be linked on Blackboard

## Optional Readings and Supplementary Materials

Additional articles will be linked on Blackboard

## Description and Assessment of Assignments

Detailed descriptions of all assignments can be found on Blackboard

## Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Frequency	Value	Due Date	Where/How to Submit
Blackboard Quizzes based on reading	Tues/Thurs	20%	by start of class	Blackboard (Bb)
5 Discussion Questions	Once	20%	By start of class	On Bb Assignments
Presentation of Theories/Methods from RSM	Once	20%	By presentation date	In-person and on Bb
Case Study Presentation	Once	20%	By presentation date	In-person and on Bb
Case Study Final Paper	Once	20%	finals week	On Bb

## Participation

This class will be collaborative and project oriented. Attendance and meaningful participation are expected.

## Course Grading Scale

Letter grades and corresponding point value ranges.

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

## Course Specific Policies

Contact me if you would like the opportunity to submit late work or resubmit work for a chance at a better grade.  
Phones should only be used in class if they contribute positively to the course experience.

We will explore the potential of AI together in this class. You are welcome to use AI to help you brainstorm, but final submissions of any work should be your own. Be especially careful with citing references provided by AI engines such as Chat GPT, which are known to “hallucinate” legitimate sounding citations that are often nonsensical.

Throughout the semester, we will grapple with many contentious issues while working to mindfully interrogate our own biases and standpoints to hold space for new, sometimes uncomfortable, but always interesting ideas. This is a seminar, so you will be expected to participate with an open mind. Be prepared to teach and learn from your peers as you tackle complicated concepts and ideologies together.

## Attendance

Students are allowed 2 unexcused absences. Each additional absence may result in a grade level reduction (from A to A-, B+ to B, and so on).

## Classroom Norms

- The primary commitment is to learn from each other. We acknowledge differences among us in disciplines, experiences, interests, and values.
- Build on one another's comments; work toward shared understanding.
- If you wish to challenge something that has been said, challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.
- Keep the tone and words respectful and productive.
- Allow others a chance to participate; empower yourself to participate.
- Maintain one another's confidence. We want to create an atmosphere for open, honest exchange.
- Do not write or say anything that would be compromising if it were made public.

## Course Evaluations

Students will receive midterm evaluations. There will be dedicated in-class time at the end of the semester to allow students to complete faculty evaluations.

## 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 Timeline

Every effort will be made to grade submissions within a week.

## Assignment Submission Policy

A. All assignments are due on the dates specified. Lacking prior discussion and agreement with the instructor, late assignments will automatically be given a grade of F.

B. Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard.

## Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

PART 1: Introductions		
Week 1	Tues 1/9	Introduction
	Thurs 1/11	Read "The 2017 Women's March on Washington," watch "Women's March" in class
Week 2	Tues 1/16	Read RSM Ch. 8 "Memos in Social Movements 2.0"
	Thurs 1/18	Come to class with 5 examples of protest signs from Women's Marches to share
<b>PART 2: Objectives and Assignments:</b> Read <i>Rhetoric of Social Movements</i> with the goal of understanding how theories and methods inform and are used to analyze social movements; daily presentations about the theories and methods used in the chapter; workshops on effective questions; discussion questions; begin brain storming case study themes and forming case study groups		
Week 3	Tues 1/23	Sign-ups and introductions to assignments
	Thurs 1/25	Read: RSM Ch. 3 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
Week 4	Tues 1/30	Read: RSM Ch. 4 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
	Thurs 2/1	Read: RSM Ch. 5 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
Week 5	Tues 2/6	Read: RSM Ch. 6 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
	Thurs 2/8	No class meeting
Week 6	Tues 2/13	Read: RSM Ch. 9 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
	Thurs 2/15	Read: RSM Ch. 10 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
Week 7	Tues 2/20	Read: RSM Ch. 11 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
	Thurs 2/22	Read: RSM Ch. 12 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
Week 8	Tues 2/27	Read: RSM Ch. 13 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
	Thurs 2/29	Read: RSM Ch. 14 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
Week 9	Tues 3/5	Read: RSM Ch. 16 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
	Thurs 3/7	Read: RSM Ch. 17 (+ in-class presentation on theory & method)
Spring Break	Tues 3/12	No class meeting
	Thurs 3/14	No class meeting
<b>PART 3: Objectives and Assignments:</b> Read <i>Social Movements</i> with the goal of reinforcing part 1 of the semester. Daily open-ended discussion questions; daily Blackboard quizzes; group work on case studies		
Week 10	Tues 3/19	Read: SM Ch. 1; complete quiz on Blackboard
	Thurs 3/21	Read: SM Ch. 2; complete quiz on Blackboard
Week 11	Tues 3/26	Read: SM Ch. 3; complete quiz on Blackboard
	Thurs 3/28	Read: SM Ch. 4; complete quiz on Blackboard
Week 12	Tues 4/2	Read: SM Ch. 5; complete quiz on Blackboard
	Thurs 4/4	Read: SM Ch. 6; complete quiz on Blackboard
Week 13	Tues 4/9	Read: SM Ch. 7; complete quiz on Blackboard. Independent Case Study Workshop.
	Thurs 4/11	Read: SM Ch. 8; complete quiz on Blackboard
PART 4: Presentations		
Week 14	Tues 4/16	Presentations; Read: SM Conclusion; complete quiz on Blackboard
	Thurs 4/18	Presentations
Week 15	Tues 4/23	Presentations
	Thurs 4/25	Presentations

**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.*

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Additional Policies**

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to check email and Blackboard regularly for updates.

### **Communication**

For the most immediate response, please text me: 510.219.5554. Please also text to make arrangements for phone calls, Zooms, and office hours. Allow 48 hours for email response Monday-Thursday. I do not check email Friday-Sunday.

### **Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

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).

### **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](https://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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

### **About Your Instructor**

Teresa “T” Delfín is an anthropologist and filmmaker. She earned a Ph.D. from Stanford in the Program in Modern Thought and Literature and an M.A. in Latin American Studies from U.C. Berkeley. T is a native Spanish speaker who grew up in Guadalajara, Mexico and the San Francisco Bay Area.