

# USC Iovine and Young Academy

*Arts, Technology and the Business  
of Innovation*

## **IDSN 560 Narrative and Storytelling**

**Units: 4.0**

**Fall 2024—Thursdays—5:30 pm-8:20 pm PT**

**Location:** <https://brightspace.usc.edu>

**Instructor:** Jay Clewis

**Office:** Virtual

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Contact:** [jclewis@usc.edu](mailto:jclewis@usc.edu)

**IT Help:** <https://uscedu.sharepoint.com/sites/IYASStudent/SitePages/IT-Resources.aspx>

**IT Email Support:** [iyahelp@usc.edu](mailto:iyahelp@usc.edu)

### **Course Description**

The ability to share one's creative vision, thoughts, or business endeavors in a manner that resonates with a target audience is critical. The resonant story communicates to listeners, readers, or viewers in a way that reflects a nuanced understanding of how one thinks, feels, reacts, and behaves. Through the depth of insight and effective communication, innovations diffuse, art is championed, content is consumed, services are rendered, and products are purchased or adopted. This course explores the various written, spoken, visual, and technological ways in which stories can be envisioned, created, and shared – historically and in contemporary contexts across audiences and for different purposes, using existing or creating new multimedia methods and tools. Accompanying this exploration is instruction in communication theory and the narrative structures and content most effective at evoking a powerful and meaningful audience response.

### **Learning Objectives and Outcomes**

Students in this course will learn how to build and communicate ideas, concepts, and solutions using universal storytelling techniques. Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the foundational and generalizable components of stories, including semiotic syntax, user viewpoints, and cultural perspectives
- Differentiate between story types, form, context, and content
- Utilize a variety of proven narrative frameworks and techniques
- Create independent narratives for practical use in an array of personal and organizational settings (e.g., design agency, engineering firm, startup venture)
- Understand public speaking best practices and use of supporting material to best effect in real-world or virtual settings

### **Prerequisites**

There are no pre- or co-requisites for this course.

## Course Notes

Students are responsible for all additional assigned material, including video and reading materials offered by the instructor in class. Zoom will be used to conduct all live synchronous sessions.

## Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students must provide their own laptops. The laptop specifications consider that students will create, stream, and download audio and video, communicate using video conferencing applications, and create and store large multimedia files.

## USC Laptop Loaner Program

The university realizes that attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to participate in your classes, you may be eligible for the [USC Computer Center Laptop Loaner Program](#).

## How To Purchase Software at The Academy Discounted Rate

Selected software licenses are available for purchase online through the USC Iovine and Young software catalog at the Academy discounted rate. To purchase software:

- Visit: <https://commerce.cashnet.com/IOVINE>
- Select the software license(s) you would like to purchase by clicking “View Details” or the software title and make your purchase.
- You will receive an order confirmation receipt at the email address you provided.
- You will be notified by email when the software license has been activated.

## Technical Support Information

For help accessing or using Brightspace, Zoom, or other USC online tools and resources, including email, use the following contact information.

- Brightspace Help: <https://www.brightspacehelp.usc.edu>
- Brightspace Email Support: [usc@d2l.com](mailto:usc@d2l.com)
- Zoom Support: [Zoom information for students](#)
- IT Help: <https://uscedu.sharepoint.com/sites/IYASStudent/SitePages/IT-Resources.aspx>
- IT Email Support: [iyahelp@usc.edu](mailto:iyahelp@usc.edu)

## Required Readings and Supplementary Material

Required content and readings may be assigned by faculty at any point during the semester. In addition, the following book will be used in the first four weeks of class and may be shared among students to select material to use for assignments 1.1 through 1.4:

- *The Medium is the Message: An Inventory of Effects* (M. McLuhan and Q. Fiore)

## Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Week	Topics	Assignments
<b>Module 1: The Medium is the Message</b>		
1	<b>Welcome to Narrative and Storytelling</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Course and Professor Introductions</li><li>● What Makes A Good Story?</li></ul>	Assignment 1.1

2	<b>History, Examples, Use-Cases, And Value of The Medium</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Film, VR, Gaming, Comics/Graphic Novels, Social Media</li> </ul>	Assignment 1.2
3	<b>History, Examples, Use-Cases, And Value Of The Medium</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Poetry, Short Story, Environmental Graphics, Photography</li> </ul>	Assignment 1.3
4	<b>Perspectives On Storytelling Across Industries</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Storytelling In Film, Art/Illustration, and Writing</li> <li>● Understanding The Audience</li> </ul>	Assignment 1.4
<b>Module 2: Performance</b>		
5	<b>Introduction To Public Speaking and The Pecha Kucha</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Overview Of Forms of Public Speaking</li> <li>● Introduction to the PechaKucha</li> </ul>	
6	<b>Best Practices and Common Mistakes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Best Practices for Public Speaking</li> <li>● Common Mistakes in Public Speaking</li> <li>● Designing Good Slides</li> </ul>	Assignment 2.1
7	<b>Listening As a Practice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What Is Listening? Perspectives From the Field</li> <li>● PechaKucha Examples to Inspire</li> </ul>	Assignment 2.2
<b>Module 3: Professional Storytelling</b>		
8	<b>Career Pathways and Opportunities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction To Career Pathways in Storytelling</li> <li>● Industry Experts About Their Career Path</li> <li>● Professional Video Narratives</li> </ul>	
9	<b>Creating Goals and Defining Strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Professional Case Study Part 01</li> <li>● Deep Dive: Creating Goals and Defining A Strategy</li> </ul>	Assignment 3.1
10	<b>Setting Objectives and Exploring Tactics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Professional Case Study Part 02</li> <li>● Deep Dive: Setting Objectives and Exploring Tactics</li> </ul>	Assignment 3.2
11	<b>Creating Goals and Defining Strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Professional Case Study Part 03</li> <li>● Deep Dive: Measuring Success</li> </ul>	Assignment 3.3
<b>Module 4: Thinking Long-Term</b>		
12	<b>Introduction To Strategic Foresight</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction To Strategic Foresight</li> <li>● Signals, Trends, Emerging Issues</li> </ul>	Assignment 4.1
13	<b>Strategic Foresight Methodologies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alternative Futures, 3 Horizons, and Futures Triangle</li> </ul>	

14	<b>Projects &amp; Perspectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Designing The Future</li> <li>● Perspectives On Design's Role in Strategic Foresight</li> </ul>	Assignment 4.2
15	<b>Diegetic Objects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creating Artifacts Of The Future</li> <li>● Final Review and Course Conclusion</li> </ul>	Assignment 4.3
	<b>Exam Day</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attendance Not Required</li> <li>● Office Hours Available Upon Request</li> </ul>	Assignment 5.1

### **Description of Assignments**

Below are brief overviews of each assignment. Your instructor will provide additional instructions for each. All assignments will be submitted to the Brightspace Learning Management System (LMS). If you experience difficulties, email your instructor and use the USC Brightspace Help page.

#### **1.1 – Pick A Spread, Any Spread**

Obtain or borrow a physical copy of *The Medium is the Massage*. Familiarize yourself with the book and select a spread (book open flat) based on any methods. Upload a PDF of your selection.

#### **1.2 – The Medium Is the Message, Part 1**

Recreate your selected spread using one media discussed: Film, VR, Gaming, Comics/Graphic Novels, or Social Media. The recreation should not be literal but a creative interpretation of the spread based on your perception of its meaning and the selected medium's unique strengths.

#### **1.3 – The Medium Is the Message, Part 2**

Recreate your selected spread using one media discussed: Film, VR, Gaming, Comics/Graphic Novels, or Social Media. The recreation should not be literal but a creative interpretation of the spread based on your perception of its meaning and the selected medium's unique strengths.

#### **1.4 – The Medium Is the Message, Part 3**

Create a three-slide presentation deck pitching a site-specific installation, exhibition, or platform that recreates your spread by combining at least three mediums explored in class. Be prepared to share the pitch in the live session. Time constraints for the pitch will be shared in class.

#### **2.1 – PechaKucha, Part 1**

Create a set of storyboards as an initial draft of your PechaKucha talk. The talk must utilize 20 slides and can be about anything of genuine interest to you (it does not have to be serious).

#### **2.2 – Pecha Kucha, Part 2**

Finalize your PechaKucha talk and slide deck. Practice your talk and be prepared to deliver your PechaKucha talk in the live session.

#### **3.1 – Goals and Strategies**

Students will work in teams to select a product, service, or business and create a campaign to pitch/sell it. The campaign will include goals, a target audience, campaign strategy, messaging, channels, tactics to execute the campaign, and metrics to measure the results. Teams will work in and outside of class to develop the campaign, which will result in a short presentation.

### **3.2 – Objectives and Tactics**

Work in teams to set Objectives (accountability/success metrics) and explore Tactics (specific marketing activities/campaign output) for a new marketing campaign for the product, service, or business you selected, using the methodology covered in Unit 10. Be prepared to share your progress in the live session.

### **3.3 – Professional Storytelling Strategy Deck**

Finalize your project by creating one cohesive Professional Storytelling Strategy Deck (10 slides maximum) that serves as a “pitch” of your concepts and strategy to the product, service, or business you selected. Be prepared to share in the live session.

### **4.1 – Signals, Emerging Issues, Trends**

Conduct research (secondary research or direct observation) to collect examples of two signals, two emerging issues, and two trends. One of each must relate to the future of storytelling, but the second may relate to any technology or social phenomenon identified. Include an image and brief description for each. Be prepared to share in the live session.

### **4.2 – Future Scenarios**

Write two scenarios on the future of storytelling using two contexts in the alternative futures framework (Growth, Collapse, Constraint, Transformation). Each scenario should be a maximum of 300 words. Styles for writing future scenarios will be shared in class. Your scenarios must be written only (no visuals). One of your scenarios will be selected to use with assignment 4.3.

### **4.3 – Diegetic Objects**

Create a diegetic object to accompany your selected scenario from exercise 4.2. This object can be any visual artifact that helps to bring your scenario to life, such as a physical object, a digital product, a drawing, an advertisement, a film, etcetera. Build a two-slide presentation to share in class, where slide one is your diegetic object and slide two is your written future scenario.

### **5.1 – Professional Video Narrative**

Create a video narrative or resume that showcases your professional experience, skills, and unique abilities as a pitch to an organization for which you would like to join. Utilize any combination of the storytelling techniques learned in class or beyond. The video should be 90 seconds or less and easily shareable via social media, a personal website, or any other digital channel.

### **Assignment Rubrics**

The instructor will provide evaluation and grading criteria for assignments throughout the course.

### **Assignment Submission Policy**

All assignments must be delivered by the date and time (Pacific Time) listed as due per instructor guidelines. Late assignments will be subject to the late submission policy indicated below.

**All assignments must be completed to pass this class.**

### **Late Submissions**

Assignments will be accepted after the deadline with the following grade penalties. Do not ask for extensions; the extensions are noted below.

Submission in the 24 hours after the deadline	10% deduction
Submission between 24 hours and 3 days after the deadline	50% deduction
Submission after 3 days after the deadline	100% deduction

### Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Weekly Participation	150	15%
1.1 Pick a Spread, Any Spread	0	0%
1.2 The Medium is the Message, Part 1	50	5%
1.3 The Medium is the Message, Part 2	50	5%
1.4 The Medium is the Message, Part 3	100	10%
2.1 PechaKucha, Part 1	50	5%
2.2 PechaKucha, Part 2	100	10%
3.1 Goals, Objectives, and Strategies (Team)	50	5%
3.2 Channels, Tactics, and Metrics (Team)	50	5%
3.3 Professional Storytelling Strategy Deck (Team)	100	10%
4.1 Signals, Emerging Issues, Trends	50	5%
4.2 Future Scenarios	50	5%
4.3 Diegetic Object	50	5%
5.1 Professional Video Narrative	150	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Grading Scale

Final course grades will be determined using the following scale:

Letter Grade	Numerical Score
A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89

B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
F	69 and below

### **Course Attendance Policy**

The Academy maintains rigorous academic standards for its students, and on-time attendance at all class meetings is expected. Each student will be allowed two absences over the course of the semester for which no explanation is required. Students are admonished not to waste excused absences on non-critical issues and to use them carefully for illness or other issues that may arise unexpectedly. Except in the case of prolonged illness or other serious issue (see below), no additional absences will be excused. Each unexcused absence will result in the lowering of the final grade by  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a grade (e.g., an A will be lowered to an A-minus, and an A-minus will be lowered to a B+, etc.). In addition, being tardy to class will count as one-third of an absence. Three tardies will equal a full course absence.

Students remain responsible for any missed work from excused or unexcused absences. Immediately following an absence, students should contact the instructor to obtain missed assignments or lecture notes and to confirm new deadlines or due dates. Extensions or other accommodations are at the instructor's discretion.

Automatically excused absences may not normally be used for quizzes, exams, or presentation days. The instructor may use an excused absence for a quiz, exam, or presentation, such as in the case of sudden illness or other emergency.

In the case of prolonged illness, family emergencies, or other unforeseen serious issues, the student should contact the instructor to arrange for accommodation. Accommodations may also be made for essential professional or career-related events or opportunities. Additionally, students who need accommodations for religious observations should provide advanced notice to instructors, and student-athletes should provide Travel Request Letters. All accommodations remain at the discretion of the instructor, and appropriate documentation may be required.

Unless students provide an accommodation letter from USC's Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) or a letter from IYA Student Services detailing visa or travel restrictions, attendance, and active participation is expected in the classroom. Any student with such accommodations should submit their accommodation document to the instructor as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations.

### **Classroom Norms and Zoom Etiquette**

We will meet each week at a set time, and you are expected to begin each session engaged and ready to participate. The classroom will open 10 minutes before each live session begins, and the class will begin on time. The expectations outlined below are paramount to your success:

- **Be on time:** Set an alarm if needed, and plan to arrive a few minutes early.
- **Limit distractions:** Find a quiet place and check your surroundings.
- **Be prepared:** Charge/plug in your computer, use headphones, and turn on your camera.
- **Presentation:** Dress appropriately (for a business setting); sit up straight.
- **Mute yourself** when you are not speaking.
- **Participate:** Be present and contribute ideas; avoid multitasking.
- **Chat responsibly:** Use chat to ask questions and offer feedback; avoid gossip.
- **Show respect:** Practice good netiquette. Listen, be respectful, be considerate.

### **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 and 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 academic misconduct violations 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.

Academic dishonesty has a far-reaching impact and is considered a serious offense against the university. Violations will result in a grade penalty, such as a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and disciplinary action from the university, such as suspension or expulsion.

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](#).

Please ask your instructor if you need clarification on what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment or what information requires citation or attribution.

### **Course Policy for the Use of Generative AI**

This policy aims to foster creativity, efficiency, innovation, and the adaptive use of contemporary tools as part of our educational and professional development. Generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) platforms have become invaluable tools for content creators, designers, developers, and beyond. Hence, students are encouraged to leverage these resources to learn how to integrate them into academic research and study while upholding the highest standards of ethics and academic integrity. Read the following guiding principles for acceptable use in this course.

- **Acceptable Uses:** Students are permitted and encouraged to use Gen AI platforms to assist in their research of topics and ideas to assist in information discovery and



summarization. Students may use Gen AI to create outlines for written work as a starting point. Students may use Gen AI tools to edit their original work. Students may use Gen AI to help visualize their original ideas and work with the creation of images and videos.

- **Transparency:** Anytime a Gen AI platform is used to create or assist in the creation of material or content used in submitted deliverables, students must cite each use.
- **Prohibited Uses:** Students are not permitted to use Gen AI to create full drafts of written content for submission. Submitting content solely generated by AI may be considered plagiarism, and submitting content without citation may be considered cheating.
- **Enforcement and Consequences:** Offenses will be reported as academic integrity offenses and may result in failing the assignment, failing the class, suspension, or expulsion.

### **Iovine and Young Hall Cleanout**

The Academy is unable to store student projects and materials beyond the end of the semester. Students must remove all projects and personal materials from the Creators Studio, lockers/locker room, and other classrooms by the end of each semester. **All projects and materials left in Iovine and Young Hall will be discarded the day after final exams end. No exceptions.**

### **Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies**

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

Recording a university class without the instructor's express permission 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 and 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 that had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relation 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).

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

#### **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).

**Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:**

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the [Financial Aid Office webpage](#) for [undergraduate-](#) and [graduate-level](#) SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

**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, seven days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline consists 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) 740-2500

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 student resources.

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

Emergency assistance and avenues to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including how 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.