USC Annenberg

COMM 400 Exhausting the Earth: AI and Environmental Crisis

4 units

Spring 2025 – Tues/Thurs – 3:30pm-4:50pm
Section: 20615R
Location: ASC 231

Instructor: Hamsini Sridharan (she/her)
Office Hours: Email to arrange appointment on Zoom or in person
Contact info: hamsinis@usc.edu

Course Description

Where on Earth is the Cloud? Can AI help address the climate crisis—or is it contributing to the problem? Two significant forces transforming the world today are the growth of digital technologies, from Big Data to cloud computing to artificial intelligence (AI), and the intensification of climate change. These forces increasingly impact every aspect of our personal and professional lives and shape the futures we have available to us. In this seminar, we will read scholarship and analyze digital objects to develop a critical understanding of the entanglement of digital technologies and the environment. We will also unpack the corporate, media, and activist discourses swirling around them that support or critique technosolutionist narratives. How digital technologies are situated in and act on environments reflects relations of power in society and can exacerbate injustice and environmental crisis—or offer a path forward to a more livable future. The readings and cases we will discuss are divided into four sets of topics: 1) the extractive and exhaustive processes (mining, energy consumption, water usage, waste, etc.) that power digital technologies; 2) corporate and media discourses of technological hype and sustainability that position AI systems as climate "solutions"; 3) how AI is applied to shape how we know and manage environments; and 4) alternative relations of digital technologies and environments.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be informed and critical consumers of information who are able to communicate knowledgeably about the relationship between digital technologies like AI and environmental crisis. Students will be able to:

- Identify the extractive environmental processes that power the Cloud and AI
- Evaluate corporate and media claims and discourses of tech hype and environmental sustainability
- Describe how these technologies shape environmental knowledge and management
- Discuss alternative relations of digital technologies and environments
- Engage in political and ethical debates surrounding these technologies and their role in environmental crisis

Land Acknowledgment

USC occupies unceded land of the Tongva/Kizh/Gabrielino peoples, and it is on this land that we gather. We remain mindful of the history of settler colonialism in this place, of the ongoing struggles for recognition and justice, and of the living culture of the indigenous people of this region. We acknowledge the many peoples indigenous to the greater Los Angeles area, to California, to the Americas, and the wider world residing in this place who share a history of conquest, violence, and enslavement. To learn more about the indigenous history of our region go to https://native-land.ca and https://mila.ss.ucla.edu.

Course Materials

Required Readings
All required readings and materials will be posted to Brightspace. If you need help navigating Brightspace, visit the USC Brightspace help guide.

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. The USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program lends out laptops if you need access to one. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's Information Technology Services website.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Reading Responses
You are required to submit written responses to course readings in at least 8 separate weeks during the semester (you may choose which weeks). Responses should be **200-250 words** apiece and demonstrate your grasp of the week's readings in relation to course concepts. They should go beyond summarizing readings to reflect thoughtful analysis and engagement. You may, for instance:

- Identify and discuss themes that emerge across readings;
- Connect ideas to discussions from previous weeks;
- Analyze specific quotes or passages;
- Pose critical questions about a reading, and/or
- Relate readings to real-world examples you encounter in your lives or in the news.

Responses are **due on Brightspace by 11:59PM Pacific Time Monday** of each week. **Each is worth 25 points** and will be graded using a ✓+ (above and beyond)/ ✓ (adequate) /✓- (inadequate) scale, based on meeting length and timeliness requirements as well as the quality of engagement with the readings.

Discussion Leadership
You are required to **lead discussion of an assigned reading four times** over the semester, once in each part of the course. This entails providing a brief(!) verbal summary of the reading in class, sharing your thoughts about how the argument connects to the day's topic and other readings, and preparing at least two questions to spark discussion (this shouldn't take more than 5 minutes to present). It can overlap with your reading responses (i.e. you can use the same material for both). Discussion leadership is worth **50 points per "presentation"** and will be graded using a ✓+ (above and beyond)/ ✓ (adequate) /✓- (inadequate) scale reflecting your preparedness and the quality of your engagement with the reading.

Projects
You will turn in three projects on Brightspace over the course of the semester. These can be tailored to your interests, and are meant to reflect analytical and creative engagement with course concepts. **You are required to use in-text citations and provide a reference list for each project using APA style**.

Project 1: Mapping Extraction and Environmental Impact (150 points)
Due: Tuesday, 2/18 at 11:59PM Pacific on Brightspace

- Option 1: Choose a specific digital technology or system and research its production, deployment, and disposal to trace the material processes connected to its life cycle, as "Anatomy of an AI system" does with the Amazon Echo. Create a visual diagram representing

these processes and provide a 500-750 word (2-3 page) essay explaining them. Engage with and cite at least 2 readings from Weeks 2-4 of class and any external sources.

- Option 2: Choose a specific case of a data center in a community and use at least 2 readings from Weeks 2-4 of class as well as news articles, policy papers, etc. about that community to discuss its localized environmental impact and the community's response. Write a 1000-1250 word (4-5 page) essay analyzing this case. Cite all sources used.

Project 2: Analyzing AI Hype and Sustainability (150 points)
Due: Tuesday, 3/25 at 11:59PM Pacific on Brightspace
Analyze a recent corporate sustainability report by a tech company (one assigned for class or a different company of your choice, with instructor approval). In a 1000-1250 word (4-5 page) essay, construct an argument about how this report portrays the environmental impact and benefits of AI and related technologies, using course readings to critically analyze specific examples of discourse and imagery. Cite the report itself, at least 2 additional readings from Weeks 5-8 of class, and any external sources used.

Project 3: Knowing Nature/Imagining Futures (150 points)
Due: Tuesday, 5/13 at 11:59PM Pacific on Brightspace

- Option 1: Research a specific case of a digital technology that is being used to intervene in some aspect of the climate crisis. In a 1500-2000 word (6-8 page) paper, consider the environmental impact of that technology and its relationship to processes of sensing, datafication, and/or modeling. Assess this project from the perspectives of environmental/data justice, indigenous ways of knowing, and/or multispecies relationality. Engage with and cite at least 2 readings from Weeks 9-12 and Week 14 of class as well as any external sources used.
- Option 2: Create a zine exploring alternative ways to approach relationships of technology and environment, and imagine how they might play out in the future. Write at least three 500-750 word (2-3 page) articles/essays/stories addressing different aspects of this. Pair the articles with images/illustrations and design to present a compelling vision. Engage with and cite at least 2 readings from Weeks 13-16 and any external sources used.

Participation
This is an upper-level seminar, meaning that it is heavily discussion-based. The expectation is that you come to class prepared to discuss the readings. If your attendance is spotty (see Attendance policy below), your participation grade will be lowered. Your grade is based on preparedness for class, listening attentively, responding to your classmates, asking questions, etc. I recognize that speaking in class is not easy for everyone; we will work together to cultivate an environment that encourages exploration of ideas without fear of being wrong. Participation also includes activities such as emailing me about the class or coming to office hours. **Participation is worth 150 points and is holistically determined.**

Grading Breakdown, Scale, and Standards

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Reading responses (8 x 25 points)	200	20%
Discussion leadership (4 x 50 points)	200	20%
Project 1	150	15%

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Project 2	150	15%
Project 3	150	15%
Participation	150	15%
TOTAL	**1000**	**100%**

Any grade that is XX.5 or above will be rounded up to the next whole number. For example, a 93.4 will receive an A-, while a 93.5 will receive an A.

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+ (C plus)	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

I will provide a rubric for each major assignment. In general, grades will reflect the following standards:

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 and Contestation

Every effort will be made to grade assignments and post grades to Brightspace within two weeks of receiving the assignment. You are responsible for notifying me of any scores that you think are missing

or inaccurate within one week of grades being posted. If you wish to contest a score, you must do so in writing within that one-week period. Email me a 2-3 paragraph explanation of your reasoning; use the rubric provided with the assignment to justify your request and be sure to respond to any comments or feedback I have provided along with your grade. I will give serious consideration to any request that meets these requirements, though this is not a guarantee of a grade change. If you do not notify me within one week of receiving the grade, no changes will be made. You are always welcome to set up an office hour meeting with me to discuss a grade or comments on an assignment.

Course Policies

Attendance
Your presence and participation are essential to this class, and you will learn the most from being part of the class community. That said, life happens. As such, **you are allowed 2 unexcused absences** over the semester, no questions asked. If you have more than 2 unexcused absences, or more than 4 total, excused or unexcused, without extenuating circumstances, this will lower your participation grade.

It is your responsibility to track your attendance. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate. If you develop a pattern of repeat absences, you will be required to meet with me to discuss options for keeping up with course material. Proactive communication about attendance and participation will benefit you (and your grade!). **Excused absences for sports, serious emergencies, medical or personal issues, or religious holidays must be submitted to me by email before the missed class** or they will be treated as unexcused. Absences due to sports must be accompanied by a letter from Athletics. You do not have to share details about health issues with me to request a sick day.

If you find yourself experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, in keeping with university recommendations, you should:

- Stay home! This is the best way to prevent spreading COVID-19 as supported by scientific evidence. Please do not come to an in-person class if you are feeling ill, particularly if you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Nothing we do in our class is worth risking your health, my health, or the health of your peers.
- Contact your instructor to identify options available for keeping up with course content.

Patterns of tardiness will also be noted in your participation grade; if you miss more than half of a class period without prior notice, it will be treated as an unexcused absence.

Assignment Submission Policy
All written assignments should be submitted on Brightspace at 11:59PM Pacific Time on the due date (Mondays for the weekly reading responses; listed due dates for the projects). Please use Word or PDF format and standard font sizes and margins for essays.

If you occasionally submit a reading response a day or two late, I won't penalize you. However, if this happens more than 3 times in a semester, I may start deducting points. Responses that are posted after Friday of each week will not be graded and won't count towards the required total.

If a project deadline will be an issue for you, please request an extension by email at least three days (72 hours) before the due date; I'll approve them on a case-by-case basis. Lacking prior agreement, late

project submissions will be marked down 10 points for each additional day late (so a project submitted 1 day late could receive a maximum of 140 points out of 150; 2 days, 130 points, and so on).

AI Generators Policy
This course aims to develop creative, analytical, and critical thinking skills. Therefore, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually, or in groups if the assignment permits. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Using AI-generated text, code, or other content is strongly discouraged because such tools do not produce information that meets the standards of this course and are rife with serious ethical dilemmas (as we will discuss in class). Unless explicitly allowed in specific assignment instructions, any use of generative artificial intelligence tools will be considered plagiarism and will result in an F grade on the assignment.

Accommodations
If you require formal accommodations, please reach out to the USC Office of Student Accessibility Services as discussed below in the "Students and Disability Accommodations" section. Please provide me with any Letter of Accommodation you receive as early in the semester as possible. Feel free to reach out if there are informal accommodation needs that would make this class work better for you.

Course Agreements
My goal is to create a welcoming, vibrant classroom community. We will not shy away from discussing power, injustice, and oppression in this course. This may require you to get comfortable with discomfort. You may always respectfully disagree with me or with your peers. I ask that you approach disagreement with empathetic and critical listening, and call each other in instead of calling people out.

You are required to come to class having read the assigned course materials for the day. Participation in discussion is crucial to building rapport and learning the material. Don't leave me or your colleagues hanging! It will be a long and boring semester if we don't engage actively during our time together.

Student Names and Pronouns
A critical part of building a learning environment that is inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity is correctly using someone's name and pronouns. You can add your pronouns in the myUSC system. Feel free at any point to let me know that you would like to be addressed differently. As a community, we will strive to address each other with the names and pronouns identified. If we make mistakes or are corrected, we will briefly apologize and correct ourselves.

Communication
Please check your USC email regularly to stay on top of communications from me, course announcements, etc.; not reading an email is not an excuse for missing information.

I will try to respond to student emails within 48 hours during the work week, but if you email me on a Friday or over the weekend, you might not receive a response until Monday. I encourage you to meet with me outside of class to discuss questions about the course, academic life, etc. You can arrange an office hours appointment with me by email.

If you find yourself overwhelmed by the difficulty of the material or by external circumstances, please reach out. My goal is to find ways to work together so that you get as much out of the class as possible. You are not alone in facing challenges in the academic context; we've all been there. I will always do my

best to meet you where you are without judgment. The sooner you communicate an issue, the sooner we can address it. Please also see the section on academic and support systems at USC below.

Course Schedule

Important note to students: *Be advised that this calendar may change at my discretion.*

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Deadlines
Part 1: Foundations and materiality				
1	Tues., 1/14	Course overview		
	Thurs., 1/16	What is AI?	Intro to AI: Week 1: What is AI? And Week 4: AI traps to look for. (2024). *MIT Technology Review*. Klein, N. (2023, April 2). AI machines aren't 'hallucinating'. But their makers are. *The Guardian*. Parshley, L. (2024, June 20). The hidden environmental impact of AI. *Jacobin*.	
2	Tues., 1/21	Slow violence	Nixon, R. (2011). Introduction. In *Slow violence and the environmentalism of the poor* (pp. 1-44).	
	Thurs., 1/23	Cloud infrastructure	Ensmenger, N. (2018). The environmental history of computing. *Technology and culture, 59*(4), S7-S33. Monserrate, S.G. (2022). The Cloud is material: On the environmental impacts of computation and data storage.	
3	Tues., 1/28	Data centers out of place	Hogan, M. (2021). The data center industrial complex. In M. Jue & R. Ruiz (Eds.), *Saturation: An elemental politics* (pp. 283-305). Edwards, D., Cooper, Z.G.T., & Hogan, M. (2024). The making of critical data center studies. *Convergence*, 1-18. Explore: We live in the Cloud. (2021). Microsoft Story Labs.	
	Thurs., 1/30	Data centers in place	Johnson, A. (2019) Emplacing data within imperial histories: Imagining Iceland as data centers' 'natural' home. *Culture machine, 18*, 1-12. Levenda, A.M. & Mahmoudi, D. (2019). Silicon Forest and server farms: The (urban) nature of digital capitalism in the Pacific Northwest. *Culture machine, 18*, 1-14.	

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Deadlines
4	Tues., 2/4	Resource extraction	Crawford, K. & Joler, V. (2018). Anatomy of an AI system. Estampa. (2024). Cartography of generative AI.	
	Thurs., 2/6	Waste and exhaust	Gabrys, J. (2023). Electronic environmentalism: Monitoring and making ecological crises. In A. López, A. Ivakhiv, S. Rust, M. Tola, A.Y. Chang, & K. Chu (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of ecomedia studies* (pp. 129-136). Cooper, Z.G.T. (2023). That which escapes: Thinking through heat in proof-of-work systems. In A. Pasek, C. Lin, Z.G.T. Cooper, & J.B. Kinder (Eds.), *Digital energetics* (pp. 43-70).	
Part 2: Discourses of hype and sustainability				
5	Tues., 2/11	Enchantment	Mosco, V. (2014). Selling the cloud sublime. In *To the cloud: Big data in a turbulent world*, (pp. 77-122). Read pp. 77-90. Elish, M.C. & boyd, d. (2018). Situating methods in the magic of Big Data and AI. *Communication monographs, 85*(1), 57-80. Campolo, A. & Crawford, K. (2020). Enchanted determinism: Power without responsibility in artificial intelligence. *Engaging science, technology, and society, 6*, 1-19.	
	Thurs., 2/13	Industry capture	Broussard, M. (2018). People problems. In *Artificial unintelligence: How computers misunderstand the world* (pp. 67-85). Whittaker, M. (2021). The steep cost of capture. *Interactions, 28*(6), 50-55.	
6	Tues., 2/18	Sustainability	Pfister, T., Schweighofer, M., & Reichel, A. (2016). Historical reflection: A brief genealogy of sustainable development. In *Sustainability* (pp. 10-25). Dauvergne, P. (2020). Enhancing eco-business. In *AI in the wild: Sustainability in the age of artificial intelligence* (pp. 71-83).	**Project 1 due 11:59PM.**
	Thurs., 2/20	Affect and imagination	Halpern, O. (2017). Hopeful resilience. *e-flux Architecture,* 1-10.	

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Deadlines
			Hogan, M & Blue, G. (2024). Big cloud solastalgia. In C. Certomà, F. Iapaolo, & F. Martellozzo (Eds.), *Digital technologies for sustainable futures: Promises and pitfalls* (pp. 32-45).	
7	Tues., 2/25	Tech sustainability narratives	Skim one (as assigned): Microsoft. (2024). How can we advance sustainability? 2024 environmental sustainability report. Google. (2024). Environmental report.	
	Thurs., 2/27	Greenwashing	Hogan, M. (2018). Big data ecologies. *Ephemera, 18*(3), 631-657. Espinoza, M. & Aroncyzk, M. (2021). Big data for climate action or climate action for big data? *Big data & society, 8*(1), 1-15.	
8	Tues., 3/4	Measuring impact	Pasek, A., Vaughan, H., & Starosielski, N. (2023). The world wide web of carbon: Toward a relational footprinting of information and communications technology's climate impacts. *Big data & society, 10*(1), 1-14. Luccioni, S., Trevelin, B., & Mitchell, M. (2024). The environmental impacts of AI – Primer. *Hugging Face*.	
	Thurs., 3/6	Offsetting and efficiency	Pasek, A. (2019). Managing carbon and data flows: Fungible forms of mediation in the Cloud. *Culture machine*, 1-15. Brain, T. & Lavigne, S. (2024). All that is air melts into air. *e-flux Architecture*. Zipper, D. (2024, September 2). What a 160-year-old theory about coal predicts about our self-driving future. The Verge.	
Part 3: Environmental applications of data and AI				
9	Tues., 3/11	Sensing and surveilling environments	Gabrys, J. (2016). Sensing an experimental forest: Processing environments and distributing relations. In *Program Earth: Environmental sensing technology and the making of a computational planet* (pp. 28-54).	

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Deadlines
			Bakker, K. (2024). The algorithmic ocean. In *Gaia's web: How digital environmentalism can combat climate change, restore biodiversity, cultivate empathy, and regenerate the Earth* (pp. 21-44).	
	Thurs., 3/13	Environmental data	Edwards, P. (2010). Friction. In *A vast machine: Computer models, climate data, and the politics of global warming* (pp. 83-110). Lin, C. Knowing nature through data. (2025). In T. Venturini, A. Acker, J.C. Plantin, & T. Walford (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of data and society*	
10	Tues., 3/18	Spring break – No class		
	Thurs., 3/20			
11	Tues., 3/25	Modeling and managing systems	Brain, T. (2018). The environment is not a system. *A peer-reviewed journal about.* Dryer, T. (2023, March 5). No AI for the Colorado River. *Water justice & technology studio*.	**Project 2 due 11:59PM**
	Thurs., 3/27	Extraction and ecocide	Dauvergne, P. (2020). Accelerating extraction and consumption. In *AI in the wild: Sustainability in the age of artificial intelligence* (133-146). Hao, K. (2024, September 13). Microsoft's hypocrisy on AI. *The Atlantic*. Human Rights Watch. (2024, September 10). Questions and answers: Israeli military's use of digital tools in Gaza. HRW.org. Ahmed, K., Gayle, D., & Mousa, A. (2024, March 29). 'Ecocide in Gaza': Does scale of environmental destruction amount to a war crime? *The Guardian*.	
12	Tues., 4/1	AGI and extinction	Gebru, T. & Torres, E. P. (2024). The TESCREAL bundle: Eugenics and the promise of utopia through artificial general intelligence. *First Monday, 29*(4). Salvaggio, E. (2024, May 19). Nobody can save us from imagination. *Cybernetic forests*.	

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Deadlines
	Thurs., 4/3	Climate disinformation	Extinction Rebellion NYC. (2020). Today Google stops funding climate change deniers. *Branch.* Climate Action Against Disinformation. (2024). Artificial intelligence threats to climate change. Jingnan, H. (2024, October 18). AI-generated images have become a new form of propaganda this election season. *NPR*. Arthur, C. (2024, November 1). How AI slop undermines our understanding of reality. *Social warming*.	
Part 4: Imagining alternatives				
13	Tues., 4/8	Regulation	Dryer, T. (2021, April 22). A digital and green transition series: Will artificial intelligence foster or hamper the Green New Deal? AI Now Institute. Kneese, T. (2023). Climate justice & labor rights. AI Now Institute.	
	Thurs., 4/10	Resistance	McQuillan, D. (2022). People's councils. In *Resisting AI: An anti-fascist approach to artificial intelligence* (pp. 119-135). Pasek, A. (2023). Getting into fights with data centres: Or, a modest proposal for reframing the climate politics of ICT. *Experimental methods and media lab*, Trent University. Skip sections "Finding out where your data lives" and "Troubleshooting with traceroute." Lehuedé, S. (2024). An elemental ethics for artificial intelligence: Water as resistance within AI's value chain. *AI & society*, 1-14.	
14	Tues., 4/15	Environmental justice	The principles of environmental justice. (1991). First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. Bergmann, R. & Solomun, S. (2021). A new AI lexicon: Sustainability. *A new AI lexicon.* Dryer, T. (2024). Your artificial future is repulsive: On climate change, data tech, and artifice. *Just Tech*.	

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Deadlines
	Thurs., 4/17	Data justice	Mah, A. (2015). Environmental justice in the age of big data: Challenging toxic blind spots of voice, speed, and expertise. *Environmental sociology, 3*(2), 122-133. Vera, L., et al. (2019). When data justice and environmental justice meet: Formulating a response to extractive logic through environmental data justice. *Information, communication, & society, 22*(7), 1012-1028.	
15	Tues., 4/22	Indigenous knowledge	Johnson, N., Strawhacker, C., & Pulsifer, P. (2022). Data infrastructures, Indigenous knowledge, and environmental observing in the Arctic. In J. Goldstein & E. Nost (Eds.), *The nature of data: Infrastructures, environments, politics* (pp. 154-173). Jennings, L. et al. (2023). Applying the 'CARE principles for Indigenous data governance' to ecology and biodiversity research. *Nature ecology & evolution, 7*(10), 1547-1551. Carroll, S.R., Duarte, M., & Liboiron, M. (2024). Indigenous data sovereignty. In J. Burrell, R Singh, P. Davison, et al., *Keywords of the datafied state*. Data & Society.	
	Thurs., 4/24	Multispecies relationality	Mattern, S. (2021). Tree thinking. *Places*. Ganesh, G. (2023). Big green lies. *Branch*. Westerlaken, M. et al. (2023). Unsettling participation by foregrounding more-than-human relations in digital forests. *Environmental humanities, 15*(1), 87-108.	
16	Tues., 4/29	Degrowth	Hickel, J. (2020). *Less is more: How degrowth will save the world*. Penguin Random House. Read: Introduction (pp. 11-40), Ch. 3 (pp. 115-149)	
	Thurs., 5/1	Imagining futures	Rakova, B. (2022). Slowing down AI with speculative friction. *Branch.* Mosso, P. & Frenzel, J. (2023). Decentralized and rooted in care: Envisioning the digital infrastructures of the future. *Branch*.	
		Project 3 due 11:59PM PST Tuesday, May 13		

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.

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 itself, such as suspension or even 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 are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

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 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, is prohibited. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relation to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. Distributing course material without

the instructor's permission will be presumed to be an intentional act to facilitate or enable academic dishonestly and is strictly prohibited. (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. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at 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
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 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 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.