

**DSM 599**  
**Social Media Self Talk:**  
**From Personal Exploration to**  
**Commercial Application**

**4 units**

**Spring 2025**

**Section 21899**

**Meeting Days and Time:** Thursday from 6:00-8:50pm

**Meeting Location:** Wallis Annenberg Hall (ANN), Room L115

**Instructor:** Julianna Kirschner, Ph.D.

**Pronouns:** she/her/hers

**Email:** [jjkirsch@usc.edu](mailto:jjkirsch@usc.edu)

**Note about email responses:** I usually respond to emails expeditiously, but there are times when I may need 48 hours to get back to you. I generally stop or slow down in responding to emails after 7:00pm on weekdays. If you send an email over the weekend, I may not have the opportunity to respond until Monday.

**Office:** My office is located in ASC, suite G21B (Located on the lower level near the loading dock).

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays from 11:00am-1:00pm and Thursdays from 12:00pm-1:00pm. These office hours are all in person. However, if those times don't work for you, contact me via email to set up an appointment. I am also happy to meet on Zoom as an alternative.

## **I. Course Description**

Social media platforms, with their echo chambers and user-focused algorithms, have turned personal content curation into "self-talk", a form of intrapersonal communication in which users create content that primarily targets an audience of one: themselves. This can manifest in various ways, such as:

- Expressing their thoughts and emotions.
- Posting motivational quotes or personal affirmations for their own encouragement.
- Creating self-accountability by publicizing their challenges, goals, and progress.
- Reflecting on personal experiences to document their life journey.
- Confirming their aspirations, believing that articulating them might help make them come true.

In sum, self-talk on social media serves as a digital journal, motivational tool, and accountability mechanism. For communication professionals, understanding how people articulate their inner dialogues on social media can provide both insights and opportunities.

This course dives into the motivations and implications of self-talk, and explores the strategies and ethical considerations of leveraging self-talk for communication campaigns:

- Using tools to analyze target audience intrapersonal communications.
- Developing marketing campaigns that resonate with these audiences.
- Measuring and optimizing the effectiveness of these campaigns.

This course will also incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA) principles to understand the diverse ways people engage in self-talk; examine social media algorithms and their

impact on visibility, propagation, and even creativity; and evaluate the role of large language models (LLMs) in shaping how users express themselves.

## II. Student Learning Outcomes

- Craft social media campaigns that integrate intrapersonal communication.
- Evaluate the impact of self-talk on social media engagement and platform dynamics.
- Navigate the ethical considerations of using personal expressions in marketing campaigns.
- Conduct research studies analyzing specific cases of intrapersonal communication.
- Track and measure campaign effectiveness using data analytics and KPIs.

## III. Required Readings and Additional Course Notes

Purchase these books in anticipation of course readings:

Eichhorn, K. (2019). *The end of forgetting: Growing up with social media*. Harvard University Press. ISBN: 9780674976696

Hofstadter, D. (2007). *I am a strange loop*. Basic Books. ISBN: 9781549117268

Humphreys, L. (2018). *The qualified self: Social media and the accounting of everyday life*. MIT Press. ISBN: 9780262538954

Klosterman, C. (2022). *The nineties*. Penguin Press. ISBN: 9780735217959

McCulloch, G. (2019). *Because internet: Understanding the New Rules of Language*. Riverhead Books. ISBN: 9780525626169

Journal articles will be accessible on Brightspace.

I do not post my slides on Brightspace, because they are not very helpful out of context. I recommend taking notes beyond what appears on slides whenever they are used.

You will want to bookmark this research guide designed for DSM courses by our subject librarian, Chimene Tucker. These resources will be beneficial for research:

<https://libguides.usc.edu/digitalsocialmedia>

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.

## IV. Description and Assessment of Assignments

### Case Study Analysis Assignments (200 points or 20%)

For these assignments, you will complete a series of assignments to analyze real-world cases of social media campaigns and their effectiveness at capturing users' self talk. *A more detailed assignment guidelines document is available on Brightspace.*

### **Intrapersonal Campaign Project (200 points or 20%)**

Through the development of a real social media campaign, you will apply intrapersonal communication strategies. You will then measure the effectiveness of such approaches in reaching target audiences. There will be several building block steps involved with this project to reach an ultimate goal of developing original research, including:

- The development of a proposal to convey your approach.
- A discussion of in-progress updates in a status report.
- A finalization of the project with a comprehensive final report, which will discuss how well the audience was reached and engaged via KPIs.

*A more detailed project guidelines document is available on Brightspace.*

### **Persuasive AI Analysis Project (200 points or 20%)**

You will examine artificial intelligence cases that affect self talk, especially cases of misinformation and disinformation that change how users see a phenomenon or issue. This project includes the following:

- A proposal outlining the AI cases that will be examined.
- A status report that discusses the misinformation and disinformation identified and their degree of prevalence.
- An interactive, multimedia demonstration of findings.
- A final executive report that covers the major findings.

*A more detailed project guidelines document is available on Brightspace.*

### **Final Project: Self Talk Collaboration (300 points or 30%)**

This team project will be the culminating assignment for the class. This project will give you the opportunity to collaborate on tailoring a message to a digital audience with similar forms of self talk and beliefs (an echo chamber). Together, you will develop strategies to appeal to your target audience and propose a plan that a real organization could implement. Your team will develop and present your findings to the class. Specifically, you will:

- Collectively develop a proposal to discuss the chosen echo chamber and forms of self talk present within it. Choose a real organization that could use this information.
- Co-write status report 1, which discusses the digital audience in depth.
- Co-write status report 2, which provides an update on marketing strategies employed.
- Develop a team presentation with the chosen organization in mind, and share results of the project.
- Develop a co-written culminating report with an executive summary.

*A more detailed project guidelines document is available on Brightspace.*

### **In-Class Assignments (100 points or 10%)**

You will complete assignments and discussions that will prepare you for the projects and expected analyses in the course. You will be required to provide feedback to classmates on their projects to improve their intrapersonal approaches. These assignments are also designed to give you ample opportunity to apply theories and principles to hone your persuasive skills for the different intrapersonal needs of target audiences.

## **V. Grading**

### **Grading Timeframe and Missing or Inaccurate Score Inquiries/Disputes**

I make a sincere effort to grade your assignments expediently. Every attempt will be made to grade assignments/exams and post grades within two weeks. Scores for all assignments and exams are

regularly updated on Brightspace. You are responsible for notifying me, the instructor, within one (1) week of a score posting if you think a score is missing or inaccurate. Moreover, you only have this period of time to contest a score on an assignment/exam. If you fail to inquire/notify me of any discrepancy, missing score, or contest a score within one week of the date the score is posted, no further changes will be made.

### Points Breakdown

Assignment	Points Possible	Percentage of Final Grade
Case Study Analysis Assignments	200	20%
Intrapersonal Campaign Project	200	20%
Persuasive AI Analysis Project	200	20%
Self Talk Collaboration Project	300	30%
In-Class Assignments	100	10%
<b>Total Possible</b>	<b>1000 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Course Grades

We will use the +/- system, and course grades will be determined using the following scale:

Earned Points	Percentage (%)	Grade
940-1000	94-100%	A
900-939.99	90-93.99%	A-
870-899.99	87-89.99%	B+
840-869.99	84-86.99%	B
800-839.99	80-83.99%	B-
770-799.99	77-79.99%	C+
740-769.99	74-76.99%	C
700-739.99	70-73.99%	C-
670-699.99	67-69.99%	D+
640-669.99	64-66.99%	D
600-639.99	60-63.99%	D-
0-599.99	0-59.99%	F

### Grading Standards

Each assignment will have their own rubric, which will explain assessment in more detail how grades are calculated. In general, grades will generally reflect the following:

Grades	Quality of Assignment
A/A-	Excellent; demonstrates extraordinarily high achievement; comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter; all expectations met and exceeded.
B+/B/B-	Good; moderately broad knowledge and understanding of subject matter; explicitly or implicitly demonstrates good, if not thorough understanding; only minor substantive shortcomings.
C+/C/C-	Satisfactory/Fair; reasonable knowledge and understanding of subject matter; most expectations are met; despite any shortcomings, demonstrates basic level of understanding.

D+/D/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.

## VI. Course Policies

Before I share what is expected of you, let me first share how I see my role. My goal is to help you reach your potential and fully realize your own humanity. Part of that realization also includes the acknowledgement of other people's agency. I want you to learn how to better communicate with other people and empathize with different positions than your own. I know these are lofty goals, but I see this class as a piece of the ever-evolving puzzle that is your university experience. I am here to help you navigate it to the best of my ability.

I also consider it my responsibility, indeed higher education's responsibility, to guide you to mastery of the professionalism you need to get, keep, and excel in the jobs you seek. In my work within and outside of academia, I have seen many talented people passed up for promotions, and others who have lost their positions because they did not know what was needed to succeed. I don't want that to be you. My policies are meant to help you avoid ending up like those who did not know how to work with rigor, adhere to standards, and/or comply with job requirements. I want you to succeed, so please contact me if you need further clarification on course concepts, assignments, and/or policies.

Read the following policies carefully. Enrollment in the class constitutes agreement with and understanding of these policies. Ignorance of these policies does not excuse their violation.

### Due Dates

It is important that you keep up with the due dates, because we work together best when everyone is on the same page. Assignments are due on assigned days. Documented illnesses or emergencies are the only exception to this policy, and you will need to contact me *before* class begins whenever possible. Please bring documentation when applicable.

*Late Assignments:* Assignments not turned in on the day due will be given one grade lower than the one deserved for each day the assignment is late (for example, a "B" for an "A" quality paper if a written assignment is one day late, a "C" for an "A" quality assignment if it is two days late). If you submit an assignment late, you will have to contact me (the instructor). Brightspace is not set to accept late assignments.

*In-Class Assignments:* These must be completed in class as assigned, and they cannot be made up.

### Attendance and Participation

Much of the learning in a communication class comes from lectures, observing presentations, and participating in class discussions, so it is very important that you attend class. The University of Southern California prohibits the awarding of points solely on a student's physical presence in a class. However, USC allows the use of unexcused absences and excessive tardiness to count against a grade. This includes leaving class early.

Although I recognize that we all have other obligations outside of class, we will all benefit from everyone attending regularly. Changes in work schedule, personal celebrations (e.g., birthdays),

transportation problems, etc. are not considered legitimate reasons to excuse an absence. If you do miss a class, it is important for your success to catch up on anything you might miss. Your success is partly due to having knowledge of all material covered in class, whether an absence is excused or not.

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 requirements and content.

Documentation of your presence will be taken during each class via Qwickly. If a student is present during class but does not sign in, the student will be marked absent for that day. Keep in mind that signing in on Qwickly is simply not enough; you must actively participate and complete in-class assignments (see the in-class assignment description above for more details).

Qwickly will not be used for grading purposes of in-class assignments. It is intended for administrative purposes. For example, when I am contacted by a USC office (e.g., Student Services) inquiring about a student's last date of attendance, I will use Qwickly to respond to these questions.

Your religious practices are supported and honored. If religious observances will prevent you from completing assigned work on a scheduled date and/or attending class, you are responsible for discussing this matter with me, your instructor, as soon as possible, and no later than the second week of classes. For the University Office of Religious Life policy regarding religious observations, see: <https://orl.usc.edu/life/calendar/absences/> Accommodations will be made for such circumstances in accordance with University policies and guidelines.

Participation is part of your grade, but it is measured through in-class assignments. Engaging in discussion, completing in-class written work, collaborating in teamwork, etc. are some of the ways this portion is measured. Missing too many classes will result in missing in-class assignments. If more than ten (10) in-class assignments are missed, it will result in a failing grade for the course, regardless of performance on other assignments. There are a few exceptions to this policy:

- A student is traveling for student athletics or other student organizations to represent USC. Documentation is required.
- A student is observing a religious holiday, as noted above.
- A student has a documented illness and/or related accommodations from OSAS, which is discussed further in this policy section below.

### **Grade Calculations**

See grading breakdown in the earlier section on grading. More details about grade calculations are provided below.

If a student's final grade is on the cusp between one grade and another, I reserve the right to adjust final grades up based on engagement in class. For example, students with a final grade of 89.99% may earn an A- (instead of a B+ grade) if they have made a significant contribution in class activities and discussions. However, if that is not the case, the grade will remain as is. We will never lower a

student's grade below what he, she, or they have earned. To protect your privacy, please note that we will not send grades or grade-specific information via email. Grades and feedback will be available on Brightspace.

If you have a problem or question about performance on an assignment, you must contact the TA that graded your assignment within a week of receiving your grade. We give you a great deal of feedback on your assignments, so please review these comments before attempting to dispute a grade. If you are disputing a grade for an assignment (see earlier note about grade disputes in the grading section above), you must reference the assignment guidelines we have provided, and put your concerns in writing. Consider also these questions:

- Was your assignment submitted on time?
- Did you follow the directions of the assignment?
- Did you turn in your best work? If it was a written assignment, did you use proper grammar and syntax? Did you misspell words? Was your work neat and professional? Did you use weird spacing to make the paper appear longer than it really was?
- If the work was an oral assignment, did you complete the presentation within the allotted time limit? Did you practice your presentation? Did you read your notes as opposed to presenting it?
- Did you credit your sources? Are your references properly formatted?
- Did you wait until the last minute to complete the assignment?

Again, please come see your TA within a week of receiving feedback on an assignment if you have questions about how it was evaluated. As your instructor, I am also more than happy to meet with you to discuss ways you can improve, but I will always loop in the TA that regularly grades your work. The earlier you ask for help, the better!

### **Guest Speakers**

Whenever possible, I invite guests to visit and speak with our class. Guest speakers take time out of their schedules to come speak with you on important topics related to this class. Please focus on the guest speaker when they are present. Ask them questions and participate in discussion, which will count toward your in-class assignments grade.

### **Courtesy to Others**

Promptness is expected as a general rule. If we are having a lecture or discussion, come in only when appropriate. Public speaking in general can create a lot of anxiety for students, and the classroom must remain a safe place for everyone.

### **Recording**

This class will be entirely in person, so we will not be recording class. The only time I anticipate holding class on Zoom is in the off chance that I am ill or COVID-positive. Should that be the case, I will give you as much notice as possible. I may change this policy if the need arises.

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 course material under existing student handbook policies regarding class notes (<https://policy.usc.edu/studenthandbook/>). These rules will be strictly enforced, and violations will be met with the appropriate disciplinary sanction.

## **Notetaking**

As I mentioned earlier in this syllabus, I do not post my slides on Brightspace, because they are not very helpful out of context. I recommend taking notes beyond what appears on slides. Taking photos of slides is not useful and distracting in class, so don't do that. The slides are my intellectual property, and I do not authorize them to be shared outside of our class purposes.

## **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access**

- My priority as your professor is to ensure a safe, respectful education environment where all students can learn and thrive. The University does not tolerate any form of protected class discrimination or harassment (e.g., discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, disability, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, pregnancy, etc.). This includes sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, stalking, or related retaliation.
- The university values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment or achievement, please notify the instructor as soon as possible.
- As your professor, I hold the fundamental belief that everyone in the class is fully capable of engaging and mastering the material. My goal is to meet everyone at least halfway in the learning process. Our classroom should be an inclusive space, where ideas, questions, and misconceptions can be discussed with respect. There is usually more than one way to see and solve a problem and we will all be richer if we can be open to multiple paths to knowledge. I look forward to getting to know you all, as individuals and as a learning community.
- As your instructor, I am committed to creating a classroom environment that welcomes all students, regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs, etc. We all have implicit biases, and I will try to continually examine my judgments, words, and actions to keep my biases in check and treat everyone fairly. I hope that you will do the same, that you will let me know if there is anything I can do to make sure everyone is encouraged to succeed in this class.
- The topics that we're covering in this class are often difficult, not just intellectually but emotionally. While I expect there to be rigorous discussion and even disagreement in the course of our class discussions, I ask that you engage in discussion with care and empathy for the other members in the classroom. Aim to disagree without becoming disagreeable. In this class we will not shy away from the uncomfortable. Critically examining and assessing our most basic assumptions and values is not just one of the tasks of philosophy but is an activity vital to living an authentic life. I urge you to have the courage to be uncomfortable in this class. In exchange for your courage, I will work to ensure a classroom environment that supports your taking these intellectual and emotional risks.

## **Gender Pronouns and Language Use**

USC students can change their name or gender pronouns online through myUSC. Student choices may reflect nicknames, middle names, or names that better align with their gender identities.

- A critical part of building a learning environment that is inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity is asking and correctly using someone's name and pronouns. You can add your pronouns in the myUSC system. Names and pronouns may change during the term, so 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.
- I will gladly honor your request to address you by your chosen name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this at any point in the semester so I can make the appropriate changes.



If I accidentally use an incorrect gender pronoun when addressing you, please feel free to let me know, in whatever manner makes you comfortable, what pronouns you use so that I can make every effort to correct that error.

- It is important to establish mechanisms to acknowledge and support individuals' self-identification. One way we can support self-identification is by honoring the name and pronouns that each of us go by. In this classroom, we seek to refer to people by the names they go by.

Please use gender-neutral language in your speaking and writing. Because the language we speak and write leads us to perceive in certain ways, gender-neutral language will help all of us perceive women, men, trans women, trans men, and non-binary/third gender folks on equal terms, participating equally in the world. For example, use *he, she, or them* instead of *he* when the person to whom you are referring could be of any gender. Similarly, use *people* or *humanity* or *individuals* instead of *man* or *mankind*, *you* or *you all* instead of *you guys*, and *chair* or *sales representative* instead of *chairman* or *salesman*. If you need more clarification on this policy, please ask me! Here is a syllabus treat: If you see this message on or before January 31, 2025, send me an email listing the title of your favorite book and the author who wrote it. If you do this by the deadline, you will receive 5 extra credit points.

### **Content Notifications**

In this course, we will discuss a variety of sensitive topics. It is important that we discuss these issues respectfully, avoiding stereotypes and the impulse to diagnose ourselves and those around us. If at any point, you have concerns about class content or want to discuss your personal reactions, I encourage you to email me, come to office hours, or schedule an appointment.

Please prepare for sensitive topics accordingly and employ self-care throughout in-class discussion. One self-care option is to make use of Counseling and Mental Health Services (in USC Student Health). Given the nature of topics covered, some course materials may include uncensored content, which some class members may find offensive. I will provide forewarning of such instances.

### **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](http://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.

### **Land Acknowledgement**

This statement has been adapted from Van Hunnicks History Department of USC:

We acknowledge our presence on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Tongva people and their neighbors: (from North to South) the Chumash, Tataviam, Kitanemuk, Serrano, Cahuilla, Payomkawichum, Acjachemen, Ipai-Tipai, Kumeyaay, and Quechan peoples, whose ancestors ruled the region we now call Southern California for at least 9,000 years. We pay respects to the members and elders of these communities, past and present, who remain stewards, caretakers, and advocates of these lands, river systems, and the waters and islands of the Santa Barbara Channel.

### **Statement on Academic Conduct**

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 integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#)

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.

Sources *must* be cited properly. MLA or APA are acceptable citation formats for this class, but if you would prefer another style, please notify me in advance. Also, if you are unclear about proper citation, please ask. It is better to ask than to assume, especially in this case.

Please ask me, your instructor, if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

### **Artificial Intelligence Policy**

Students must obtain permission from me before using AI composition software (like ChatGPT) for any assignments in this course. Using these tools without my permission puts your academic integrity at risk.

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-e, etc.) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming ideas;
- Fine tuning your research questions; and
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is NOT permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose written assignments assigned to you.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification.

If found responsible for an academic violation, students may be assigned university outcomes, such as suspension or expulsion from the university, and grade penalties, such as an “F” grade on the assignment, exam, or in the course.

Please Note: I will not be using any AI tools in writing the feedback they provide you. All comments will be mine and written personally by me.

## **VII. 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*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

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*

<http://988lifeline.org/>

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 and Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX) - (213) 740-5086*

<http://eetix.usc.edu/>

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 IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) - (213) 740-0776*

[osas.usc.edu](http://osas.usc.edu)

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*

<http://campussupport.usc.edu/>

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*

<http://diversity.usc.edu/>

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.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

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*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)*

<http://ombuds.usc.edu/>

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)

<http://chan.usc.edu/patient-care/faculty-practice>

Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

*TrojansAlert*

<https://dps.usc.edu/services/trojans-alerts/>

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.

*ITS Customer Support Center (CSC)*: (213) 740-5555

<https://itservices.usc.edu/students/>

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*

<https://policy.usc.edu/violence-free-campus/>

Visit the website to read more about prohibited behaviors, reporting responsibilities and where to report.

*Student-Athlete Travel Excuse Letters*

<https://saas.usc.edu/academic-support-services/travel/>

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.

## VIII. DSM 599 Course Schedule

Be advised that this calendar is subject to change—and probably will change—based on the progress of the class, news and world events, and/or guest speaker availability. An updated version will be provided on Brightspace if and when changes occur.

Access the general university calendar on the schedule of classes: <https://classes.usc.edu/>

### Week 1: Thursday, January 16, 2025

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#### **Class Topic: Introductions**

We will introduce ourselves and discuss the main ideas of the course. We will define self talk on social media and discuss the implications of this reality on social media marketing.

### Week 2: Thursday, January 23, 2025

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#### **Class Topic: Self Talk**

This class session will explore the value of self talk on social media platforms. What impact does self talk have on a user's experience? What exceptions might exist in a self talk based environment? What can marketers do to break through the structures on social media to reach their target audiences?

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Klosterman, C. (2022). *The nineties*. Penguin Press. [Read chapters 1-6.]

Hagemann, L. & Abramova, O. (2023). Sentiment, we-talk and engagement on social media: Insights from Twitter data mining on the US presidential elections 2020. *Internet Research*, 33(6), 2058-2085. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

**Assignment Due:** Case Study Analysis 1

### Week 3: Thursday, January 30, 2025

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#### **Class Topic: Proto-Social Media**

This class session will focus on how we arrived at the current state of social media platforms and marketing. How has it changed? What impact does the past have on the present? How can social media marketers make use of this historical knowledge to connect with users on a nostalgic level?

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Kirschner, J. (In Progress). A selection from *Repeat after me*. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

Klosterman, C. (2022). *The nineties*. Penguin Press. [Read chapters 7-12.]

**Assignment Due:** Intrapersonal Campaign Project Proposal

## **Week 4: Thursday, February 6, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Breaking Through Social Media Barriers**

For this session, we will examine strategies to reach audiences on social media. How can marketers best communicate messages that are of value to these constituencies? What tools can be used to create lines of communication that do not currently exist?

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Chan, M. (2018). Reluctance to talk about politics in face-to-face and Facebook settings: Examining the impact of fear of isolation, willingness to self-censor, and peer network characteristics. *Mass Communication and Society*, 21, 1–23. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

Hofstadter, D. (2007). *I am a strange loop*. Basic Books. [Read chapters 1-10.]

**Assignment Due:** Case Study Analysis 2

## **Week 5: Thursday, February 13, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Breaking Through Social Media Barriers (Continued)**

Now that we have some processes to move forward from week 4, what barriers to access may exist? In what ways can theory inform our practice? Or, how do we take abstract concepts and bring them into social media marketing? How do data analytics tools and KPIs break through these barriers?

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Hofstadter, D. (2007). *I am a strange loop*. Basic Books. [Read chapters 11-Epilogue.]

**Assignment Due:** Intrapersonal Campaign Project Status Report

## **Week 6: Thursday, February 20, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Media Accounting of the Self**

This week, we will consider ways that users self document their lives. In what ways can media accounting contribute to our knowledge of our target audiences? Personal dialogue and digital journaling can tell us a lot about a group's motivations. What ways can we process personal narrative content using data analytics tools?

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Duffy, B.E. & Pooley, J. (2019). Idols of promotion: The triumph of self-branding in an age of precarity. *Journal of Communication*, 69, 26–48. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

Humphreys, L. (2018). *The qualified self: Social media and the accounting of everyday life*. MIT Press. [Read chapters 1-3.]

**Assignment Due:** Case Study Analysis 3 AND Persuasive AI Analysis Project Proposal

## **Week 7: Thursday, February 27, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Media Accounting of the Self (Continued)**

As a class, we will explore some case studies to connect personal media accounting with effective marketing strategies. What tools will be more useful to certain audiences and not others? When we determine groups have some self talk aspects in common, how do we address contrasting views (if at all)? How to KPIs inform these analyses?

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Humphreys, L. (2018). *The qualified self: Social media and the accounting of everyday life*. MIT Press. [Read chapters 4-6.]

Labrecque, L.I., Swani, K., Stephen, T. (2020). The impact of pronoun choices on consumer engagement actions: Exploring top global brands' social media communications. *Psychology & Marketing*, 37, 796-814. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

**Assignment Due:** Intrapersonal Campaign Project Final Report

## **Week 8: Thursday, March 6, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Social Media Language**

This week, we will begin exploring how the internet and social media spaces have shaped users' self talk. How do members of likeminded internet communities influence each other? In what ways have rhetorical strategies changed over the last few decades? These linguistic choices can inform marketing approaches on social media.

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

McCulloch, G. (2019). *Because internet: Understanding the New Rules of Language*. Riverhead Books. [Read chapters 1-4.]

**Assignment Due:** Persuasive AI Analysis Project Status Report

## **Week 9: Thursday, March 13, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Social Media Language (Continued)**

This session will explore one constant in self talk (and most everything): change. How people talk about themselves, their lives, and what is important to them have shifted with the technological medium they use. What changes can we anticipate in social media marketing? How can we be nimble to accommodate these changes?

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

McCulloch, G. (2019). *Because internet: Understanding the New Rules of Language*. Riverhead Books. [Read chapters 5-8.]

**Assignment Due:** Self Talk Collaboration Final Project Proposal



## **Week 10: Thursday, March 20, 2025**

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**No Class: Spring Break**

## **Week 11: Thursday, March 27, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Self Talk & Artificial Intelligence**

Social media platforms are some of the most AI regulated spaces on the internet. This course session will explore how AI factors into certain forms of self talk. How can marketers use the knowledge gained from self talk and AI frameworks to render positive outcomes? In other words, how does AI facilitate connecting users with products and services they want or need?

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Binlibdah, S. (2024). Investigating the role of artificial intelligence to measure consumer efficiency: The use of strategic communication and personalized media content. *Journalism and Media*, 5, 1142-116. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

Murár, P., Kubovics, M., & Jurišová, V. (2024). The impact of brand-voice integration and artificial intelligence on social media marketing. *Communication Today*, 15(1), 50-63. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

**Assignment Due:** Persuasive AI Analysis Project Interactive Multimedia Deliverable AND Final Executive Report

## **Week 12: Thursday, April 3, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Case Studies**

In this course session, we will examine case studies that demonstrate methods for reaching unique self talk communities.

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Kempton, S.E.D. (2023). Marketing motherhood: Analyzing the recruitment media of LuLaRoe. *Communicata*, 26, 1-7. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

Gautam, V. & Sharma, V. (2017). The mediating role of customer relationship on the social media marketing and purchase intention relationship with special reference to luxury fashion brands. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 23(6), 872-888. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

**Assignment Due:** Case Study Analysis 4

## **Week 13: Thursday, April 10, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Case Studies**

In this course session, we will examine case studies that demonstrate methods for reaching unique self talk communities.

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Kei, C.K. (2024). Influencer marketing to youth: The impact of Instagram influencer on healthy food choices among youth. *Journal of Communication, Language, and Culture*, 4(1), 108-125. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

Ulqinaku, A., Kadić-Maglajlić, S., & Sarial-Abi, G. (2024). Social media as a living laboratory for researchers: The relationship between linguistics and online user responses. *Internet Research*, 34(5), 1744-1774. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

**Assignment Due:** Self Talk Collaboration Final Project Status Report 1

## **Week 14: Thursday, April 17, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Case Studies**

In this course session, we will examine case studies that demonstrate methods for reaching unique self talk communities.

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Obreja, I. & Manolică, A. (2024). Can Bookstagrammers make a book more recognizable? The case of “Bookstagram tour” in Romania. *Journal of Media Research*, 17(2), 65-80. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

Korená, K. & Pártlová, P. (2023). Social media as a tool of building reputation and identity of national parks. *Communication Today*, 14(1), 116-135. [Accessible on Brightspace.]

**Assignment Due:** Self Talk Collaboration Final Project Status Report 2

## **Week 15: Thursday, April 24, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Self Talk Collaboration Project Presentations**

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Eichhorn, K. (2019). The end of forgetting: Growing up with social media. Harvard University Press. [Read introduction-chapter 3.]

## **Week 16: Thursday, May 1, 2025**

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### **Class Topic: Self Talk Collaboration Final Project Presentations**

**Readings:** Before class begins, you are required to read the following:

Eichhorn, K. (2019). The end of forgetting: Growing up with social media. Harvard University Press. [Read chapter 4-conclusion.]

## **Finals Week**

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**Assignment Due:** Self Talk Collaboration Final Project Culminating Report