

**SOWK 725a: DSW Preparatory Scholarship for Capstone**

**Section #67712D**

2 Units

Spring 2025

Monday, 5pm-7pm PT

Location: VAC

**SYLLABUS**

(Subject to change)

*“The language of design, abolition, emancipation, and liberation overlap at times. The overlap focuses on building, reconstructing, creativity, and making new visions.”*

- Lesley Ann-Noel, Ph.D., The Black Experience in Design

**Instructor:** Loc H. Nguyen, Dr.P.H., M.S.W.

**E-Mail:** [LocHNguy@usc.edu](mailto:LocHNguy@usc.edu)

**Cell Phone:** 323-356-8475

**Office Phone:**

\*Replies can be expected within 2 business days

**Office Location:** Virtual

**Office Hours Days & Times:** By Appointment

**Zoom Meeting Link:**

**Co-Course Leads:** Renee Smith-Maddox & Annalisa Enrile

**Email:** smithmad@usc.edu and enrile@usc.edu

**IT Help Hours of Service:** 24 hours, 7 days/week

**IT Help Contact Information:** UPC: 213-740-5555, [consult@usc.edu](mailto:consult@usc.edu)

VAC: 833-740-1273,  
[techsupport@digitalcampus.2u.com](mailto:techsupport@digitalcampus.2u.com)

## I. Course Prerequisites and/or Co-Requisites

Successful completion of the following prerequisite courses is required: Strategic Innovations for Grand Challenges (704), Design Laboratory for Social Innovation 1 (711), Leading and Managing Large Complex Systems (706), Data Driven Decision Making in Social Services (721), Design Laboratory for Social Innovation 2 (723), Leading Public Discourse (705), Communication and Influence for Social Good (720), Application of Implementation Science (713), Financial Management for Social Change (707), and Executive Leadership (714).

## II. Catalogue Description

Design and develop an innovative, feasible, and defensible Capstone Project focusing on a selected Grand Challenge for Social Work. **Course credit will be granted on the approval of a capstone proposal.**

## III. Course Description

The USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work's DSW program prepares students to lead large-scale social change. Students in the DSW program complete a team-based capstone project that demonstrates collaborative problem solving and the results of prototype testing a proof of concept. Preparatory Scholarship for Capstone is a 3-course series that creates the conditions for students to develop their Capstone Project. The DSW capstone project requires students to integrate the skills acquired in the program and apply the design thinking methodology to tackle complex challenges (such as the Grand Challenges of Social Work), cultivate creativity, and design breakthrough solutions in an organizational context. This includes developing an approved capstone proposal (725a), prototyping and testing (725b), and the defense of the capstone project, process, and its readiness for implementation(725c).

## Course Objectives

### By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop a collaborative learning community for experiential learning, problem-solving, design thinking, constructive feedback, and group discussions.
2. Understand that good writing and problem solving are iterative processes that require continuous reflection and revision.
3. Apply a theoretical/conceptual framework and logic model to the design of a capstone project with specific measurable outcomes.
4. Learn how to translate customer/client needs into a viable, plausible, and feasible solution (i.e., product or service)

#### **IV. Course Format & Instructional Methods**

Online (VAC), grade type- CR/NC, LMS -Canvas

Instructional Methods: The capstone courses (725a/b/c) represent a **mentoring support structure** designed to facilitate independent capstone work from development of a proposal through until completion. The mentoring support structure is somewhat different from a typical class. It is similar in that it involves weekly involvement. It differs because, depending upon the week, you will either participate in an **integrative seminar** or a meeting with your **Capstone Peer Mentoring Team (CPMT)**. The integrative seminar and capstone peer mentoring team meetings complement one another but have different composition and functions. Both are important to supporting your capstone work and progress.

During the Capstone Peer Mentoring Team (CPMT) meetings, students will present a brief overview of their project and facilitate a dialogue that highlights its various components, challenges, and limitations. The CPMT meetings are designed to enable critical and constructive discussion that can advance the development of a proposal that addresses a social problem or problem of practice. They are not meant to be formal defense of your project's proposal. The more focused your inquiry and discussion, the better. Think of the CPMT meetings as the opportunity to receive dedicated feedback.

Across the integrative seminar and peer mentoring components, this course will largely operate in a seminar format that also includes collaborative support centered around the capstone work. Weekly activities may include other social innovation efforts, review and support of one another's work, presentation of capstone plans to foster group discussion / feedback / brainstorming, and other activities to support capstone development and progress.

Throughout the semester, the process of synthesizing the solution will occur in a collaborative environment that involves sharing and discussing ideas and written materials, even at stages when those ideas and materials may not yet be in their final form. This is a norm that we highlight because many individuals prefer to share polished final work. This course will ask all members to stretch in sharing and learning in a collaborative environment. The class environment is structured to model an essential aspect of working and learning in diverse team contexts. Instructors expect all participants to commit to supporting the advancement of other group members, even when feedback may result in re-thinking or challenging of current ideas. Confidentiality of material shared in class will be maintained. As class discussion is an integral part of the learning process, students are expected to come to class ready to discuss materials for the week, as appropriate.

This course aims to be student-centered. This means that the contents of sessions may vary somewhat from the syllabus based on ongoing progress and discussion among students and faculty. Therefore, some syllabus and reading adjustments may occur to fit the needs of student members.

**Please note:** It may be necessary for the instructor to adjust the syllabus and/or course during the semester. In such an instance, the instructor will inform the class both verbally and in writing.

**V. Technology Proficiency & Hardware/Software Required**

This course requires the use of an online learning management system (LMS), as well as Microsoft Office 365 (e.g., Word, PPT) and virtual meeting (e.g., Zoom) applications. The following links for USC technology support may be helpful: [Zoom information for students](#), [Brightspace help for students](#), [USC Online Canvas guide for students](#), [Software available to USC Campus](#). Students should contact SDP Learning Technical Support (LTS) for assistance with online platforms at [sdp.lts@usc.edu](mailto:sdp.lts@usc.edu).

**VI. Course Deliverables, Due Dates & Percent of Final Grade**

The table below presents all course deliverables, due dates, and the final grade for each deliverable.

<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Week Due<sup>[1]</sup></b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Deliverable 1</b> Draft Capstone Proposal	Week 4 2/3/2025 at 11:59pm PST	CR/NC
<b>Deliverable 2</b> Revised Capstone Proposal and Action Plan	Week 8 3/3/2025 at 11:59pm PST	CR/NC
<b>Deliverable 3</b> Capstone Oral Presentations and Discussion Session w/ CPMT and Instructor	Week 9, 10, 11 3/10/2025, 3/24/2025, and 3/31/2025	CR/NC

<sup>[1]</sup> Please note that in some instances a deliverable due date may differ slightly among sections of this course. In those instances, due dates have been adapted to reflect the number of lesson weeks and University holidays for particular course sections.

**Descriptions of Deliverables**

An overview of each deliverable is presented below. Detailed instructions and grading guidelines for each assignment will be disseminated by the instructor.

***Deliverable 1 – Draft Capstone Project Proposal***  
***Due: Week 4***

**Learning Objective: To demonstrate depth of understanding and emerging expertise about a social problem and a preliminary plan for work on a capstone problem of practice.**

The first requirement is to create a draft capstone proposal to elicit feedback from student colleagues (Capstone Peer Mentoring Team) and faculty during the Capstone Advising Meetings. The main elements of the proposal should include: 1) abstract, 2) problem statement, 3) theoretical and/or conceptual framework, 4) project description, 5) theory of change, 6) project objectives, 7) considerations and implications, and 8) action plan.

Specifically, the **abstract** should provide a brief overview of the proposed project. It should clearly and succinctly state the problem in focus and provide justification (including credible statistics and research) that supports the student's statement that it is indeed a problem of practice.

The **problem statement** section should explain briefly why the capstone project focuses on the specified problem of practice, how planned directions fit within the context of existing practice and solutions, and should draw heavily on work completed in SOWK 790 A and B. This discussion should be much more compact, however, than writing from SOWK 790 A and B.

**Conceptual and/or Theoretical Framework.** Describe the conceptual and/or theoretical framework that connects to the problem and design of the Capstone Project.

Drawing on design thinking and design justice principles, the **project description** should address the preliminary plan for engaging users and stakeholders in the solution. It should also clearly discuss all key aspects of the context in which the planned work will occur, including the student's role and relationships. This section should identify relevant stakeholders for the design team who are or may be involved and discuss who might be an appropriate external design partner.

The **theory of change** should be used to provide a rationale for the expected outcome and how the desired change will occur.

The **project objectives** should identify the planned outcomes and deliverables of your capstone project.

The **considerations and implications** section should address how the Capstone Project will contribute to the existing landscape and any limitations that might impact implementation.

The **action plan** should outline activities and timelines for achieving the set of objectives.

**A detailed Outline for the Capstone Draft Proposal and the required format will be provided. The length of the proposal should not exceed 15 pages (not including references).**

Draft proposals must be uploaded as a Word (.doc) file to the virtual platform by **Week 4**.

After uploading the proposal, students should schedule a time to give the members of their Capstone Peer Mentoring Team (CPMT) a 5 to 10-minute presentation using the Lean Canvas Template. In turn, every student must provide feedback on their CPTM's proposals. Feedback at this point should remain at a high-quality level (i.e., focusing on plausibility, design criteria, the preferences and/or needs of the target population). CPTM should understand that their feedback is valuable when it is explicit (i.e., addressing the potential outcomes the project could bring). Most feedback can be provided verbally and/or in writing and should allow the recipient to understand your primary reactions, questions, areas of concerns (e.g., limited opportunities to test ideas, resources needed, competitive environment). The feedback should not include value judgments or recommendations on how to improve the proposal.

**Grading** is "complete/incomplete" based on addressing all the required elements. A grade of "incomplete" will receive a conditional approval for the revised the proposal. The 725 instructor will provide the details on the terms of the conditional approval (including what sections of the proposal need to be further developed and/or revised).

***Deliverable 2*** – Revised Capstone Proposal & Action Plan ***Due: Week 8***

**Learning Objective: To prepare a complete capstone project proposal that addresses a social issue and/or a problem of practice, and directions to explore a proposed solution. The revised capstone proposal includes all required components and benefits from feedback and dialogue with peers, faculty, and stakeholders.**

The length of the capstone revised proposal should not exceed 15 pages. Proposals must be uploaded by **Week 8**.

When revising the draft capstone proposal, students are expected to integrate feedback from peers, faculty, stakeholders, Faculty Reviewer, and External Design Partner into the revised capstone proposal that includes a detailed action plan.

**The Capstone proposal should list faculty reviewer and the External Design Partner who is willing to review and support ongoing capstone project work. Once the revised capstone proposal is approved, students are expected to be fully engaged in completing the work proposed.**

**Your 725 instructor (the chair for your Capstone Project) must approve the External Design Partner and Faculty Reviewer, so this should be discussed in advance.** On occasion, your 725 instructor may ask for a follow-up meeting before the proposal is approved. Whether such an additional meeting occurs or not, all students should expect that your chair may request further updates as part of the approval process, meaning that you may be asked to make some additional adjustments or revisions to finalize the proposal.

**Deliverable 3 - Capstone Oral Presentations and Discussion Session w/ CPMT and Instructor** *Due: Weeks 9, 10 or 11*

**Learning Objective: To synthesize and process key issues in designing a Capstone Project in the context of a learning community that includes peers and faculty.**

When you make your capstone oral presentation, you only need to present a basic overview of your proposed project using the **Lean Canvas Template**. This format will allow each presenter to facilitate a discussion with peers and faculty about issues and ideas that they are grappling with.

Each presenter will have 20 minutes for the proposal presentation session, ideally using 10 minutes for initial framing of the proposed capstone project and 10 minutes for feedback, questions, comments, and discussion. At the end of the discussion, plan to synthesize the key issues and discussion points so you can integrate new ideas and directions into your final capstone proposal.

**Grading** is “complete/incomplete” based on addressing all the required elements of the capstone proposal.

A grade of “incomplete” will receive a conditional approval for the revised the proposal. The 725 instructor will provide the details on the terms of the conditional approval (including what sections of the proposal need to be further developed and/or revised).

**Assignment and course grades** will be based on the following:

This course is Credit/No Credit. Credit is the passing mark for non-letter-graded courses. Equivalent to B quality or better for graduate courses There is no effect on a student’s GPA.

A No Credit grade for graduate course work, is work that is less than the equivalent of B quality work. There is no effect on GPA. However, if students receive a No Credit, they may not continue to the next part of the series (for example: if a student’s Capstone Proposal is not accepted, then they cannot continue onto SOWK 725b). If students receive a No Credit in 725a, they must retake the course.

Within the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, grades are determined in each class based on the following standards which have been established by the faculty of the School: (1) Grades of A or A- are reserved for student work which not only demonstrates very good mastery of content but which also shows that the student has undertaken a complex task, has applied critical thinking skills to the assignment, and/or has demonstrated creativity in her or his approach to the assignment. The difference between these two grades would be determined by the degree to which these skills have been demonstrated by the student. (2) A grade of B+ will be given to work which is judged to be very good. This grade denotes that a student has demonstrated a more-than-competent understanding of the material being tested in the assignment. (3) A grade of B will be given to student work which meets the basic requirements of the assignment. It denotes that the student has done adequate work on the assignment and meets basic course expectations. (4) A grade of B- will denote that a student's performance was less than adequate on an assignment, reflecting only moderate grasp of content and/or expectations. (5) A grade of C would reflect a minimal grasp of the assignments, poor organization of ideas and/or several significant areas requiring improvement. (6) Grades between C- and F will be applied to denote a failure to meet minimum standards, reflecting serious deficiencies in all aspects of a student's performance on the assignment.

#### **VII. Assignment Submissions, Extensions & Extra Credit Policy**

By the specified deadlines, assignments should be submitted through the course's learning management system (LMS). Students are responsible for ensuring successful submission of their assignments and are encouraged to maintain a copy of the submission confirmation for their records.

Prior to the due date, extensions may be granted for extenuating circumstances at the instructor's discretion. The instructor will confirm an extension and revised due date in writing/email. If the instructor accepts a late submission, it could be marked down for each day late. Assignments submitted more than one week past the posted due date may not be accepted for grading; however, this is at the instructor's discretion, assuming extenuating circumstances. The instructor may require documentation of the extenuating circumstance in considering an extension request.

Once an assignment is graded, the grade is final, unless there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., error in determining grade, academic integrity violation). Extra credit on an assignment is not permitted.

#### **VIII. Grading Timeline**

Students should expect grading and feedback from the instructor within two weeks of assignment submission. The instructor will notify students of any extenuating circumstances that might affect this grading timeline.

#### **IX. Statement about Incompletes and In Progress Grades**

The grade of Incomplete (IN) can be assigned only if a student is in good standing in the course and the work left to be completed is due to a documented illness or some other



emergency occurring after the 12th week of the semester. Students must NOT assume that the instructor will agree to the grade of IN. Removal of the grade of IN must be initiated by the student and agreed to by the instructor and reported on the official “Incomplete Contract Completion Form.”

## **X. Attendance**

As a professional school, class attendance and participation are essential to students’ professional training and development at the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the class. Students cannot actively, proactively, or meaningfully contribute to a positive learning environment if they are not in attendance. Students are expected to notify the instructor by email of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students’ observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements in advance to complete class work that will be missed or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

Please refer to the [USC Student Handbook](#) and to the USC School of Social Work Student Handbook for additional information on attendance policies.

## **XI. Classroom Norms**

Class ground rules help to promote a positive learning environment by specifying behaviors that are encouraged and discouraged. The instructor will facilitate a class discussion to generate mutually agreed upon ground rules for the learning environment.

## **XII. Zoom Etiquette and Use of Technology in the Classroom**

Students on zoom should have cameras on, unless there are extenuating circumstances shared with the instructor. As much as possible, students are requested to be mindful of appropriate classroom behavior and professionalism (for example, students are encouraged to refrain from smoking, drinking alcohol, or multi-tasking). Also, as much as possible, students should have a dedicated workspace where they can attend synchronous sessions where they will not be disturbed by other people.

The use of laptops, tablets, smart phones during class generally is recommended to contribute to their learning and engagement in class activities. The use of technology should not be distracting to student engagement in the learning process.

## **XIII. 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. Students 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 \(OAI\)](#).

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

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [Student Handbook](#), the [Office of Academic Integrity’s website](#), and [university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

### **Special Note on the Use of AI Generators**

AI generators, such as such as ChatGPT4 and Bard, can be useful tools. However, AI programs do not replace human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. AI text generators also may present incorrect or biased information and incomplete analyses. Within limited circumstances, with instructor permission and proper disclosure and attribution (see [USC Libraries’ generative AI guide](#)), AI generators may be permitted in this course, per the University’s academic integrity regulations. Using these tools without the instructor’s permission, and without proper attribution and disclosure, constitutes a violation of academic integrity and will be reported to the [Office of Academic Integrity](#).

### **XIV. Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings**

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 is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials.

This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media (Living our Unifying Values: [The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

## **XV. Course Evaluations**

The USC Learning Experience evaluation occurs at the end of each semester. This evaluation is an important review of students' experiences in the class. The process and intent of the end-of-semester evaluation will be discussed in class by the instructor. In addition to the end-of-semester evaluation, a mid-semester evaluation is implemented in the School of Social Work. The process and intent of the mid-semester evaluation also will be discussed by the instructor.

## **XVI. Required Textbooks**

Grand Challenge and Problem of Practice Specific Bibliographies. Students are encouraged to continue building an active bibliography related to their Capstone Project. This is expected to be a diversity of content including peer reviewed books and articles, professional reports, policy analysis, podcasts, reputable blogs, institutional websites, periodicals, etc.

Students may also reference books and articles used in previous coursework, especially as it relates to design thinking, design justice, and the Grand Challenges of Social Work.

In addition to the required texts, other required readings are available through USC's online reserves system, ARES, and/or in the USC Libraries. A USC email address and password are required to access the system: <https://reserves.usc.edu/ares/ares.dll>. Use the search bar to locate the course by School, course number or Lead Instructor's last name.

## **XVII. Recommended Materials & Resources**

Brown, M (Fall 2020) Unpacking the theory of change. Stanford Social Innovation Review, 44-50.

Grant, C. and Osanloo, Azadeh (2014) Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation. Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting, Education, Practice and Research, 4(2),12-26.

Costanza-Chock, S. (2020). *Design justice: Community-led practices to build the worlds we need*. The MIT Press.

Ogilvie, T., & Liedtka, J. (2011). *Designing for growth: A design thinking toolkit for managers*.

[https://uosc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01USC\\_INST/tt7nj9/alma991043217469703731](https://uosc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01USC_INST/tt7nj9/alma991043217469703731)

Liedtka, J., Ogilvie, T., & Brozenske, R. (2019). *The designing for growth field book: A step-by-step project guide*.

[https://uosc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01USC\\_INST/tt7nj9/alma991043229628903731](https://uosc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01USC_INST/tt7nj9/alma991043229628903731)

## **Guides for Academic Integrity, APA Style Formatting, Writing & Research**

American Psychological Association (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Publisher.

APA formatting and style guide: The OWL at Purdue.  
<https://owl.purdue.edu/>

USC guide to avoiding plagiarism:  
<https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/plagiarism>

USC guide to APA 7<sup>th</sup> writing style <https://libguides.usc.edu/APA7th>

## **Sample List of Professional Social Work Organizations**

National Association of Social Workers. Available at <http://www.naswdc.org>

Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research.  
Available at <http://www.iaswresearch.org>

Society for Social Work and Research. Available at <http://www.sswr.org>

Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Available at <https://www.cswe.org/>

### XVIII. Course Schedule

The table below presents the topics for each unit of instruction. Students are expected to attend class having completed the required reading and, if applicable, the asynchronous course material.

Unit	Topic	Milestone	Deliverable Due Dates
<b>1</b> January 13, 2025	Introduction to 725a  Review Outline for the Capstone Proposal  Review Design Thinking Methodology, Design Criteria & Design Justice Principles  Community Design Teams and Capstone Review Committee	Review of design thinking & design justice principles	
<b>2</b> January 20, 2025	<b>UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday</b>		
<b>3</b> January 27, 2025	3-minute Napkin Pitch on Theory for Change & Logic Model		
<b>4</b> February 3, 2025	3-minute Pitch on Theoretical/Conceptual Framework for Capstone Project		<b>Deliverable 1: Draft Capstone Proposal Due Feb., 3, 2025 @11:59pm PST</b>
<b>5</b> February 10, 2025	Capstone Advising Session w/ Instructor		
<b>6</b> February 17, 2025	<b>UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY President's Day</b>		
<b>7</b> February 24, 2025	Capstone Peer Mentoring Team Meeting		
<b>8</b> March 3, 2025	Capstone Peer Mentoring Team Meeting		<b>Deliverable 2: Revised Proposal Due Mar 3, 2025, @11:59pm PST</b>
<b>9</b> March 10, 2025	Oral Presentation and Discussion Session w/ CPMT and Instructor		<b>Deliverable 3 In-Class Mar 10, 2025</b>

Unit	Topic	Milestone	Deliverable Due Dates
March 17, 2025 NO CLASS	<b>SPRING BREAK: March 17-23, 2025</b>		
<b>10</b> March 24, 2025	Oral Presentation and Discussion Session w/ CPMT and Instructor		<b>Deliverable 3 In-Class Mar 24, 2025</b>
<b>11</b> March 31, 2025	Oral Presentation and Discussion Session w/ CPMT and Instructor		<b>Deliverable 3 In-Class Apr 7, 2025</b>
<b>12</b> April 7, 2025	Preparing for SOWK 725B Using the Design Thinking Tools for the “What If” Stage		

### SOWK 725a Recommended Course Schedule

#### Overview

The capstone mentorship structure involves integrative seminar weeks and capstone peer mentoring team meetings. During the integrative seminar weeks, live sessions will typically focus on the key features included in the design criteria for the Capstone Project. The design process will be based on research and interviews with stakeholders and end users to develop a proposed solution or portfolio of solutions to a problem of practice in an organizational setting. Students will be asked to reflect on their process, including feedback from stakeholders, end users, community design teams, and peers. The in-class sessions will generally involve large group discussion time, breakout time with Capstone Peer Mentoring Team to discuss, present, and apply the design thinking and design justice principles to one’s own capstone design process.

#### Unit 1: Course Overview

January 13, 2025

#### Topics

- Course Overview
- Capstone Proposal
- Design Thinking Methodology, Design Criteria, and Design Justice Principles
- Creating Community Design Teams
- Capstone Review Committee
- Revising Problem Statement & Expanding Solution Landscape Analysis

### Required Viewing

- Capstone exemplar #1: Police and Social Justice : Interview with Robert Hernandez

## Unit 2: Methodological Framework and Opportunity for Developing the Capstone Project

January 20, 2025

NO CLASS

### Topics

- Theory for Change and Logic Model
- Context for Capstone Work
- 3-minute Napkin Pitch

### Required Readings

- Brown, M. (Fall 2020). Unpacking the theory of change. Stanford Social Innovation Review, pp. 44-50
- Logic Model Development Guide. (2004) W.K. Kellogg Foundation, pp.1-12.

### Required Viewing

- Capstone exemplar #2: An Innovative Look at Implicit Bias: Interview with James Bell III
- Capstone exemplar #3: Mailbox for the Homeless: Interview with Ashley Steves

## Unit 3: Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

January 27, 2025

### Topics

- Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

### Required Reading

- [Grant, C. & Osanloo, A. \(2014\) Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation. Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting, Education, Practice and Research, 4\(2\),12-26.](#)

### Required Viewing

- Capstone exemplar #4: Juvenile Detention Prevention: Interview with Malukah Marrus
- Capstone exemplar #5: Technology to Monitor and Improve Emotional Health in Children: Interview with Trysha Mazzola

#### **Unit 4: Capstone Advising w/ Instructor**

February 3, 2025

##### Topics

- Progress Report on capstone work
- Communication Plan with the Capstone Review Committee Members
- Action Plan for the Capstone Project

#### **Unit 5: Capstone Advising w/ Instructor**

February 10, 2025

##### Topics

- Progress Report on capstone work
- Communication Plan with the Capstone Review Committee Members
- Action Plan for the Capstone Project

#### **Unit 6: Capstone Advising w/ Instructor**

February 17, 2025

##### Topic

- Consultation meeting and facilitated discussion on capstone proposal

#### **Unit 7: Capstone Advising w/ Instructor**

February 24, 2025

##### Topic

- Consultation meeting and facilitated discussion on capstone proposal
- 

#### **Unit 8: Capstone Advising w/ Instructor**

March 3, 2025

##### Topic

- Consultation meeting and facilitated discussion on capstone proposal

#### **Unit 9: Capstone Oral Presentation and Discussion Session w/ CPMT and Instructor**

March 10, 2025

##### Topic

- Presentation and facilitated discussions on capstone proposal



**Spring Break (NO CLASS) March 17-23, 2025**

**Unit 10: Capstone Oral Presentation and Discussion Session w/  
CPMT and Instructor**

**March 24, 2025**

Topic

- Presentation and facilitated discussions on capstone proposal

**Unit 11: Capstone Oral Presentation and Discussion Session w/  
CPMT and Instructor**

**March 31, 2025**

Topic

- Presentation and facilitated discussions on capstone proposal

**Unit 12: Preparing for SOWK 725B**

**April 7, 2025**

Topics

- Prototyping & Testing
- Action Plan for the Design Team and Capstone Review Committee

## **XIX. University Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

### **Academic Integrity**

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, comprises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. Students may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

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](#).

Please ask the instructor if unsure about what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

### **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 in the classroom or in practicum. 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/practicum placement. The LOA must be given to each course/practicum 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). Students may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu).

## **Support Systems**

Students' health and well-being are important. Reaching out for assistance with physical, emotional, social, academic, spiritual, financial, and professional wellbeing is encouraged. USC has resources and support systems in place to help students succeed. Additional resources can be found on the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Website at: <https://dworakpeck.usc.edu/student-life/we-care-student-wellness-initiative> or by reaching out to the Student Wellness Coordinator in the SDP Office of Associate Dean of Academic Affairs ([sdp.adc@usc.edu](mailto:sdp.adc@usc.edu)).

### **Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call**

Free and confidential mental health treatment for campus-based students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

### **VAC Students: Uwill Counseling Services**

Uwill is a counseling service available to VAC students. It is designed to support students during their time in the program. Uwill is a leading teletherapy platform that enables college students nationwide to receive real-time counseling online from a network of licensed mental health professionals. Students (enrolled or on leave of absence) can access up to six sessions (180 credits) per year with a licensed clinician at no cost to them.

### **Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call**

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

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

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

### **Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298**

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX 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.

Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity - 213-740-7884, [kortschakcenter@usc.edu](mailto:kortschakcenter@usc.edu)  
The Kortschak Center offers academic coaching and resources.

The Writing Center - 213-740-3691, [writing@usc.edu](mailto:writing@usc.edu)  
The Writing Center offers individualized feedback on any kind of writing.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 740-0411  
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - (213) 740-2101  
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call  
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call  
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)  
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice - (323) 442-2850 or [otfp@med.usc.edu](mailto:otfp@med.usc.edu)  
Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call  
The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

## **XXII. List of Appendices**

- A. Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work ADEI Statement
- B. Preamble to the NASW Code of Ethics
- C. Tips for Maximizing Your Learning Experience

### **Appendix A: Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work Anti-Racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement**

At the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, we aspire to promote anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion in our courses and professional practice. We value the diverse backgrounds and perspectives that our students bring into the classroom as strengths and resources that enrich the academic and learning experience. We offer and value inclusive learning in the classroom and beyond. We integrate readings, materials and activities that are respectful of diversity in all forms, including race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, ability and disability, socioeconomic status, religion, and political perspectives. Collectively, we aspire to co-create a brave space with students and instructors to critically examine individual and collective sources of bias, prejudice, discrimination, and systematic oppression that affect the ability of people and communities to thrive. In this way, we fulfill our professional responsibility to practice the [NASW Code of Ethics](#), abide by the [CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards](#), and address the [American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare, Grand Challenges for Social Work](#).

### **Appendix B: [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#)**

*Approved by the 1996 NASW Delegate Assembly and revised by the 2017 NASW Delegate Assembly*

#### **Preamble**

The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty. A historic and defining feature of social work is the profession's focus on individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society. Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.

Social workers promote social justice and social change with and on behalf of clients. "Clients" is used inclusively to refer to individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. These activities may be in the form of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Social workers seek to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs. Social workers also seek to promote the responsiveness of organizations, communities, and other social institutions to individuals' needs and social problems.

The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These core values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purpose and perspective:

- service
- social justice
- dignity and worth of the person
- importance of human relationships
- integrity
- competence

This constellation of core values reflects what is unique to the social work profession. Core values, and the principles that flow from them, must be balanced within the context and complexity of the human experience.

### **Appendix C: Tips for Maximizing Your Learning Experience in this Course**

- ✓ Be proactive! TOGETHER, let's do everything we can to make this an educational and enjoyable experience for you. Try to anticipate issues that could present challenges and PLEASE REACH OUT TO ME so that we can problem-solve before rather than after the fact.
- ✓ Be mindful of getting proper nutrition, exercise, rest, and sleep!
- ✓ Create a professional self-care plan.
- ✓ Complete required readings, assignments, and activities before coming to class.
- ✓ Keep up with the assigned readings and assignments. Don't procrastinate!!
- ✓ Come to class and participate in an active, respectful, and meaningful way.
- ✓ Come to class prepared to ask any questions you might have. If you don't understand something, ask questions! Ask questions in class, during office hours, and/or through email!
- ✓ Stay offline while in class.
- ✓ Form study groups with other students in the class or in another section of the class.
- ✓ Take advantage of office hours and extra review/discussion sessions offered by your instructor. Contact me if you are concerned about or are struggling in class.
- ✓ If you believe it is necessary to receive support from a content tutor or Writing Support, please inform or involve me. I want to be able to help and support you in any way possible, but I need to know that you want/need support!! I am also happy to meet with you and your tutor.
- ✓ Keep an open mind and positive attitude!