



**University of Southern California**  
**Department of American Studies and Ethnicity**  
**GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
 SPRING 2024

For the University’s official policies please see the *USC Catalogue*, the document of authority for all students. The degree requirements listed in the *USC Catalogue* supersede any information that may be contained in any bulletin of any school or department.

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## **WELCOME LETTER FROM THE INTERIM DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

Congratulations and welcome to the Ph.D. program in American Studies and Ethnicity (ASE). You are now a member of an extraordinary multidisciplinary program and community of scholarship. This year is the first step in a long and rewarding journey and we are glad you have joined our community at ASE.

The purpose of the graduate handbook is to guide you through the work of a graduate student, the doctoral program expectations in American Studies and Ethnicity and your experience as a student at USC.

Students have three phases in their graduate program career. The first phase is coursework. The second is preparation for your qualifying examinations. And the third is your dissertation—your original scholarly contribution and the pinnacle of achievement. In order to ensure a smooth progression, we have prepared this handbook to share the rules, expectations and common practices around these three phases of a graduate student career. This handbook will help you think about and plan for each of these periods.

Beyond the basic rules and requirements, there are many other aspects related to becoming a professional scholar the handbook addresses ranging from finding the courses you need, to professional development and developing and completing a dissertation. We expect that you also will be gathering information and advice from faculty and more senior graduate students in the program and at USC.

Shawn McDaniel is the Director of Graduate Studies and will be conducting the fall orientation. If you have any questions that your advisor cannot answer or administrative inquiries, do not hesitate to contact him ([shawnm@usc.edu](mailto:shawnm@usc.edu)).

Our support staff is also available to help out with procedures for registration and other logistical details. Kitty Lai is the Graduate Staff Advisor and your central contact person on the staff. Sonia Rodriguez is the Office Manager for the Department, and Jujuana Preston is the Administrative Assistant who coordinates appointments for you with Shawn McDaniel and with myself. Please communicate with all of them individually by email. You may also reach them during business hours on the main department phone line: (213) 740-2426.

Once again, welcome to the department and wishing you a fantastic beginning to your graduate studies!

Sarah Gualtieri  
Interim Department Chair

## American Studies and Ethnicity

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Department of American Studies & Ethnicity's (ASE) mission is to educate in the comprehensive analysis of race and ethnicity and engage students and the public to understand diversity, the consequences of disparity and inequity, and the enactment of community and citizenship at multiple scales in Los Angeles, California, the United States and the world. We seek to investigate and explain stratification based on race, gender, sexuality, religion, and class and examine the texture of lived experience and imagination of varied communities and their struggles towards equity and justice.

Our signature department profile consists of:

Ethnic & Racial Studies  
Power and Social Justice Studies  
Gender & Sexuality Studies  
Transnational/Global Studies

~ Adopted by ASE Core Faculty on March 28, 2013

## GRADUATE STUDENTS

### Incoming Graduate Students

**Aaliyah Allen (She/Her)** (aaliyaha@usc.edu) graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in American Studies and Music in May 2023. She is interested in race, popular music, performance studies, Black feminism, and sonic politics. Motivated by questions around the legacies of racial and sonic segregation embedded in the creation and marketing of popular music, her research examines the stakes of representation, racial authenticity, and transgressive femininities within the performance styles of Black female rappers such as Doja Cat and Megan Thee Stallion. Allen's first year advisor is Oneka LaBennett.

**Kelso Bechtol (They/Them)** (bechtol@usc.edu) graduated from California State University, Long Beach (cum laude) in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies in 2019, and received a Master's degree in Women and Gender Studies in 2022 from San Francisco State University. Bechtol focuses on queer and trans theories of late capitalism, and is influenced by positionality as a working-class trans person from Oklahoma. Bechtol plans to explore rural transgender resistance presented in interviews, historical records, labor theories, and media, making use of the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives at USC, and continuing to conduct semi-structured interviews of rural trans voices. Bechtol's first year advisor is Karen Tongson.

**Venus Green (She/Her)** (qsgreen@usc.edu) graduated from Williams College in American Studies and Chicano/Latino Studies in 2021, and is expected to get a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Rutgers this May 2023. Green's research focuses on Black queer and trans cultural production and socio-political history in the Americas and the Caribbean, from the 1970s to the 1990s. Green's theoretical approach utilizes an intersectional lens including queer of color critique, Black feminist thought, ethnic studies, and sociology to document the geographies of movement, performance styles and political struggles negotiated within Black and brown queer and trans public performance spaces such as clubs, shelters and parks. Green's first year advisor is Oneka LaBennett.

**Nicole Oveisi (She/Her)** (noveisi@usc.edu) graduated from UC Berkeley in Geography and African Studies in 2017, and received a Master of Science degree in Geography from George Washington University in 2021. Oveisi is interested in using Black Feminist analysis in conversation with Critical Iranian Studies, bringing Arab/Iranian frameworks of analysis to Africana Studies. Specifically, Oveisi plans to shed light on the ways in which race, class, and ethnicity in America are rooted in and shaped by anti-Blackness, and how Iranians and SWANA peoples achieve varying degrees of safety and class mobility in the West through the constant negation of their own non-white identities, through use of a variety of qualitative research methodologies, including feminist approaches, oral histories, archival research and discourse analysis, participatory action research, and holding interviews and questionnaires. Oveisi's first year advisor is Sarah Gualtieri.

**Irina Sandoval (She/Her)** (irinasan@usc.edu) graduated from Dartmouth College in June 2023 in Latin American Studies. Her scholarly interests lie in Latinx diasporic studies, food culture, the obesity epidemic, race and migration, gendered labor, urban studies, environmental and spatial studies, affect and embodiment. Having written an undergraduate thesis exploring how the "obesity epidemic" in the early 2000s was used to racialize Latinx people in Huntington Park, California, Sandoval plans to bring visual approaches such as research-based photography and ethnography to document the built environment and architecture of Huntington Park as a way of indexing the city's food culture and illuminating questions around food access. Incorporating mother-daughter conversations, Sandoval wants to understand how women and femmes live within this complex food ecology and internalize gendered criticisms of Latinx bodies, diets, lifestyles, and parenting. Sandoval's first year advisor is Juan De Lara.

## **Continuing Graduate Students**

**Adrienne Adams** (atadams@usc.edu) graduated from Occidental College with a B.A. in Critical Theory & Social Justice. Their current research traces the production and circulation of print and audiovisual materials among black diasporic queer/trans erotic information networks in the late 20th century. The movement of these materials—magazines, newsletters, porn videos, and letter correspondence—across the Spanish Caribbean and Anglophone Atlantic offer fertile ground to rethink the historical grammars and cartographies of black internationalism, racial capitalism, and mundane technologies (i.e. the printer). Adams' work has been supported by grants and fellowships from the Ford Foundation, Point Foundation, Elton John AIDS Foundation, among others. Mentor: Shawn McDaniel

**Megan Awwad** (mrawwad@usc.edu) received an MA in Environment and Community from Humboldt State University in 2020 and a BA in Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, and Middle East Studies from UC-Riverside in 2015. Megan's master's thesis, "Retelling Narratives of Eco-Memory: Settler Colonialism and Carceral Occupation of the Jordan River," argues that with the expansion of the Zionist settler colonial state, the Jordan River goes from a natural border to a militarized and carceral space, and a tourist destination. Megan is interested in interrogating the ways in which the state's management of land and the environment in the United States and Israel intricately exhibits and advances settler colonial logics, racial tensions, and the dispossession of vulnerable communities. Mentors: Evelyn Alsultany/Sarah Gualtieri

**Ana Briz** (briz@usc.edu) obtained a BA in Art History at Florida International University and is currently completing an MA in Curatorial Practices at USC's Roski School of Art and Design. Her undergraduate and MA research has consistently focused on feminist issues in art history, questions of sex and gender in the frame of indigeneity, colonization, and decolonization, and on the work of women artists—from Tracey Emin (for her undergraduate thesis) to Xandra Ibarra, radical Chicana queer feminist performance artist from California (for her MA thesis). Mentor: Amelia Jones

**Cathleen Calderon** (ccaldero@usc.edu) received her BA from Yale in Ethnic Studies where she wrote a thesis entitled, "Everything we do is Cuauhtémoc: Dance as Political Education, Resistance." She is also interested in answering questions of indigeneity to understand what kind of indigenous identity the group claims and asserts, and questions of danza as an embodied cultural knowledge. In the PhD program she will investigate what political and economic processes have shaped the ethnic- and class-based divisions between Valley neighborhoods and how these place-based distinctions are represented in landscapes and embodied by residents of color. Mentor: George Sanchez

**Aurélien Davennes** (davennes@usc.edu) is a scholar interested in gender studies, queer theory, intersectionality, black feminist theory, and social movements. Originally from a small town on the (very conservative) French southern coast, Aurélien moved to Paris as a student, where he completed undergraduate and graduate work at some of France's most select institutions while also serving as an active member of G.A.R.Ç.E.S., a feminist & LGBTQ French collective. He completed the equivalent of a BA degree in Political Science before pursuing two MA degrees: one in Public Affairs at the Institut des sciences politiques de Paris (the Institute of Political Studies, Paris), and a second one in Sociology completed (with honors) at the Ecole de Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (School for the Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences). For the latter, Aurélien wrote a thesis entitled "Race, Politics, and Sexuality: An Intersectional Perspective on the French LGBTQ Movement." Along the way, Aurélien was a press assistant at the French Consulate in San Francisco during the 2009-2010 school year, and also participated in a documentary comparative study of sexual violence on university campuses in US and France. For his PhD project, Aurélien plans on extending his MA research to a comparative study of LGBTQ activism, focusing in particular in the marginalized suburbs surrounding France's major cities, *les banlieues*. Mentor: Oneka LaBennett

**Arabella Delgado** (ad22789@usc.edu) attended the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor where she graduated with majors in American Culture (honors) and Anthropology degree in May 2020. Her research interests revolve around the representation of Mexican and Mexican American history in historic preservation along the U.S.-Mexico border and the impact this has on public history and identity. Her honors thesis, "A Museum in the Streets: Preservation and Public History in Downtown El Paso, Texas," in American Culture examines historic preservation in downtown El Paso, Texas and the history that is preserved and excluded in the urban landscape. Mentor: George Sánchez

**Nicholas Derda** (derda@usc.edu) received his degree in Gender and Sexuality Studies at George Washington University. For the PhD, Derda will pursue a project in queer theory, biomedicine, race, disability and analysis of HIV/AIDS. He is fluent in Spanish and worked with Latinx and African American queer and feminist communities. Mentor: Nayan Shah

**Karlynn-Aila Ejercito** (kejercit@usc.edu) graduated from Reed College in 2011 with a degree in German Studies and then went to Germany to study at the Freie Universität. She speaks three languages – English, German and Tagalog and has interests in the history of the American left and Third-Worldism during the Cold War and the formation and self-determination of the Asian-American middle class. Professor Amelia Jones is very excited to work with this student. Mentors: Adrian De Leon and Viet Thanh Nguyen

**Alejandro Comas-Short** - comassho@usc.edu  
Alejandro received a Masters Degree (MSc) in Migration Studies from Lincoln College, University of Oxford in 2020 and a BA in Ethnicity, Race and Migration from Yale in 2019. Alejandro's Masters thesis examined how the cultural content of Latin American immigrants in Spain reflects and engages with questions of historical empire and the comparatively preferential immigration status set by the Spanish state. At USC, Alejandro would like to critically examine contemporary Latin popular music (urbano) as containing the most globalized and international representations of Latin America, particularly the Caribbean. Mentor: Josh Kun

**Rojeen Harsini** (harsini@usc.edu) received a BA in Literary Journalism from the University of California, Irvine, Irvine CA and is currently completing her MA Thesis, "Race and Belonging: First and Second Generation Iranian Americans' Quest for Self," in American Studies at Columbia University. In her doctoral studies, she wishes to examine how first-generation Iranians adopt Orientalism, how Iranian nationalism promotes Islamophobia, and how second-generation Iranians identify with and as people of color and negotiate the first generation's Islamophobia. Mentor: Evelyn Alsultany

**Sabina Hills-Villalobos** (hillsvil@usc.edu) received her B.A. in American Studies at Scripps College. As a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow, she completed her thesis, "Beyond Bob Dylan." In her graduate studies, she is exploring the pop culture studies, media studies, and queer community studies, with a focus on sound studies, particularly as it relates to diaspora studies. Mentor: Karen Tongson

**Rachel Klein** (rklein@usc.edu) earned her B.F.A from George Mason University with a double major in Dance African & African American Studies. She went on to earn her MA in Global Journalism and Africana Studies Program from New York University. Since 2017, she has worked as a staff writer for *Salon*, the online news site which focuses on U.S. politics, culture, and current events. During her tenure at Salon, Klein has used a gender analysis in her articles in topics ranging from music and popular culture to violence and white supremacy. Klein intends to build upon the important work she did as a staff writer in the area of women's imprisonment by using a gendered lens to study the carceral state. Mentors: Francille Wilson and George Sanchez

**Julian Kuffour** - kuffour@usc.edu

Julian received a BA in Law, History, and Culture with a minor in Gender and Sexuality Studies from USC in 2022. Julian's undergraduate thesis "War on Time: Blackness in Ontological Superposition" argues that gender assignation relies on a chronopolitical abstraction that intersects with ideas about antiblackness. At USC, Julian plans to expand on this thesis by focusing on the ways in which gender assignation intersects with psychoanalysis, individuation, and ideas about Blackness. Mentor: Nayan Shah

**Rocío León** (rociolo@usc.edu) is a Doctoral Candidate in the American Studies and Ethnicity program at the University of Southern California, where her training has focused on Latinx media studies, globalization, visual culture, and humor studies. Her dissertation, "Latinx Mediascapes: Billennials, Spanish-Language Television, and Digital Culture" analyzes the dialogical, economic, and cultural exchanges between the content of Netflix Spanish-language series, show runners' creative intent, and transnational audience engagement. Focusing on the U.S., Mexico, and Colombia, this project uses Netflix Spanish-language content as a node to understand the formation of Latinidad on a global scale. Rocío received an MA in American Studies from Purdue University and a BA in Liberal Arts from Oberlin College. Mentor: Evelyn Alsultany

**Maya McKeev** - mlmckeev@usc.edu

Maya received a BA in Political Science with a minor in Africana Studies from Bucknell University in 2021. Maya's research focuses on Black, predominantly African American and Afro Latinx, populations to explore the differences and similarities between Black experiences in different regions impacted by chattel slavery. At USC, Maya would like to study how antiblackness is exercised, weaponized, and normalized in different regions of the world, whether within Latin American cultures or American cultures. The dissertation will examine the role of popular culture, content creators, and Black culture. Mentor: Oneka LaBennett

**Jaden Morales** (jadenmor@usc.edu) graduated from Yale University with a B.A. in Ethnicity, Race, and Migration in 2019. Recipient of Yale's Justice Carlos Moreno award for best senior thesis on Latinx experience in the U.S., their senior thesis, "Los Pepinianos de San Sebastián: Puerto Rican Diaspora and Reconciling Liminality Through Political Mobilization and Placemaking in Perth Amboy, New Jersey, 1960s-80s," observed how urban riots, bilingual student activism, and the formation of not-for-profit organizations between the 1960s and 1980s served as pivotal moments for Puerto Ricans from San Sebastian, Puerto Rico to assert membership and belonging. At USC, Jaden's research examines the social and political intimacies that link the geographies of Puerto Rico, the Caribbean, and the Global South across space, time, and empires vis-à-vis transnational circuits of bodies, knowledges, capital, and commodities. In doing so, Jaden seeks to interrogate distinct yet mutually constitutive histories of global racial capitalism, imperial dispossession, and de/coloniality. Mentor: Juan de Lara

**Deena Ziad Naime** (dnaime@usc.edu) is a PhD Candidate in the department of American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. Her dissertation is tentatively titled *Sobhiyat w Zyarat: Generations of Druze Feminism Through Shared Spaces, Emotional Intimacy, and Care (Work)*. Her project centers women's spaces fostered in Druze communities in the Levant and the North American diaspora in order to theorize the concept of Druze feminism - as well as the cultivation of spaces of intimacy and care among women as a potentially radical intervention in feminist research methodology. Naime also holds a BA in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and Middle Eastern Studies from California State University, Long Beach and MA in Women's Studies from San Diego State University where she wrote her thesis on Arab American women's disruption of mainstream "self-care" vis-à-vis U.S. neoliberal capitalism. She is invested in using academia as a site to co-create spaces both in- and outside of higher education through radical approaches of listening, feeling, and engaging - inspired by the Druze feminist praxis she theorizes. Mentor: Sarah Gualtieri

**Teraya Paramehta** (parameht@usc.edu) completed a MA with honors as a Fulbright scholar in Asian American Studies at San Francisco State University (2013) and, before that, a Bachelor of Arts in the Humanities in Jakarta at the Universitas Indonesia. She is broadly interested in literature of exile and migration, diasporic culture, state violence, and Southeast Asia during the cold war. Already an accomplished teacher and scholar, Teraya would like to conduct her dissertation project around post-9/11 discourse in the context of transpacific cultural production. Thinking from her position as an Indonesian woman, she interrogates the “us versus them” binary emerging out of terrorism discourses, ideas about national security, and identity formations as they play out beyond the borders of the United States. Teraya’s work examines how post-9/11 ideologies resonate across the Pacific,” often in contrast to the Atlantic. Teraya’s methods include postcolonial theory, intersectionality, and feminist thought. Mentor: Dorinne Kondo

**Rebekah Park** (rebekahp@usc.edu) holds a BA from and completed a senior honor’s thesis in the Department of Social and Cultural Analysis at NYU. Her background in interdisciplinary American and Ethnic studies makes her an exceptional candidate for doctoral level graduate work. Rebekah speaks Korean and Spanish and wrote a brilliant undergraduate thesis titled: “Kijich’on Prostitute, G.I. Bride, and Mail-Order Bride: Affective Agents of the U.S. – South Korean Relationship.” This thesis both bodes well for her ability to carry out research at the graduate level and it forms the foundation for advanced research that she proposes to carry out here at USC under the able mentorship of Professors Nguyen and Shah. Building on the work of Grace Cho, Crystal Parikh and others, Park proposes to continue studying the impact of militarism upon the varieties and forms of Korean femininity that developed in South Korea and in the US following the Korean War. Mentor: Viet Nguyen

**Kathy Pulupa** (kpulupa@usc.edu) completed a BA in Contemporary Latino and Latin American Studies major and Gender Studies minor at the University of Southern California. She has worked as a curator at the Boyle Heights Museum and as an assistant archivist at the ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives at the USC Libraries. She has participated in several programs outside of USC including, the Leadership Alliance Stanford at Stanford University, Voces Oral History Institute at University of Austin Texas, and the UCLA Summer Writing Institute, University of California Los Angeles. She will build on her Mellon Mays research in graduate school, expanding on her thesis, “Lesbian Latina Identity Preservation and Development through Soccer Leagues in Los Angeles,” which looks at how soccer impacts notions of sexual, familial, and national self-identification processes for first-generation and/or immigrant Lesbian Latinas. Mentor: George Sanchez

**Samia Saliba** – (ssaliba@usc.edu)  
Samia received a BA in History from Western Washington University in 2020. Samia's history thesis was titled, "Contested Markets: Criminality and Resistance in Argentina's Informal Sector During the Economic Crisis, 1998-2002." Samia's also wrote an honors thesis that was titled, "'We Know We Are Forgotten': Re-Centering Women in the Study of Economic Sanctions on Iraq, 1990-2003". At USC, Samia plans to study the gendered effects of economic subjugation, particularly sanctions, as a manifestation of American imperialism across the Middle East and Latin America. Samia will apply feminist theories of violence to analyze how political actors obscure the violence of sanctions by claiming that they are nonviolent. Mentor: Sarah Gualtieri

**Neud’s Saint-Cyr** (saintcyr@usc.edu) received her B.A. in Africana Studies and minor in chemistry at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. At USC, she mainly focuses on Caribbean studies, Black immigrants in the U.S., migration studies, ethnographic research methods, and cultural/visual analysis. She anticipates her research focusing on the lived realities of TPS holding/undocumented Haitians in the U.S. as they establish a place and space for themselves. Mentor: Oneka LaBennett



**Dillon Sung** (daslesun@usc.edu) is a multimedia artist and community organizer based in Southern California. The concern of her research as a Ph.D. student and Provost Fellow in American Studies & Ethnicity at USC is on the question of migrant self-determination. Her work considers the ways affective practices can generate resistive subject formations for the speculative potentialities of statelessness in the imperiling of notion(s) of citizenship, settler colonialism, and nation statehood. She has background in the fashion industry, grassroots and migrant justice organizing, and creating art and design for collectives and campaigns against deportation and state surveillance. She earned a B.F.A. in Fine Art with a thesis exhibition entitled "Speculative Geographies," which included works of installation, drawing, painting, video, and autoethnographic writings. She thinks through community organizing and scholarship from a discourse of social practice and is currently working to develop a community-based digital archive project in collaboration with the Stop LAPD Spying Coalition as a 2020 Rapid Response for a Better Digital Future Fellow at Eyebeam. Mentors: Viet Nguyen and Amelia Jones

**Suiyi Tang** – (suiyitan@usc.edu)

Suiyi received an MPhil in Gender Studies from the University of Cambridge in 2021 and a BA in American Studies and Comparative Literature from Williams College in 2020. Suiyi's MPhil thesis conducts a comparative reading of two Afrofuturist considerations of the Korean and Vietnam Wars—Lovecraft Country (2020) and Watchmen (2019)—to analyze the function of yellow feminine debility within narratives of multicultural U.S. empire. At USC, Suiyi will study U.S. textual and cinematic depictions of yellow women alongside declassified military and CIA archives of state enemies and allies in the Asian theater throughout the Cold War. The dissertation will examine how the state made sense of the racialized-gendered figure of the yellow woman and her political agency within the cultural memory and material afterlives of war. Mentor: Viet Nguyen

**Ann Tran** (ngtran@usc.edu) is a Ph.D. student in the Department of American Studies & Ethnicity at the University of Southern California. Her work explores the cultural and migration history of Vietnamese / American communities in the U.S. Gulf South, with specific attention to the struggles and experiences of fisher people who work in and around the Gulf of Mexico. Her research has been supported by the USC Center for Transpacific Research, the Portal to Texas History at UNT, and the Francis S. Summersell Center for the Study of the South, and the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South at Tulane University. Mentor: Viet Nguyen

**Carlo Gabriel Tuason** - ctuason@usc.edu

Carlo received an M.A. in Curatorial Practices in the Public Sphere from the University of Southern California in 2020 and a BM in Violin Performance as well as a BA in International Affairs from the University of Cincinnati. Carlo's MA thesis, *Competing Futures: The Art of Protest and Countervisuality in 2019 Hong Kong*, critically explores protest art and the cultural production of the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement in Hong Kong. At USC, Carlo would like to work on a project that situates visual complexes of power in Asia within global, transpacific, and diasporic contexts, particularly in relation to historical and contemporary forms of militarism, colonialism, and empire. Mentor: Adrian De Leon

**Zaina Ujayli** (ujayli@usc.edu) received an MA in English from the University of Virginia in 2020 and a BA in English and Business from Ohio State University in 2018. Zaina's master's thesis, "Arab American Patriotisms in The Syrian World," focuses on the twentieth century Arab diaspora in the Americas whose history is preserved in a transnational network of periodicals, with a focus on debates about race, empire, and assimilation. Zaina is interested in recovering the literature of Arab diaspora writers, especially writings by Arab women, and placing it in dialogue with other communities who write about immigrant and racial belonging. Mentors: Sarah Gualtieri/Evelyn Alsultany

**Michelle Vasquez Ruiz** (micheldv@usc.edu): Michelle Vasquez Ruiz's research interests stem from personal and professional experiences as a Zapotec indigenous immigrant from Oaxaca, Mexico. Michelle's scholarship centers on the Zapotec diaspora in Los Angeles and considers the

ways in which post-industrial urban space shapes immigrant experiences. Michelle completed a BA in Political Science and Chicano Studies at the University of California, Irvine before a Masters in Arts program in History at Cal State, LA. The title of the MA research project is "Solving the 'Indian Problem': Indian Relocation to Los Angeles County in the 1950s and 1960s." Michelle has participated in intensive indigenous language training and leadership programs, most recently the Indigenous Studies Summer Program on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Policy held at Columbia University. Michelle also served as National Coordinating Chair for the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA) and has also worked at a number of youth workshops related to the promotion of Chicano/Latino education. Mentor: George Sanchez

**Jason Vu** (jtvu@usc.edu) received a BA in Global Studies, Asian American Studies, and Linguistics from UCLA in 2021. Jason's undergraduate thesis, "'We Have Heart': Memory, Diaspora, and Refugee Resistance in Lan Nguyen's *Fighting for Family*," connects the histories of Vietnamese settler colonialism and American imperialism in Southeast Asia to the ongoing criminalization of Southeast Asian refugees in the U.S. Jason is interested in examining Southeast Asian refugees who escaped war in their homelands and now face a new threat in the form of U.S. detention and deportation, as well as the potential for solidarity between Indigenous and refugee communities as they engage in related yet distinct struggles against cycles of violence. Mentors: Viet Nguyen/Adrian De Leon

**Layla Zbinden** (lbritton@usc.edu) received a BA from the University of California, San Diego in Psychology with a minor in Critical Gender Studies in 2016 and an MA in Women's Studies from San Diego State University in 2018. They are interested in researching how discourses on national security impact Arab American communities, utilizing queer of color critique and disability studies as analytical lenses. Mentor: Evelyn Alsultany

## **American Studies and Ethnicity PhD Graduates**

**HEIDI AMIN-HONG**, Ph.D. 2021

Dissertation: A Contaminated Transpacific: Ecological Afterlives of the Vietnam War  
Current Position: Assistant Professor of English, UC Santa Barbara

**QUINN ANEX-RIES**, Ph.D. 2023

Dissertation: Revolution or Regulation?: Technology, Federal Policy, and the Politics of Sexuality in Postwar America  
Current Position: Policy Associate with the Lawyers's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (Washington, DC)

**MAYTHA ALHASSEN**, Ph.D. 2017

Dissertation: Tell What the Eye Beholds: A Post 1945 Transnational History of Afro-Arab "Solidarity Politics"  
Current Position: Associate Professor, Prescott College

**DEBORAH AL-NAJJAR**, Ph.D. 2017

Dissertation: Around 1991: Racial/Sexual Terror and U.S. Empire  
Current Position: Founder of Desirecompass Coaching

**SOPHIA AZEB**, Ph.D. 2016

Dissertation: Another Country: Black Americans, Arab Worlds, 1952-1979  
Current Position: Assistant Professor, Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Chicago

**CRYSTAL BAIK, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Mechanisms of Visibility: Korean Militarized Subjects, Critical Sensing, and The Decolonial Archive

Current Position: Associate Professor of Gender Studies and Sexuality Studies, UC Riverside

**LAURA BARRACLOUGH, Ph.D. 2006**

Dissertation: Rural Urbanism: Land Use Activism and the Cultural Politics of Spatial Exclusion

Current Position: Professor, American Studies Program, Yale University

**FLORIDALMA BOJ-LOPEZ, Ph.D. 2017**

Dissertation: Mobile Archives of Indigeneity: The Maya Diaspora and Cultural Production

Current Position: Assistant Professor in the César E. Chavez Department of Chicana/o Studies, University of California, Los Angeles

**JUNGMIWHA BULLOCK, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Multiracial Politics or the Politics of Being Multiracial?: Racial Theory, Civic Engagement and Socio-Political Participation in a Contemporary Society

Current Position: Visiting Scholar (Faculty Sponsor: Michael Omi), University of California, Berkeley; Founder, J.S. Bullock & Associates, LLC – Washington, D.C.

**ADAM BUSH, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Passing Notes in Class: Listening to Pedagogical Improvisations in Jazz History

Current Position: Provost for College Unbound, Founding Director of Curriculum for College Unbound, and the Co-Founder of the Center for the Transformation of Higher Education

**CECILIA CABALLERO, Ph.D. 2022**

Dissertation: "Porque Sin Madres No Hay Revolución": Mothering the Revolution in Contemporary Chicana/Latina Literature and Cultural Production

Position: Independent Scholar

**UMAYYAH CABLE, Ph.D. 2016**

Dissertation: Cinematic Activism: Film Festivals and the Exhibition of Palestinian Cultural Politics in the United States

Current Position: Assistant Professor, American Culture and Film, Television, and Media Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

**GENEVIEVE CARPIO, Ph.D. 2013**

Dissertation: From Citrus Belt to Inland Empire: Race, Place and Mobility in Southern California 1880-2000

Current Position: Associate Professor of Chicana/o Studies at UCLA. 2013-15 Clay Postdoctoral Fellowship at Yale University

**JOLIE CHEA, Ph.D. 2017**

Dissertation: Agents of War: Cambodian Refugees and the Containment of Radical Opposition

Current Position: Assistant Professor in Asian American Studies at UCLA.

**CHRISTOPHER CHIEN, Ph.D. 2023**

Dissertation: New Cold War Visuality: U.S., China, and Hong Kong Entanglement in the Cold War Transpacific

Current Position: 1) Postdoctoral Associate -- Transnational Asian Studies, Tulane University.  
2) Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Postdoctoral Fellow — Global Asia Program, Simon Fraser University

**JIH-FEI CHENG, Ph.D. 2015**

Dissertation: AIDS and its Afterlives: Race, Gender, and the Queer Radical Imagination

Current Position: Associate Professor, Department of Feminist, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Scripps College

**WENDY CHENG, Ph.D. 2009**

Dissertation: Episodes in the Life of a Place: Regional Racial Formation in Los Angeles's San Gabriel Valley

Current Position: Associate Professor of American Studies, Scripps College

**HUIBIN AMELIA CHEW, Ph.D. 2016**

Dissertation: The Revolution Will Come Home: Gendered Violence and Transformative Organizing from the Philippines to the U.S.

Current Position: Independent Scholar

**ATHIA CHOUDHURY, Ph.D. 2022**

Dissertation: Gut Cultures: Fat Matter(s) in Genealogies of Health, Nation, and Empire

Current Position: Postdoctoral Associate in Asian American and Diaspora Studies at Duke University.

**MICHELLE DENISE COMMANDER, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Flights of the Imagination: Black American Travelers Journey toward "Africa" in Brazil and Ghana

Current Position: Associate Director and Curator, Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture (2018-present).

**MICHAN CONNOR, Ph.D. 2008**

Dissertation: Conceptions of Cityhood: Municipal Boundaries, Place Entrepreneurs, and The Production of Race in Los Angeles County, 1926-1978

Current Position: Editor in Chief, History News Network, Department of History, George Washington University

**ANH THANG DAO-SHAH, Ph.D. 2012**

Dissertation: Writing Exile: Vietnamese Literature in the Diaspora

Current Position: Executive Director Equity and Belonging, John Muir Health at Walnut Creek, California

**JENNIFER DECLUE, Ph.D. 2015**

Dissertation: Specters of Miscegenation: Blood, Belonging, and the Reproduction of Blackness

Current Position: Assistant Professor, Women and Gender Studies Department, Smith College

**CAROLYN MARIE DUNN, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Carrying the Fire Home: Space, Place and Citizenship in the Diaspora Narratives of Joy Harjo, Arigon Starr, and Gayle Ross

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Theatre and Dance at California State University, Los Angeles

**ROBERT EAP, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Contested Commemorations: Violence and Memory in Cambodia

Current Position: Associate Director of Curriculum and Programming for the Cornell Prison Education Program

**TREVA ELLISON, Ph.D. 2015**

Dissertation: Towards a Politics of Perfect Disorder: Carceral Geographies, Queer Criminality, and Other Ways to Be

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at Pomona College

**ARACELI ESPARZA, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Activist Imagining and Imagined Solidarities: Chicana Literature, Central America, and Political Violence, 1981-2005

Current Position: Assistant Professor, English Department, Cal State University, Long Beach

**SARAH FONG, Ph.D. 2020**

Dissertation: Making Citizens: Racialization, Settler Colonialism, and the Logics of Social Welfare, 1865-1924

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Studies in Race, Colonialism, and Diaspora, Tufts University

**RYAN FUKUMORI, Ph.D. 2016**

Dissertation: The Motley Tower: Master Plans, Urban Crises, and Multiracial Higher Education in Postwar Los Angeles

Current Position: Independent Scholar

**LAURA FUGIKAWA, Ph.D. 2011**

Dissertation: Domestic Containment: Japanese Americans, Native Americans and the Cultural Politics of Relocation

Current Position: Assistant Professor, American Studies and Woman's Gender and Sexuality Studies at Colby College

**REBEKAH GARRISON, Ph.D. 2021**

Dissertation: Settler Responsibility: Island Relationality and Decolonial Solidarity

Current Position: Community Organizer, Hawai'i Peace and Justice

**KHADEEJAH AVVIRIN GRAY, Ph.D. 2022**

Dissertation: A Peculiar Paradise: Tribal Place, Property, and the Peripatetic Tradition in African American Literature

Current Position: Assistant Professor of English with Specialization in Indigenous Literature at Washington and Lee University

**KAI GREEN, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Into the Darkness: A Quare (Re)Membering of Los Angeles in a Time of Crises

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Women's Gender and Sexuality at Williams College.

2014-16 Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in African American Studies and Performance Studies at Northwestern University

**PERLA MINERVA GUERRERO, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Impacting Arkansas: Vietnamese and Cuban Refugees and Latina/o Immigrants, 1975-2005

Current Position: Associate Professor, American Studies & U.S. Latina/o Studies Program, University of Maryland, College Park

**EMMETT HARSIN DRAGER, Ph.D. 2022**

Dissertation: To Be Seen: Transsexuals and the Gender Clinics

Current Position: Postdoctoral Fellow of Trans/Queer Studies in the Department of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Missouri

**HUAN HE, Ph.D. 2022**

Dissertation: The Racial Interface: Informatics and Asian/America

Current Position: Postdoctorate Fellow at the University of Michigan's Digital Studies Institute;  
Assistant Professor of English (starting Fall 2023), Vanderbilt University

**ANALENA HOPE HASSBERG, Ph.D. 2015**

Dissertation: To Survive and Thrive: Food, Justice, and Cited Sovereignty in South LA

Current Position: Associate Professor of African American Studies, Department of Ethnic and  
Women's Studies, California Polytechnic State University, Pomona

**CHRISTINA HEATHERTON, Ph.D. 2012**

Dissertation: The Color Line and the Class Struggle: The Mexican Revolution and Convergences  
of Radical Internationalism, 1910-1946

Current Position: Associate Professor of American Studies and Human Rights, Trinity College,  
Connecticut

**JESUS J. HERNANDEZ, Ph.D. 2012**

Dissertation: Bastard Diasporas: Illegitimacy, Exile, and U.S. Cuban Cultural Politics

Current Position: Associate Director of Engaged Scholarship at The Swearer Center for Public  
Service, Brown University, where he also holds an appointment as Adjunct Assistant Professor of  
American Studies.

**EMILY HOBSON, Ph.D. 2009**

Dissertation: Imagining Alliance: Queer Anti-Imperialism & Race in California, 1966-1990

Current Position: Associate Professor in Women's Studies and History and Department Chair of  
Gender, Race and Identity Studies, University of Nevada, Reno.

**NICOLE HODGES-PERSLEY, Ph.D. 2009**

Dissertation: Sampling Blackness: Performing African Americanness in Hip-hop Theater and  
Performance

Current Position: Associate Professor of American Studies and African & African American  
Studies, Theater and Film, University of Kansas

**TODD HONMA, Ph.D. 2011**

Dissertation: Cartographies of Skin: Asian American Adornment and the Aesthetics of Race

Current Position: Associate Professor of Asian American Studies at Pitzer College.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ HOSANG, Ph.D. 2007**

Dissertation: Genteel Apartheid: Ballot Initiatives and Race-Making in Postwar

Current Position: Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity, Race and Migration at Yale  
University.

**SABRINA HOWARD, Ph.D. 2020**

Dissertation: Window Seat: Examining Public Space, Politics, and Social Identity through Urban  
Public Transportation

Current Position: Research Manager, The Institute for the Future in Palo Alto, California.

**SAM IKEHARA, Ph.D. 2023**

Dissertation: Air and Militarism in the Pacific Ocean

Current Position: University of California President's and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Critical Race & Ethnic Studies at the University of  
California, Santa Cruz

**HILLARY JENKS, Ph.D. 2008**

Dissertation: "Home Is Little Tokyo": Race, Community, and Memory in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles

Current Position: Coordinator, Graduate Writing Center at University of California, Riverside

**IMANI JOHNSON, Ph.D. 2009**

Dissertation: Dark Matter in B-Boying Cyphers: Race and Global Connection in Hip Hop

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Critical Dance Studies, UC Riverside

**NISHA KUNTE, Ph.D. 2012**

Dissertation: Moving Parts: Reconfiguring Corporeal Difference and the Human through Organ Transplant Narratives

Current Position: History and Social Studies Teacher at Sage Hill High School, California

**VIET LE, Ph.D. 2011**

Dissertation: Return Engagement: Contemporary Art's Traumas of Modernity and History in Diasporic Sài Gòn and Phnom Penh

Current Position: Associate Professor, Visual Studies Program, California College of the Arts, San Francisco

**PRISCILLA LEIVA, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Stadium Struggles: The Cultural Politics of Difference and Civic Identity in Postwar Urban Imaginaries

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Chicana/o Studies and Latina/o Studies at Loyola Marymount University

**COLBY LENZ, Ph.D. 2022**

Dissertation: TBA

Current Position: Independent Scholar

**JESSICA LOVAAS, Ph.D. 2017**

Dissertation: Fostering Control: The Politics and Power of the Child Welfare System in Southern California

Current Position: High School Teacher in Government, Economics, Ethnic Studies and History, School of the Liberal Arts, New York

**SHARON LUK, Ph.D. 2012**

Dissertation: The Life of Paper: A Poetics

Current Position: Associate Professor of English, University of Oregon

**CELESTE MENCHACA, Ph.D. 2016**

Dissertation: Borderland Visualities: Technologies of Sight and the Production of the Nineteenth-Century U.S.-Mexico Borderlands

Current Position: Assistant Professor of History, University of Southern California

**JEB MIDDLEBROOK, Ph.D. 2011**

Dissertation: Challenging the White Supremacist System: Antiracist Organizing and Multiracial Alliance in the United States.

Current Position: Independent Scholar

**JOSHUA MITCHELL, Ph.D. 2019**

Dissertation: The Prisoner's Cinema: Film Culture in the Penal Press Before 1960

Current Position: Lecturer, American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California

**SERGIO MUÑOZ-BATA, Ph.D. 2017**

Dissertation: Rural Fascism in America Thomas Mann in Los Angeles

Current Position: Independent Scholar

**LATA MURTI, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: With and Without the White Coat: The Racialization of Southern California's Indian Physicians

Current Position: Associate Professor of Sociology, Brandman University – Santa Maria

**ANJALI NATH, Ph.D. 2013**

Dissertation: Rendered Visualities: Representation and Detention in the War on Terror

Current Position: Assistant Professor at UC Davis in American Cultures.

**SIONNE NEELY, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Sensing the Sonic and Mnemonic: Digging Through Grooves, Afro-Feelings and Black Markets in Ghana, 1966-Present

Current Position: Co-founder/Producer, [ACCRA \[dot\] ALT](#), a cultural network that promotes the work of independent Ghanaian artists by creating links to emerging artists across the globe

**PHUONG NGUYEN, Ph.D. 2009**

Dissertation: The People of the Fall: Refugee Nationalism in Little Saigon, 1975-2005

Current Position: Associate Professor of History, California State University, Monterey Bay.

**CHRISSHONNA GRANT NIEVA, Ph.D. 2011**

Dissertation: This is My Country: The Use of Blackness in Discourses of Racial Nativism Towards Latino Immigrants

Current Position: Lecturer, American Studies and Ethnicity, University of Southern California

**DIVANA OLIVAS, Ph.D. 2023**

Dissertation: Red or Green?: Chicanx Food Imaginaries in New Mexico from Statehood to Climate Crisis

Current Position: Inclusive Excellence Postdoctoral Fellow with the Chicana/o Studies Department at the University of New Mexico with the Division for Equity and Inclusion

**TANACHAI MARK PADOONGPATT, Ph.D. 2011**

Dissertation: Thais That Bind: U.S. Empire, Food, and Community in Los Angeles, 1945-2008

Current Position: Associate Professor of Multidisciplinary Studies, Interdisciplinary Degree Programs, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

**HAVEN PEREZ, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: How Evangelicals Are Born-Again & Again: Race, Ethnicity and Religion in American Culture

Current Position: Lecturer, Sociology, University of Southern California

**JESSI QUIZAR, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Who Cares for Detroit? Urban Agriculture, Black Self-Determination, and Struggles over Urban Space

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Urban Studies at University of Washington, Tacoma

**NIC JOHN RAMOS, Ph.D. 2017**

Dissertation: Worthy of Care? Medical Inclusion from the Watts Riots to the Building of King-Drew, Prisons, and Skid Row, 1965-1986



Current Position: NEH Postdoctoral Fellow at the Consortium of Science, Technology and Medicine for 2021-22; And continues to be Assistant Professor of History at Drexel University

**EMILY RAYMUNDO, Ph.D. 2017**

Dissertation: Reorienting Asian America: Racial Feeling in a Colorblind Era

Current Position: 2019-2023 Presidential Fellow in American Studies at the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom.

**NICOLE RICHARDS, Ph.D. 2022**

Dissertation: Go to the Water and Find your Bones: Towards a Queer-Feminist Theory of Black Fatherhood

Current Position: CFD Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Scripps College

**ANTHONY BAYANI RODRIGUEZ, Ph.D. 2015**

Dissertation: Heretical Scripts: Sylvia Wynter's Early Intellectual Life in the Decolonial Atlantic, 1947 – 1984

Current Position: Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at St. Johns University in Queens, New York

**LUÍS CARLOS RODRÍGUEZ, Ph.D. 2012**

Dissertation: "Chican@s in a Moment of Danger: Mexican American Popular Culture and Identity in Late Twentieth Century Los Angeles"

Current Position: Lecturer, California State University, Long Beach

**ABIGAIL ROSAS, Ph.D. 2011**

Dissertation: On the Move and in the Moment: Community Formation, Identity, and Opportunity in South Central Los Angeles, 1945-2008

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Chicano and Latino Studies at California State University, Long Beach

**ULLI RYDER, Ph.D. 2008**

Dissertation: "As Shelters against the Cold": Women Poets of the Black Arts and Chicano Movements, 1965-1978

Current Position: Director, Intercultural Student Engagement, Rhode Island School of Design

**MARGARET SALAZAR-PORZIO, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Representational Conquest: Tourism, Display, and Public Memory in "America's Finest City"

Current Position: Curator of Latino/a History and Culture at Smithsonian Institution National Museum of American History

**ORLANDO SERRANO, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Colonial Brews: Café and Power in the Américas

Current Position: 9<sup>th</sup> Grade English Educator, Chavez Schools, Washington, D.C.

**ROSANNE SIA, Ph.D. 2020**

Dissertation: Fantasy in Motion: Performing Racial Imaginaries in the Early Cold War

Current Position: Assistant Professor at the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Social Justice at the University of British Columbia.

**SRIYA SHRESTHA, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Profiting from Disparity: Marketing to the poor across the United States and South Asia

Current Position: Assistant Professor, California State University, Monterey Bay.

**TASNEEM SIDDIQUI, Ph.D. 2015**

Dissertation: Freedom is a Place: Black Self-Determination in the Low Country and Sea Islands, 1865-1945

Current Position: Assistant Professor, Department of History and Program in Africana Studies, Drexel University

**ANTON SMITH, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Stepping Out on Faith: Representing Spirituality in African American Literature from the Harlem Renaissance to the Civil Rights Movement

Current Position: Associate Professor of African American Literature, Humanities Department, Massachusetts Maritime Academy

**MICAELA SMITH, Ph.D. 2012**

Dissertation: Conditions of Belonging: Life, Historical Preservation and Tourism Development in the Making of Pelourinho-Maciel, Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, 1965-1985

Current Position: Interim Assistant Director at the Center for the Humanities at UC San Diego and Program Officer for the Justice in Mexico program at University of San Diego

**ANTHONY SPARKS, Ph.D. 2012**

Dissertation: Image Breakers, Image Makers: Producing Race, America, and Television, 1999-2009

Current Position: Associate Professor, Department of Radio-TV-Film, College of Communication, California State University, Fullerton

**STEPHANIE SPARLING WILLIAMS, Ph.D. 2016**

Dissertation: Speaking Out of Turn: Race, Gender, and Direct Address in American Art Museums

Current Position: Andrew W. Mellon Curator of American Art Brooklyn Museum

**DAVID STEIN, Ph.D. 2014**

Dissertation: Fearing Inflation, Inflating Fear: The End of Full Employment and the Rise of the Carceral State

Current Position: University of California President's Postdoctoral Fellow, UCLA, Department of African American Studies, 2019-Present

**JENNIFER LYNN STOEVE, Ph.D. 2007**

Dissertation: The Contours of the Sonic Color-Line: Slavery, Segregation, and the Cultural Politics of Listening

Current Position: Associate Professor, English, State University of New York at Binghamton

**JENNIFER KIM ANH TRAN, Ph.D. 2019**

Dissertation: Refugee Worlds: Meanings of Migration, Race, and Living in the San Francisco East Bay Area

Current Position: Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies at California State University – East Bay

**GRETEL VERA ROSAS, Ph.D. 2013**

Dissertation: The Breaking and Remaking of Everyday Life: Illegality, Maternity & Displacement in the Americas

Current Position: Associate Professor, Sociology, California State University, Dominguez Hills

**CAM NHUNG VU, Ph.D. 2010**

Dissertation: Regarding Vietnam: Affects in Postwar Vietnamese and Vietnamese Diasporic Literature and Film

Current Position: Director of Development at the Program for Torture Victims (ptvla.org)

**TERRION WILLIAMSON, Ph.D. 2011**

Dissertation: Marks of the Fetish: Twenty-First Century (Mis)Performances of the Black Female Body  
Current Position: Associate Professor of African and African American and African Studies at University of Minnesota with joint appointments with the Departments of Gender, Women & Sexuality and American Studies.

**YUSHI YAMAZAKI, Ph.D. 2015**

Dissertation: Radical Crossings: From Peasant Rebellions to Internationalist Multiracial Labor Organizing among Japanese Immigrant Communities in Hawaii and California, 1885-1935  
Current Position: Research Associate of the Center for Global Communication Strategies at Tokyo University, 2016-18

**KAREN YONEMOTO, Ph.D. 2009**

Dissertation: Sacred Changes: Multiracial Alliances & Community Transformation among Evangelical Churches in the U.S.  
Current Position: Research Grants Specialist, California State University, Fullerton, Office of Research Development

## **TIME TO DEGREE, ATTRITION RATES, AND PLACEMENT RECORD**

In the Fall semester 2019, the ASE department completed an analysis of our basic Ph.D. graduate completion records as part of the UCAR department self-study. The average time to degree of our 74 graduate alumni as of September 2019 has been **6.77 years**. Eleven students who entered the Ph.D. program since its founding have left without completing the degree, including three students who followed departing USC faculty members to their new institutions and one who transferred to another graduate program at USC. This gives ASE an **87% retention rate**. Five Ph.D. students left with Master's degrees after passing their qualifying examinations.

Forty-one of our 74 Ph.D. graduate alumni are now in tenure-track faculty positions. We believe that this **55.4% placement rate in tenure-track faculty positions** is the highest of any USC Dornsife department, and clearly puts us ahead of other humanities and social science departments at USC. This placement record also places us among the most successful American Studies or Ethnic Studies departments or programs nationally. Twelve of the 41 tenure-track faculty who received the Ph.D.s from ASE have now been advanced to tenured and/or Associate Professor positions. The institutions of these tenure-track faculty include: Barnard, California State University campuses (9), Colby, Dartmouth, Drexel, Loyola Marymount, Northern Arizona, Pitzer, Scripps, Smith, State University of New York, St. Johns, Texas Christian, UC Davis, UCLA (2), UC Riverside (2), Universities of Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Oregon, Nevada (2), and Tennessee, Williams, Yale (2), and others (4).

Sixteen others have landed in other academic positions, putting the total at 57, or **77% of our graduates in academia**. These include two (2) currently in postdoctoral positions, one provost, one dean, one artist-in-residence, and others working on campuses in prison education, faculty engagement, graduate writing, research, and humanities. Eleven other ASE graduate alumni are employed in various positions, including two as curators, three as high school teachers, one in a social justice non-profit, and two in the arts.

The nature of the faculty appointments held by our graduate alumni provides a window into the nature of the job market for interdisciplinary Ph.D.s. Of the 41 graduates in tenure-track

faculty appointments, 23 have interdisciplinary faculty positions. Seven of these are in American Studies departments, and ten are in various Ethnic Studies departments. With various Ethnic Studies units, four are in Ethnic Studies, three in Chicano/Latino Studies, two in Asian American Studies, and one in African American Studies. In addition, three interdisciplinary faculty positions are in Women/Gender/Sexuality Studies departments, and one each in Visual Studies, Multidisciplinary Studies, and Humanities.

Fourteen of the 41 in tenure-track faculty appointments have landed in disciplinary positions. Four of these are in Sociology, three in English, three in History, and one each in Theater/Film, Critical Dance Studies, Criminology, and Communications. The remaining four faculty members are located in joint positions between interdisciplinary and disciplinary departments. These include one in a joint position between Media Studies and Postcolonial Literature, one in a joint position between Africana Studies and English, one in a joint position between Women's Studies and Geography, and one in a joint position between Women's Studies and History.

## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

This section is intended to give you a quick sense of the administrative structure of the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity. The biggest thing to keep in mind is that the Department has been growing rapidly over the past few years; therefore, new administrative structures are consistently being set up to manage the growth and little is steeped in years of tradition.

### **Core and Affiliate Faculty:**

The Department of American Studies and Ethnicity has both core and affiliated faculty. Those who are considered "core" faculty have a teaching commitment to the Department and may have their tenure line here. Affiliated faculty contribute time and energy to ASE but have a core appointment elsewhere. Affiliate faculty participate in the department by working with students, having their courses listed with ASE and serving on ASE committees. Either core or affiliated faculty may serve on ASE students' PhD committees as either members or chairs.

### **Administrative Staff:**

<b>Sarah Gualtieri</b> Interim Chair of the Department <a href="mailto:gualtier@usc.edu">gualtier@usc.edu</a>	Gualtieri oversees the overall mission and administration of the intellectual, research and pedagogical project of American Studies and Ethnicity.
<b>Shawn McDaniel</b> Director of Graduate Studies <a href="mailto:shawnm@usc.edu">shawnm@usc.edu</a>	McDaniel oversees the administrative, scholarly, and logistical needs of graduate students in the program.
<b>Kitty Lai</b> Graduate Staff Advisor <a href="mailto:kittylai@usc.edu">kittylai@usc.edu</a> (213)821-5361	Lai should be your first contact for all questions related to Graduate School's policies, qualifying exam and dissertation defense procedures, and petition forms.
<b>Sonia Rodriguez</b> Office Manager II <a href="mailto:sonia@usc.edu">sonia@usc.edu</a>	Rodriguez assists with coordinating Team ASE activities, interpreting financial aid entries in Oasis, coordinating funding disbursements from multiple sources, advisement on national fellowships and study abroad, stipends, department space, facilities, access, budgets and ASE's social media presence.
<b>Jujuana Preston</b> Administrative Assistant II <a href="mailto:jlpresto@usc.edu">jlpresto@usc.edu</a> (213)740-2426	Preston assists with scheduling of appointments for the Department Chair and Director of Graduate Studies. She also is the contact person for scheduling of the conference room for meetings, exams, dissertation defenses and all ASE events. You may also consult with her regarding reimbursements, stipends and travel grants.

### **Administrative Structure:**

The following committees operate each year and report to the executive committee:

### **Administrative Space and Common Space:**

The administrative staff has offices in the ASE Suite in KAP. There is a graduate student workroom and TA office in KAP 458 as well as a kitchen area with a microwave in KAP 467. There are codes for each of these spaces. Please be respectful of these common areas and help to maintain their cleanliness.

### **GRADUATE ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE**

This group selects our incoming Ph.D. class each year. The group is likely to meet once in the fall quarter, then meets intensely in January to read files and make decisions.

### **GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE**

This group meets regularly during the year to consider changes and additions to our graduate curriculum, and policies regarding our Ph.D. program. It is the group responsible for approving new courses to the graduate curriculum and it also reviews ongoing student files and nominates ongoing students for fellowships and teaching assistantships in rank order.

### **RELATIONSHIPS WITH NATIONAL/REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:**

American Studies and Ethnicity maintains ongoing relationships with several national and regional associations for American Studies and Ethnic Studies. We encourage all faculty and graduate students to become active individual members of these organizations and attend their annual meetings.

### **AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION (ASA)**

American Studies and Ethnicity is an institutional member of the national American Studies Association, known as the ASA. It holds an annual meeting in the fall (October or November) at different sites in the United States and Canada.

Chartered in 1951, the American Studies Association now has more than 5,000 members. They come from many fields: history, literature, religion, geography, art, philosophy, music, science, folklore, ethnic studies, anthropology, material culture, museum studies, sociology, government, communications, education, library science, gender studies, popular culture, and others. They include persons concerned with American culture: teachers and other professionals whose interests extend beyond their specialty, faculty and students associated with American Studies programs in colleges and secondary schools, museum directors and librarians interested in all segments of American life, public officials and administrators concerned with the broadest aspects of education. They approach American culture from many directions but have in common the desire to view America as a whole rather than from the perspective of a single discipline.

The ASA publishes the *American Quarterly* four times a year, the leading journal in American Studies. *American Quarterly*, the *Guide to American Studies Resources*, and the *ASA Newsletter* are sent to all members. The *American Quarterly* is currently housed at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The ASA's *Employment Opportunities Bulletin* is available online as a free service to the American Studies community worldwide. Reduced rates for subscriptions to *American Studies International* and *Canadian Review of American Studies* are available to ASA members. The ASA also maintains the Electronic Crossroads project, an extensive website of American Studies resources at <http://www.georgetown.edu/crossroads>.

Every year, faculty and graduate students from American Studies & Ethnicity present papers, moderate panels, and serve on ASA committees. Students are strongly encouraged to attend the ASA conference as the faculty consider it an important part of professional development. Every year the department tries to provide some funds to assist students in attending the conference.

### **CALIFORNIA AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION (CASA)**

The California American Studies Association (CASA) is the regional organization of ASA in which USC is involved and with which it participates. CASA holds an annual conference each spring at various sites in California and the West.

CASA was created in 1982, when the theretofore distinct northern and southern California ASA chapters were combined. Annual three-day conferences have been held every spring since 1983, addressing focused topics and drawing presenters and attendees not only from California but from other regions. Recent themes have included "Over the Edge," "On Edge," "Corridors and Open Spaces: Place, Time and Texts," "Families, Tribes and Communities," "Expanding Borders and Boundaries: Rethinking 'America'"; "California Cultures;" "Cities on the Edge;" "Sin, Stigma, and Risk;" "Origins and Visions: American Voices at the Quincentennial;" "Moving America;" and "Place in American Culture." These conferences regularly attract between 120 and 170 registrants.

At least as important as the scholarly aspect of the annual conference is the establishment and renewal of friendships among members. CASA is strongly committed to active participation by members from all levels (student/faculty/independent scholars); over the years we have developed an impressive mix of core CASA regulars from throughout the state that are always supplemented by newcomers. As the CASA conferences have become larger and more formal, program chairs and their committees have successfully maintained the intimacy of the earlier informal gatherings by scheduling events to bring all the attendees together: a common meal (sometimes a Saturday picnic-style lunch, sometimes a Saturday evening banquet, and sometimes both), a keynote speaker (addressing a plenary session on a topic relevant to the main conference theme and often including music, slides, and other media in the presentation), and a business meeting/buffet lunch as the conference ends.

CASA maintains a website, containing information about its activities, at <http://amst.fullerton.edu/casa.aspx>

Other regions in the United States also have active regional chapters, and their activities and conferences are open to participants from any regions. To obtain information about other regional chapters, see [http://www.theasa.net/committee\\_regional\\_chapters/](http://www.theasa.net/committee_regional_chapters/)

## **CENTERS, PROGRAMS AND PRESS**

### **AMERICAN QUARTERLY**

*American Quarterly* is one of the premier journals in the field. It publishes peer reviewed articles, many of which are interdisciplinary in form and ground-breaking in content and research. The journal is currently published by the Johns Hopkins University Press [<http://www.americanquarterly.org>] and was housed at USC from 2003 to 2014. It is currently housed at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. In its most recent incarnation, the journal has a much more dynamic, multi-platform online presence and it hosts blog style essay submissions, reader responses as well as more conventional essay submissions.

### **CENTER FOR DIVERSITY AND DEMOCRACY**

The USC Center for Diversity and Democracy <https://dornsife.usc.edu/cdd/> focuses on research that stresses imagining a future for Los Angeles and other global metropolitan areas of racial equity and social justice, empowering various communities to come together and work in harmony. This research may explore the past, present, or future of these regions, as well as comparisons across national and continental boundaries. For the past few years, the CDD has co-sponsored the Boyle Heights Museum with CASA 0101 in Boyle Heights, launching four different historical exhibitions on the history of that neighborhood, utilizing a team of faculty members, postdoctoral scholars, Ph.D. students, and undergraduate students as researchers, curators, and exhibit designers.

### **EQUITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ERI) <https://dornsife.usc.edu/eri>**

USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute (ERI) is a research unit housed within the Dana and David Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences at the University of Southern California. ERI produces data-driven analysis and rigorous research, leads convenings, engages strategic collaborations, and models effective, sustainable, racially-just research center. ERI is the entity resulting from the combination of two institutes: the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE) and the Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration (CSII), which were founded at USC in 2008.

### **CENTER FOR LATINX AND LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES**

<https://dornsife.usc.edu/latinx/main/>

The Center for Latinx & Latin American Studies is an interdisciplinary research center committed to local and transnational collaborations that advance the economic, social, and political well-being of all peoples. By connecting and thinking with workers in different academic, legal, medical, financial, and social fields, the Center team aims to:



- provide a platform for teaching and learning across fields to cultivate complex and mindful collaboration
- engage regularly in hemispheric approaches to acknowledge both distinct and shared elements of Latinidad across space
- support long-standing and ongoing work around equity in education, housing, food, and employment

As faculty, students, and community partners continue engaging in interdisciplinary research and public-facing scholarship, we invite you to learn and collaborate with us.

## **KAYA PRESS**

Founded in 1994, Kaya Press <http://kaya.com> has been publishing cutting-edge Asian diasporic writers for more than 15 years. Kaya and its authors have won numerous awards, including the Gregory Kolovakas Prize for Outstanding New Literary Press, the American Book Award, the Association for Asian American Studies Book Award, the PEN Beyond Margins Open Book Prize, the Asian American Writers' Workshop Award, and the PEN Oakland Josephine Miles Prize.

## **SCHEDULE OF ORIENTATION EVENTS**

Dornsife College T.A. Training: Online – Mid August – via online. For more information visit USC's Center for Excellence in Teaching at [http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/ta\\_training/](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/ta_training/)

The University Graduate Orientation for Incoming Graduate Students: August TBD via email sign-up. For more information on this event, visit USC's Office of Orientation at <http://orientation.usc.edu/graduate/summer/>

## **Important Dates:**

### **August 18**

August 21

August 21(10-12pm)

September 4

September 8

### **September 8**

November 30(12-2pm)

February 20-22, 2024

April 30, 2024

### **Last day to register and settle without late fee**

Fall semester classes begin

Department Orientation

Labor Day, university holiday

Deadline for purchasing or showing proof of health insurance

### **Last day to register and add classes**

ASE Holiday Celebration

Prospective Graduate Student Recruitment

Annual screening meeting of all graduate students  
(Students must provide a report on their progress to their faculty advisor prior to this date.)

### How to register for your classes

First year students: Set up advisement appointment with your advisor. All incoming-students have been assigned a first-year advisor. You should contact your advisor sometime in August to set-up an appointment, as it may take a while to reach some faculty. The advisor should help you select appropriate classes in light of programmatic requirements. If you have trouble reaching your advisor, contact Shawn McDaniel, Director of Graduate Studies.

If necessary, obtain the signed approval form from your advisor and return it to Kitty Lai for "D" clearance. It is also sometimes necessary to obtain "D" clearance from other departments for particular courses.

Register via Web Registration (follow directions in the Schedule of Classes) at <http://web-app.usc.edu/soc/>.

View your registration confirmation online and pay all necessary fees by deadline.

Verify local address, phone, and USC e-mail account via OASIS/MyUSC on the USC website.

Pick up your ID card from USCard services (McCarthy Way Parking Structure, formerly PSX).

**Disbursement of fellowship checks depends on up-to-date registration. Register by the due date to avoid late fees and falling out of status.**

### Registration Directory

[Registration](#) Packets, Enrollment & Drop/Add – JHH Lobby

[American Language Institute ALI Office](#) (Royal St. Parking Structure 106), x00079

[Office of International Services](#) – Royal St. Parking Structure (formerly PSD) 101

[USCard](#) – McCarthy Way Parking Structure(formerly PSX)

[Health Insurance / Student Health Center](#) (SHC)

[Housing Services](#) – McCarthy Way Parking Structure(formerly PSX)

[Financial Aid](#) – Hubbard Hall (JHH) Lobby

[Parking Permits/Ridesharing](#) CWO - McCarthy Way Parking Structure

[Payment of Fees/Cashier's Office](#) – Student Union 106, (213)740-7471

For a [map](#) of the University, check the USC website.

## 2023-24 CORE FACULTY LISTING

NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION Home Department	BACKGROUND	INTELLECTUAL & TEACHING INTERESTS
<a href="#"><u>Evelyn Alsultany</u></a>	American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-8048 <a href="mailto:ealsulta@usc.edu"><u>ealsulta@usc.edu</u></a>	Ph.D., Stanford University, 2005	Representations of Arabs and Muslims in the U.S. Media; Islamophobia/Anti- Muslim Racism/Racialization of Muslims; Arab and Muslim American Studies; Cultural and Media Studies; Race, Popular Culture, and Cultural Politics
<a href="#"><u>Hector Amaya</u></a>	Annenberg School of Communication (0% ASE appointment) (213)740-3951 <a href="mailto:hectoram@usc.edu"><u>hectoram@usc.edu</u></a>	Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 2003	Anonymity, Ethnicity and Media; Globalization; Language Rights Latin American Media and Film Latina/o Media; Nativism and Media; Philosophy of Communication, Publicity Theory, and Violence
<a href="#"><u>Ben Carrington</u></a>	Annenberg School of Communication & Journalism (0% ASE appointment) (213) 821-9610 <a href="mailto:carringb@usc.edu"><u>carringb@usc.edu</u></a>	Ph.D., Leeds Metropolitan University, 2004	Cultural Sociology, Cultural Studies, Diaspora Studies, Gender Studies, Media Studies, Politics, Popular Culture, Post/colonial Theory, Qualitative Methodologies, Race and Ethnicity, Social Theory, Sports
<a href="#"><u>Alicia Chavez</u></a>	American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-2426 <a href="mailto:alchavez@usc.edu"><u>alchavez@usc.edu</u></a>	Ph.D., Stanford University, 2010	History of Latinx workers in Los Angeles, the postwar economy and labor relations, and the interplay between unions and social movements.
<a href="#"><u>Juan De Lara</u></a>	American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-1767 <a href="mailto:jdelara@usc.edu"><u>jdelara@usc.edu</u></a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2009	The political economy of urbanization, how social movements and social justice affect the production of space, urban political ecology, and the geographies of race and representation

<b><u>Adrian De Leon</u></b>	American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-2426 <a href="mailto:adriand@usc.edu">adriand@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Toronto, 2019	Indigeneity, migrant labor, and ethnic belonging in the Filipinx diaspora; food labor, urban histories, and ethnic entrepreneurship; Asian American Studies; Transpacific Studies
<b><u>Chris Finley</u></b>	American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-5737 <a href="mailto:cfinley@usc.edu">cfinley@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Michigan, 2012	Race and Sexuality; Queer Theory; Queer Indigenous Studies; Women of Color Feminisms; Queer of Color Critique; US Native Studies
<b><u>Sarah Gualtieri</u></b>	Department of History (50% ASE appointment) (213)740-1657 <a href="mailto:gualtieri@usc.edu">gualtieri@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., The University of Chicago, 2000	Arab American history; Middle Eastern diasporas, Gender, Race and Immigration.
<b><u>Olivia C Harrison</u></b>	Department of French and Italian (0% ASE appointment) (213) 740-0104 <a href="mailto:oharriso@usc.edu">oharriso@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Columbia University, 2010	Maghrebi and Beur/banlieue literature and film; the Palestinian question; diversity in postcolonial France; the historiography and memory of colonization in France and Algeria; anti- and postcolonial theory; translation.
<b><u>Edwin Hill</u></b>	Department of French and Italian (25% ASE appointment) (213)740-5744 <a href="mailto:edwinhil@usc.edu">edwinhil@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., French and Francophone Studies, UCLA, 2007	Francophone poetry and music. Representations of post/colonial desire and romance. Exchanges in Caribbean and black Atlantic identity formations and cultural discourses. Cultural studies, performance studies and musical discourses on gender and race. Technology and post/colonial discourse.
<b><u>Stanley J. Huey Jr.</u></b>	Department of Psychology (50% ASE appointment) (213) 740-2203 <a href="mailto:hueyjr@rcf.usc.edu">hueyjr@rcf.usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1998	Culture and mental health, psychosocial problems in urban settings, community-based interventions.

<b><u>Lanita Jacobs</u></b>	Department of Anthropology (50% ASE appointment) (213) 740-1900 <a href="mailto:jacobshu@usc.edu">jacobshu@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1999	African American women's discourse; anthropology of the body; language & identity in diasporas; language & gender.
<b><u>Sherman Jackson</u></b>	School of Religion (25% ASE appointment) (213)740-0270 <a href="mailto:sajackso@usc.edu">sajackso@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 1990	Islamic Studies, Muslims in America, Islamic Law, African American Religion, Arabic Literature
<b><u>Amelia Jones</u></b>	Roski School of Art and Design (0% ASE appointment) (213)740-2787 <a href="mailto:ameliaj@usc.edu">ameliaj@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., UCLA, 1991	Modernism, contemporary art, film, and feminist theory; critical theory
<b><u>Kara Keeling</u></b>	School of Cinematic Arts (0% ASE appointment) <a href="mailto:kkeeling@cinema.usc.edu">kkeeling@cinema.usc.edu</a> (213)740-3334	Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 2001	Media Studies (Film Theory, Black Film, Television Studies, New Media), Cultural Studies, Critical Theory, Women's Studies, Black Studies, Queer Theory.
<b><u>Dorinne Kondo</u></b>	Department of Anthropology (50% ASE appointment) (213) 740-1900 <a href="mailto:kondo@usc.edu">kondo@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Harvard University, 1982	Fashion; theatre, especially work by artists of color in the U.S.; race issues.
<b><u>Josh Kun</u></b>	Annenberg School for Communication (0% ASE appointment) (213)821-4325 <a href="mailto:jkun@usc.edu">jkun@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., UC Berkeley, 1998	Popular Music of the Americas; US-Mexico Border; Los Angeles; Cultures of Globalization; Jewish-American Studies.
<b><u>Oneka LaBennett</u></b>	American Studies and Ethnicity (213)740-2426 (75% ASE appointment) <a href="mailto:labennet@usc.edu">labennet@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Harvard University, 2002	Black girlhood and youth culture, transnationalism and global feminisms, racial formation, popular representation, urban anthropology, immigration; African Diaspora, U.S. and Caribbean.

<a href="#"><u>Shawn McDaniel</u></a>	American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-2426 <a href="mailto:shawnm@usc.edu">shawnm@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., CUNY, 2013	Caribbean, Latin American, and Latinx literary and cultural studies; Transnational Cuban print, visual, and sonic cultures; Latinx urban aesthetics and cultural geography; Latin American <i>Modernismo</i> ; Race in the Americas; Queer theory; Intellectual history; Critical theory; Scottish Gaelic diasporic cultural production
<a href="#"><u>Natalia Molina</u></a>	American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-3600 <a href="mailto:natalia.molina@usc.edu">natalia.molina@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 2001	U.S. history, racial and ethnic studies, immigration studies, urban studies and public health.
<a href="#"><u>Lydie E. Moudileno</u></a>	Department of French and Italian (25% ASE appointment) (213)740-3700 <a href="mailto:moudilen@usc.edu">moudilen@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 1994	Contemporary fiction with a connection to the (former) French colonies, including the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa and hexagonal France
<a href="#"><u>Viet Nguyen</u></a>	Department of English (50% ASE appointment) (213) 740-2808 <a href="mailto:vnguyen@usc.edu">vnguyen@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 1997	Asian American and American literature and film.
<a href="#"><u>Manuel Pastor</u></a>	Department of American Studies and Ethnicity (0% ASE appointment) (213) 740-0050 <a href="mailto:mpastor@ucsc.edu">mpastor@ucsc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, 1984	Urban poverty and regional development, Latinos in the urban U.S., macroeconomic stabilization in Latin America; distribution, democracy, and growth in the developing world; Cuban economic reform; Mexican economic reform.
<a href="#"><u>David Roman</u></a>	Department of English (25% ASE appointment) (213) 740-2808 <a href="mailto:davidr@usc.edu">davidr@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1991	Theatre and performance studies, Latino studies, queer studies.
<a href="#"><u>John Carlos Rowe</u></a>	Department of English (25% ASE appointment) (213)740-2808 <a href="mailto:johnrowe@usc.edu">johnrowe@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., State University of New York, Buffalo, 1972	American Studies; Critical Theory.

<b><u>Leland Saito</u></b>	Department of Sociology (25% ASE appointment) (213) 740-3533 <a href="mailto:lsaito@usc.edu">lsaito@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1992	Race and ethnic relations; Asian American Studies; urban politics; community studies; urban sociology; qualitative research methods.
<b><u>George J. Sánchez</u></b>	Department of American Studies and Ethnicity; Department of History (50% ASE appointment) (213) 740-1657 <a href="mailto:georges@usc.edu">georges@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Stanford University, 1989	Chicano/a immigration; American West.
<b><u>Nayan Shah</u></b>	Department of American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-4625 <a href="mailto:nayan.shah@usc.edu">nayan.shah@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1995	Ethnic Studies and Comparative Studies of Race and Racialization; LGBT History and Queer Theory; Migration Studies; Law and Social Change; Governance, Democracy and State Formation; Health, Inequality, and Ethics; Social Movements and Globalization; History of California and Western North America, 1848- 1960
<b><u>Karen Tongson</u></b>	Department of English (25% ASE appointment) (213) 740-2817 <a href="mailto:tongson@usc.edu">tongson@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2003	Critical Theory, Film & Popular Culture, Gender Studies, Minority Discourse, 19th-Century, Queer Studies.
<b><u>Jody Agius Vallejo</u></b>	Department of Sociology (25% ASE appointment) (213)740-5047 <a href="mailto:vallejoj@usc.edu">vallejoj@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Irvine, 2008	Immigrations; Immigrant Incorporation; Immigrant Communities; Race/Ethnicity; The New Second Generation; Immigrant Opportunity
<b><u>Jackie Wang</u></b>	American Studies and Ethnicity (100% ASE appointment) (213)740-2426 <a href="mailto:jwang196@usc.edu">jwang196@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Harvard University, 2021	Race and the political economy of prisons and police in the United States

<a href="#"><u>Duncan Williams</u></a>	School of Religion (25% ASE appointment) (213)740-0272 <a href="mailto:duncanwi@usc.edu">duncanwi@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Harvard University, 2000	Buddhism, Japanese religions, American Buddhism, Buddhism and the environment, Japanese American history and religion, World War Two Japanese American incarceration and internment, mixed race Japanese society, critical mixed race studies, social history of religion
<a href="#"><u>Francille Rusan Wilson</u></a>	Department of American Studies and Ethnicity; Department of History (75% ASE appointment) (213)740-1667 <a href="mailto:frwilson@usc.edu">frwilson@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Harvard University, 1988	Black labor movements, black social scientists, and black women's history during the Jim Crow era.

### 2023-24 AFFILIATE FACULTY LISTING

NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION	BACKGROUND	INTELLECTUAL & TEACHING INTERESTS
<a href="#"><u>Natalie Belisle</u></a>	Department of Spanish and Portuguese (213)740-1258 <a href="mailto:nbelisl@usc.edu">nbelisl@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2016	Caribbean literature and popular culture; critical Caribbean thought; Afro-Latinx studies; political philosophy; postcolonial theory; decolonial feminism; critical race theory; new media studies
<a href="#"><u>Todd Boyd</u></a>	School of Cinema Critical Studies Program (213) 740-3334 <a href="mailto:tboyd@cinema.usc.edu">tboyd@cinema.usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Iowa, 1990	African-American cinema and culture; music and popular culture; media and society; sports and society; American cinema and television; race, class and gender in American cinema.
<a href="#"><u>Meiling Cheng</u></a>	School of Theater (213) 740-1286 <a href="mailto:meilingc@usc.edu">meilingc@usc.edu</a>	Doctor of Fine Arts, Yale University, 1993	Contemporary theatre; modern drama, especially avant-garde performances; performance art; body art; European avant-garde movements.



<a href="#"><u><b>Melissa Daniels-Rauterkus</b></u></a>	Department of English (213) 740-2808 <a href="mailto:rauterku@usc.edu">rauterku@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D. English, Northwestern University, 2012	African American Literature, American Literature, Literary Realism, Literary History, Genre Studies, Southern Literature, New Southern Studies, Race & Ethnicity.
<a href="#"><u><b>William Deverell</b></u></a>	Department of History (213)740-1676 <a href="mailto:deverell@usc.edu">deverell@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Princeton University, 1989	History of California, Los Angeles, the American West.
<a href="#"><u><b>Alice Echols</b></u></a>	Department of English (213) 740-3746 <a href="mailto:echols@usc.edu">echols@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Michigan, 1986	Histories of Sexuality; U.S. Women's History; American Feminisms; "Authenticity" in Popular Music; Post-War American Culture; Gay and Lesbian Studies; Social Change Movements; Transnational Approaches to Pop Music.
<a href="#"><u><b>Philip J. Ethington</b></u></a>	Department of History (213) 740-1657 <a href="mailto:philipje@usc.edu">philipje@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Stanford University, 1989	Urban, political, social and cultural history of the US since 1850.
<a href="#"><u><b>Taj Frazier</b></u></a>	Annenberg School for Communication (213)740-6595 <a href="mailto:rfrazier@usc.edu">rfrazier@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2009	Race and Representation in the Media; Critical Race Theory; History of the African Diaspora; African American Political Thought; Popular Culture; Urban Social Movements; Place, Space, and Diasporic Culture; 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Chinese History
<a href="#"><u><b>Jonathan Gomez</b></u></a>	Thorton School of Music (213)740-7416 <a href="mailto:gomezjon@usc.edu">gomezjon@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Harvard University, 2022	Black American musics of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries; musics of the African diaspora
<a href="#"><u><b>Jennifer Greenhill</b></u></a>	Department of Art History (213)740-4552 <a href="mailto:greenhil@usc.edu">greenhil@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Yale University, 2007	American art and visual culture; visual, literary, and theatrical humor; intersections between elite and popular forms of expression; race and the politics of visibility; the visibility of text; magazines and commercial illustration; the history of advertising theory and practice

<b><u><a href="#">Ariela Gross</a></u></b>	Law School (213) 740-6473 <a href="mailto:agross@law.usc.edu">agross@law.usc.edu</a>	J.D., Stanford University, 1994; Ph.D., Stanford University, 1996	American legal history; race, law, and culture in 19 <sup>th</sup> century US; race, gender, and the law; comparative slavery studies; gender studies.
<b><u><a href="#">Larry Gross</a></u></b>	Annenberg School for Communication (213) 740-3770 <a href="mailto:lpgross@usc.edu">lpgross@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Columbia University, 1968	Media and culture; Art, artists and society; Sexual and other minorities.
<b><u><a href="#">Sofia Gruskin</a></u></b>	Department of Preventative Medicine (323) 865-0826 <a href="mailto:gurskin@usc.edu">gurskin@usc.edu</a>	JD, Yeshiva University, 1990	Preventive Medicine and Law, Director, Program on Global Health and Human Rights, Institute for Global Health
<b><u><a href="#">Thomas Gustafson</a></u></b>	Department of English (213) 740-2808 <a href="mailto:thomasg@usc.edu">thomasg@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Stanford University, 1986	Colonial and 19 <sup>th</sup> century American literature, American political discourse, and literature of the American West.
<b><u><a href="#">Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo</a></u></b>	Department of Sociology (213) 740-3533 <a href="mailto:sotelo@usc.edu">sotelo@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 1990	Immigration, gender; Mexican/Latino transnational workers.
<b><u><a href="#">Janet Hoskins</a></u></b>	Department of Anthropology (213) 740-1913 <a href="mailto:jhoskins@usc.edu">jhoskins@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Harvard University, 1984	Visual Anthropology; Colonial and Post-Colonial Theory; Transnational Religion; Ritual Performance; Indigenous Representations of the Past and of Time; Material Culture; Gender; Exchange; Narrative and Healing
<b><u><a href="#">Velina Hasu Houston</a></u></b>	School of Theater (213) 740-1286 <a href="mailto:vhouston@usc.edu">vhouston@usc.edu</a>	MFA, University of California, Los Angeles, 1981; Ph.D., University of Southern California, 2000	Multiethnic identity and interracial relationships; Asian-American feminist dramatic literature; Japanese studies; playwriting; screenwriting; cinema and race.
<b><u><a href="#">Jane Junn</a></u></b>	Department of Political Science (213) 740-6998 <a href="mailto:junn@usc.edu">junn@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D. University of Chicago, 1994	California politics, public opinion, polling methods and analysis, women in politics, racial and ethnic politics, the politics of immigration, political behavior, independent voters, voter demographics
<b><u><a href="#">Elaine Bell Kaplan</a></u></b>	Department of Sociology (213) 740-3533 <a href="mailto:ekaplan@usc.edu">ekaplan@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 1988	Race and ethnic relations; social inequality; sociology of childhood; gender, qualitative methodology.

<b><u><a href="#">Neetu Khanna</a></u></b>	Department of Comparative Literature (213)740-0102 <a href="mailto:neetukha@usc.edu">neetukha@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2011	Modern South Asian literatures, global marxisms, postcolonial literature and theory, literatures of decolonization, aesthetics of affect, transnational feminisms and queer theory
<b><u><a href="#">Annette Kim</a></u></b>	Price School of Public Policy (213)740-0910 <a href="mailto:annettek@usc.edu">annettek@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 2002	Housing and land use, international development planning, Asian urbanization, critical cartography, spatial ethnography
<b><u><a href="#">Lon Kurashige</a></u></b>	Department of History (213) 740-1657 <a href="mailto:kurashig@usc.edu">kurashig@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1994	Asian-American history; Japanese Americans (especially in Southern California); ethnic identity politics.
<b><u><a href="#">Sharon Little</a></u></b>	Department of Business Communication (213)821-1159 <a href="mailto:slittle@marshall.usc.edu">slittle@marshall.usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Indiana University, 2005	Management and leadership communication, organizational effectiveness, institutional diversity, and educational outcomes
<b><u><a href="#">Peter Mancall</a></u></b>	Department of History (213) 821-2151 <a href="mailto:mancall@usc.edu">mancall@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., History, Harvard University 1986	Early America, the Early modern Atlantic world, and Early Native American Indian History.
<b><u><a href="#">Oliver Mayer</a></u></b>	School of Theatre (213)821-1545 <a href="mailto:omayer@usc.edu">omayer@usc.edu</a>	M.F.A., Columbia University, 1989	Dramatic Writing (plays and screen plays); contemporary Latino African American and Asian American plays
<b><u><a href="#">Susan McCabe</a></u></b>	Department of English (213) 740-2808 <a href="mailto:mccabe@usc.edu">mccabe@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1990	Modern & contemporary American poetry; American literature.
<b><u><a href="#">Tara McPherson</a></u></b>	School of Cinematic Arts Critical Studies Program (213) 740-3334 <a href="mailto:tmcphers@usc.edu">tmcphers@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1996	Race, femininity and place; especially in the US South; gender and new technologies; television, feminism and media.

<b><u>Ronald Mendoza-de Jesus</u></b>	Department of Spanish and Portuguese (213) 740-1258 <a href="mailto:ronaldme@usc.edu">ronaldme@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Emory University, 2015	Latin American and Caribbean modern literature and culture, Transnational approaches to modernity and modernism, Philosophy and Literature, Theories of literary history and translation, Political theory (sovereignty, democracy, and biopolitics), Queer, feminist, and postcolonial theory
<b><u>Tania Modleski</u></b>	Department of English (213) 740-2808 <a href="mailto:modleski@usc.edu">modleski@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Stanford University, 1980	Women in film; women in popular culture; women in literature; feminist studies; soap operas.
<b><u>Alison Dundes Renteln</u></b>	Department of Political Science (213)740-3248 <a href="mailto:arenteln@usc.edu">arenteln@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, 1987 J.D., University of Southern California, Law Center, 1991	International Law, Human Rights, Comparative Law, Constitutional Law, Political and Legal Theory
<b><u>Elda Maria Roman</u></b>	Department of English (213)740-2808 <a href="mailto:emr@usc.edu">emr@usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Stanford University, 2013	Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies, African American Literature, 20th and 21st Century American Literature, Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity, Social Class Analysis, Women of Color Feminism, Popular Culture
<b><u>Emily Ryo</u></b>	School of Law (213)740-7331 <a href="mailto:eryo@law.usc.edu">eryo@law.usc.edu</a>	Ph.D., Stanford University,	Immigration law and policy, detention and deportation, judicial behavior, empirical analysis of law, sociolegal studies, criminal law, civil rights
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<a href="#"><u>Laura Serna</u></a>	School of Cinematic Arts Critical Studies Program (213)740-3334 lserna@cinema.usc.edu	Ph.D., Harvard University, 2006	Cultural and industrial history of cinema in Latin America during the silent period; Latino/a media cultures, marginalized labor in the Hollywood system; the relationship of nationalism to the formation of film cultures.
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# OVERVIEW OF SEQUENCE

## ASE GRADUATE PROGRAM

### Academic Year One

This year you will get acquainted with the program, with the staff and faculty, your peers and the university as a whole. You will begin taking courses, including AMST 500 the mandatory introductory class, and you will complete the Graduate Student Screening before your 24th unit. Some of you will begin to work as TA's.

### Academic Year Two

The second year in the program continues to be mainly about seminars and building a profile on campus and in relation to your cohort. You will also start seriously thinking about your research areas and, during the Spring semester, you invite faculty to attend your Pre-Qualifying Exam meeting during the last week of the semester. Look for internal and external grant and fellowship opportunities during this year.

### Academic Year Three

Finish course work. Complete the language requirement. The main event of year three is consolidating your QE committee, meeting with them, completing your reading lists with each individual member of your committee and, finally, sitting for the exam. You may also want to start applying for dissertation fellowships this year.

### Academic Years Four/Five

In addition to taking AMST 700 and AMST 701, this is the time to begin, plan, and write the dissertation. You should certainly be in regular contact with your chair and individual members of your committee during this critical period, but mostly, you will be developing your research, writing your chapters and beginning the transition from student to independent scholar/researcher/faculty member.

### Academic Years Six/Seven and Beyond

The normative time to degree is 6-7 years but we strongly encourage you to try to finish in 6 years. You may be on the job market as early as year four or as late as year seven. For those who have not finished by year seven, we advise you to start looking for postdocs; for those who are not finished by year 8, you risk termination from the graduate program.

**Remember:** there are lots of different careers you can pursue with an advanced degree. Not everyone who completes the PhD in American Studies and Ethnicity will want to become an academic. Many PhDs nowadays continue on to very successful careers in law, government, public policy, think tanks, public health, consulting, NGO's and so on.

## ASE PhD COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ADVISEMENT SHEET

In order to earn the PhD students must complete a minimum of **64 units** and meet four sets of requirements. This hand-out is intended to help ASE advisors and students understand the programmatic requirements and to assist them in course planning. All course requirements, including at least 48 units, must be completed prior to the Qualifying Exam. Note: *Individual courses can fulfill multiple requirements.* Courses CANNOT be taken for pass/no pass credit, but must be taken for a grade.

**STUDENT & YEAR ENTERED** \_\_\_\_\_ **ADVISOR** \_\_\_\_\_

### A) SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**FULFILLMENT** (include date completed, course, grade, units)

AMST 500

\_\_\_\_\_

Choose one course from AMST 660, 670 or 680

\_\_\_\_\_

Choose any 600-level course

\_\_\_\_\_

AMST 700 & AMST 701

\_\_\_\_\_

### B) METHODS REQUIREMENT

Students must complete one course from two different methodologies (for a total of 2). Some options are:

Literary/Textual Analysis (English 501, English 650)

Historical/Archival (AMST 552, History 500, PLUS 609)

Ethnography (AMST 564, Anthropology 562, Sociology 520, 524)

Cultural/Visual Analysis (Art History 500, Communication 519, CNTV 688)

Spatial Practices (AMST 635, Geography 581, PLUS 526)

Quantitative Methods (AMST 572, POSC 500, SOCI 523)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### C) DISCIPLINARY REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete at least 4 courses in any one discipline. One course must be a methods course and one must be a research seminar.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### D) LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Students must show competency in a language other than English prior to the Qualifying Exam by either completing a 400 or 500 level language course with at least a 'B', completing training at an intensive non-English language institute or one-semester of study abroad where English is not the dominant language, or by passing a written examination administered by ASE faculty.

Must be fulfilled prior to the Qualifying Examination. Method of Completion:

\_\_\_\_\_

### E) ADDITIONAL UNITS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## THE PH.D. PROGRAM

### **Course work:**

The graduate curriculum combines core interdisciplinary courses, primarily in the first two years and in the three areas of specialization:

- The study of race and ethnicity;
- Los Angeles as a global city;
- The analysis of culture across disciplines.

Each student will be asked to gain competency in the methodology and grounding in the literature of one specific disciplinary area (history, literature, sociology, etc.) to enhance the fundamentally interdisciplinary nature of their training in American Studies and Ethnicity. We have prepared two handouts to help you visualize the sequence of programmatic requirements and keep tabs on your progress. The first one shows the general progression of activities, and the second one should be updated every semester. *Students should bring an updated copy to all meetings with the Director of Graduate Studies and when planning coursework with the faculty advisor.*

### **Course Requirements:**

AMST 500 is required of all doctoral students. It is required that AMST 500 be completed in the first semester of residence.

Two 600-level graduate seminars are required for the degree, and at least one of these must be an interdisciplinary seminar offered by the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity.

Both AMST 700 and AMST 701 are required of all doctoral students.

Each year the Department will sequence at least one readings course to be followed by a research seminar, concentrating in one of the main areas of specialization.

Graduate students who will serve as TAs are also required to enroll in a mandatory 2-unit TA Training Course, the first year they serve as TAs.

ABD students must consistently enroll in 794. Responsibility for enrolling in 794 each semester lies with the student. Given the policies instituted in The Graduate School, failure to enroll could result in tuition and late fees that can potentially delay the receipt of your Ph.D.

### **Language Requirement:**

Students are required to demonstrate competence in one foreign language. This requirement must be met before the student is eligible to take the qualifying exam.

Even if a student only works in one language, language study is a crucial part of any advanced training in higher education. The ability to read scholarship in more than one language and, even better, to engage in scholarly conversations in more than one language, is almost an ethical obligation especially in a world where English has become a global and dominant language. English speakers should not expect to be read by other language communities without having some capacity to read or engage with other scholars in their languages too. Furthermore, many scholars need to and wish to read materials in their original languages rather than in translation. Broad intellectual engagement is multilingual.



## ASE LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT INFORMATION SHEET

This form is to document how ASE students fulfill the language requirement. The requirement can be fulfilled three ways: through an examination, through completing training at an intensive non-English language institute or one-semester of study abroad where English is not the dominant language, or through coursework. Students should discuss with their advisors which option is most appropriate for them.

Language Exam Students can show proficiency by taking a written language exam which consists of translating a critical (in most cases academic) text into English. The test is one hour in length. Dictionaries are allowed. Since the two most popular languages are Spanish and French, one exam for each language will be conducted each semester by a faculty person appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies. This will be announced department-wide. Other languages ASE faculty are prepared to offer exams in are Japanese and Latin. Students can take the test up to two times. After the second attempt, the language requirement must be completed via coursework. Several language departments also offer courses geared towards helping students prepare for language exams, such as Spanish 020. Students are encouraged to explore such options. If USC does not offer expertise in the language of the student's choice, they can find outside faculty, subject to the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Students should request in writing the language they wish to be tested in, the name and institutional affiliation of the proposed examiner, their CV, and the rationale for the request.

Language Training Institute Students can also fulfill the requirement by completing training at an intensive non-English language institute or one-semester of study abroad where English is not the dominant language. This option must be approved by the ASE Graduate Studies Committee. Students may seek approval by submitting a one-paragraph short narrative statement about the program or institute they are planning to attend. Time from completion (if training took place prior to entry in the PhD program will also be considered). After approval, the requirement is considered fulfilled after the student submits proof or documentation of successful completion (e.g., certificate of completion from the program).

Coursework Students can also fulfill the language requirement through coursework. Students must complete a course in the *literature* of the language in question. The course must be conducted in that language and the student must earn a 'B' or better. At USC the appropriate courses are 400 and 500 level classes. Students can also petition to have coursework from another institution fulfill the requirement. Students should submit to the DGS copies of their transcript, the list of courses in questions, and catalog text describing each course (hard copies only will be accepted).

*NOTE: The Language Requirement must be fulfilled prior to the Qualifying Exam.*

The form on the next sheet is to be filled out upon completion of the Language Requirement and submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies.

**The principle of the language requirement is underpinned by the ASE commitment to transnationalism and work across linguistic communities.**

## **ASE LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT**

### LANGUAGE FULFILLMENT FORM

Name of Student:

\_\_\_\_\_

Language to be tested in:

\_\_\_\_\_

Method of Fulfillment (check one):    ☐ Coursework    ☐ Examination

### **Coursework**

Name of Course(s):

\_\_\_\_\_

Institution:

\_\_\_\_\_

Semester Taken \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Earned \_\_\_\_\_

Attach transcript and catalog text to Form

### **Language Examination**

Name and Institution of Faculty Examiner:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Examination Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Outcome (check one):    ☐ Pass    ☐ No pass

Number of Times Exam Taken (check one):    ☐ First    ☐ Second

Comments from Examiner (if any):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date and Signature of Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

Date and Signature of Director of  
Graduate Studies

**Methods Requirement:**

Students are required to show competency in two methodologies from a list approved by the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity. The following methodologies fulfill the methods requirement in American Studies and Ethnicity: (1) literary/textual analysis; (2) historical/archival analysis; (3) ethnography; (4) cultural/visual analysis; (5) spatial practices and analysis; (6) quantitative analysis.

**Disciplinary Requirement:**

The Department of American Studies and Ethnicity believes that the strongest interdisciplinary research is conducted alongside a strong background in at least one disciplinary field. Every doctoral student is expected to achieve competency in at least one disciplinary field by successfully completing at least a total of four graduate courses in one discipline.

These four courses must include at least one methodology course, one 600-level advanced seminar, and two graduate readings courses at the 500 or 600 level.

**ADVISORS, COMMITTEES, AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

The Department will assign you a main advisor before you arrive on campus. You'll meet with this professor each semester before you choose classes, and as many times as necessary during the year to update them about your progress. In most cases, your advisor is the person within the department who has the most expertise in your primary field. It is not unusual, however, for students to decide after their arrival that another faculty member may be more appropriate as an advisor, either because of intellectual fit, personality, or differences in mentoring styles and expectations. Students can and should change advisors if they feel the need to.

If there is more than one person who is intellectually qualified to serve as your advisor, spend time talking with those professors with whom you are interested in working. Faculty expect students to be proactive in seeking out guidance and mentorship. Actively seek meetings with them. Read their work and take a course with them if you can. Approach them as intellectuals and know their work in advance and how your own work might be a good fit for theirs. This, in general, is also true of academic networking outside of the department and in the profession. Know the work of people you want to contact and have a relationship with.

Your advisor serves as the Chair of your guidance committee and, in most cases, as the Chair of your dissertation committee. The Guidance Committee is a committee of 5 people who helps you prepare for the Qualifying Exam and will test you. The Dissertation Committee consists of three people who oversee the dissertation process. You will be working under the direction of your Dissertation Committee chair for a number of years. Find out now (or at least well before your qualifying exams) if this is the right person, in terms of expertise, personal style and point of view. This is the person with whom you should have the most ready contact, have discussed issues of how you are doing and where you are going, have worked with

in one, two, or three courses, and who would have a good sense of you as a student and an American Studies or Ethnic Studies scholar.

The purpose of your guidance committee is to give you support and direction through the qualifying exam process. The best way to approach this business of putting together your committee is to start with the fields, and then move back into building your committee. First get a sense of what your major fields and major foci are. Then start to get your committee together to help you establish with whom you should work.

In general, students should actively work to maintain communication with the advisors and committees. Although faculty have an obligation to provide mentoring and guidance, the faculty also expect students to seek help, to ask questions about what they don't know and what they need, and to keep the faculty updated about their progress and research. Failure to communicate, on both sides, can be a significant hindrance to the mentoring relationship.

As students expect the faculty to give them timely recommendations and guidance, faculty expect students to respond in a timely and productive fashion to their recommendations and guidance. The DGS and the mentoring structure of ASE, with its annual discussions of student performance, are designed to check in on faculty-student relationships, but students should also be taking it upon themselves to seek assistance on a more regular basis and from different faculty if primary advisors are not meeting expectations.

You may make changes to your committee — up to and including your advisor — at any time prior to filing the paperwork to take your qualifying examinations. In fact, your guidance committee does not become official until you actually request to take the qualifying examinations. Students typically stay with the First-year Advisor, but not always, and students should not be shy about making changes to their advising situation. A student's intellectual interest may shift, or there may be a personality conflict with the faculty member. At the end of the first year, students should assess their relationship with their advisor and discuss any concerns with the Director of Graduate Studies.

In the event that the student's advisor is the DGS, the student should consult with the department chair, and vice versa. In the event that the DGS and the chair both serve on the student's committee, and the student needs additional advice, the student should consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies, who is the next person in the department hierarchy. If all else fails within the department, the student should consult with a member or members of the graduate studies committee who is/are not involved in the dissertation committee. Finally, if all else fails, the student has recourse to the Graduate School, <http://graduateschool.usc.edu/people/>.

### **Student Evaluation Procedures:**

Throughout your time in the graduate program at ASE, we will carefully monitor your progress and give you feedback on how you are doing. The

Careful monitoring is designed to provide you with mentorship, support and to keep you on track so that you have a really good chance of finishing the program in a reasonable time frame and getting out onto the job market at the appropriate time. In order to track your progress then, we use the following methods:

**1) Screening** - every April, the faculty meet to discuss and evaluate the progress of every active student in the department. Prior to this meeting, you should turn in to your advisor the following materials: an updated CV; an updated Advisement Sheet and Bio; the status of your language requirement; a short paragraph about your projected plan for the coming year.

**2) Pre-Qualifying Exam (PQM):** This meeting occurs at the end of the second year (on two specified dates) and includes potential committee members and the DGS. The PQM established the framework for preparing for the exam, developing relations with faculty, creating reading lists and looking ahead to the dissertation.

**3) Dissertation Progress Meeting (DPM):** this is an annual meeting that takes place at the beginning of the year after the student has passed the QE. The meeting allows the student to discuss their progress on the dissertation with their advisor, keep them up to date and get advice on any problems that may have arisen during the early stages of writing. These meetings are important for both the student and the advisor and they may result in clear plans for the coming year, professional advice, or early interventions into developing problems or time issues. In order to prepare for these meetings, students should put together a file of chapters they have written, completed or started; grant proposals; prospective publications.

## COURSEWORK AND UNITS

The manner in which you choose your courses will depend on your current program requirements, your intellectual goals, the advice of your advisor(s), and what is offered. Please consult with your advisor and/or the DGS to plan your courses, both with an eye towards fulfilling requirements and to developing relationships with faculty.

It is often the case that faculty will be reluctant to work with graduate students at the qualifying exam or dissertation writing phase if a student has not taken a class with the professor. Students should therefore try to enroll in classes with faculty who they might ask to be on their committees, and barring that, seek to do independent studies with them. By the end of the first year, students should have 2 or 3 relationships with faculty who could be potential advisors or committee members.

If a course you are interested in isn't being offered in a semester, do not despair. Start by speaking to the professor in the subject you are interested in. Find out when the course may be offered. If there are no plans to offer a specific course, talk with the professor about structuring a 590 (Directed Research), which is a type of tutorial or independent study. However, beware that you are limited to taking a maximum of 12 Directed Reading units prior to the Qualifying Exam. Also be aware that faculty who are doing directed reading units are doing so on top of their research, administrative, and teaching obligations. Please respect their time and their contribution to your study.

Or, talk to the Department Chair to find out if the course, or a similar one, will be offered soon. You should also take time to read the University catalogue and check the course schedule. You may find that another department offers the course (or instructor) you need, or something close to it.

Finally, talk with other graduate students. You may find there is a person working in a field you are interested in, or in a related field, in another department or even at another institution. USC has a reciprocity agreement with UCLA, allowing our students to take their courses and transfer the credits in.

Sitting in or auditing courses can be done at the discretion of the instructor. Some instructors may not object to a graduate student sitting in on large lecture courses. However, some faculty feel it is hard to have an auditor in a course, particularly if it's a small seminar. Individual instructors may require a fairly high level of commitment from a student who is auditing a course.

***NOTE:** If you are formally auditing a course, you must enroll in the course and pay for the units (although you will receive no credits for those units), even if the instructor has given permission for you to take it on an audit basis.*

The 590 and the 790 are both directed research courses open to any Doctoral level student. The purpose of having two different course numbers is to accommodate

the University computers. If you are taking two directed research courses in the same semester, you cannot register for two 590s because the computer will merge them into one eight unit 590. The mechanism for getting around that is to take one 590 and one 790.

**MANDATORY CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT OF 794: ABD students MUST have continuous enrollment in 794 in adherence to requirements by the Graduate School. It is the responsibility of the student to enroll in 794 EVERY SEMESTER to ensure the receipt of their Ph.D. without late fees and tuition fees.**

## **Transferring Units:**

*The Degree Progress Department in the Office of Academic Records and Registrar determines whether course work taken elsewhere is available for transfer credit. Faculty of the student's degree program determine whether such credit is applicable toward a specific graduate degree, subject to approval by the dean of the degree-conferring unit. The faculty's decision should be made no later than the end of the first year in a master's program or the second year in a doctoral program.*

*Credit will only be allowed for courses*

- 1. From an accredited graduate school,*
- 2. Of a quality of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 grading scale,*
- 3. Constituting a fair and reasonable equivalent to current USC course work at the graduate level and*
- 4. Logically fitting into the program for the degree. Transfer course work is applied as credit (CR) toward the degree and is not included in the calculation of a minimum grade point average for graduation.*

Graduate students are allowed to transfer up to thirty (30) units. Students are responsible for initiating such a process themselves. However, zero of these units can be applied to specific programmatic requirements as we want to ensure that students get an ASE education. In addition, it is important to remember that a key reason for taking classes is for students to get to know faculty that can serve as potential committee members. In short, the transferred units can only serve as elective or additional units. Such units may be very helpful to some of you, but not necessarily everyone. For example, for those who may have worked as a TA or RA their entire time at USC and are a class or two short to sit for the Qualifying Exam, the extra units may come in handy. But for others, especially those on fellowship, transferring units will probably not make a big difference.

In order to initiate the process, students need to go to DEGREE PROGRESS and request an evaluation. DEGREE PROGRESS will let students know in writing how many units can be transferred. Students should then petition the Graduate School to apply those units towards their degree program. A copy of the finalized paperwork should then be submitted to Kitty, who will place it in the student's file. Any questions about the process should be directed to the Graduate School: (213) 740-9045.



## QUALIFYING EXAMS

It is the job of the committee chair to guide the student through the process of preparing for and taking the actual exam. In addition to assisting the student in identifying the four fields, the chair should actively assist in the selection of the committee. Once the committee has been confirmed the student should meet with each committee member in order to develop four bibliographies. The bibliographies, developed in consultation with the committee members, then becomes the basis for the exam.

The QE must be taken after the PQM but before the beginning of the 4th year, as determined by the committee. All program requirements, including the Language requirement, must be met before the student can take the QE. The purpose of the QE is to ensure students are ready to 1) embark on dissertation research, and 2) are prepared to teach in American Studies. The QE will consist of four content-based fields. One field is the *disciplinary and methodological field*; another is the *field of specialization*. In both of these cases, the student should use the field to prepare for dissertation research and to prepare for teaching in those fields at the undergraduate and graduate level. The third and fourth fields will be designed by the student in consultation with the student's committee. The exam committee will consist of at least 5 people, at least one of which will serve as an "Outside" member. The outside member can be an affiliate faculty, or they may have no connection to the Department. A Core member cannot serve as an outside member. All committee members will be asked to submit to the committee chair 2-3 questions which can each be answered in approximately ten pages. The chair will then choose which questions to present to the student, ensuring that each of the four fields are covered and that the student is offered some choice in each category. The student will answer a total of four questions over a one-week period to be followed by an Oral Examination. The entire process cannot take more than 60 days. At the end of the Oral Examination the committee as a whole will vote to determine whether the student passed or failed the exam. A student must pass BOTH the written and oral portions in order to successfully pass the Qualifying Examination. A "pass" cannot be contingent on any additional tasks nor can there be any more than one negative vote on the part of the committee.

NOTE: It is critical that all Committee members clearly identify on the ASE Qualifying Exam Agreement form which programmatic affiliation they are identifying with (eg: AMST or Psychology). Once someone has identified themselves as "inside" or "outside" this identification cannot be switched.

## The Qualifying Exam – Frequently Asked Questions

### What are the Qualifying Exams and what do they entail?

The Qualifying Exam (QE) is a two-part test which the University requires of all PhD students. Passing the QE is necessary in order to proceed with the dissertation. The first part of the test is written and consists of four fields. Students must answer one question addressing each field over a one-week period. Students are given a choice of questions in each field. Each response should be approximately 10 pages in length (exclusive of bibliography, etc.). The second part of the QE is an oral discussion of the written material. The oral offers the student an opportunity to elaborate on the written material and offer any corrections. The student is evaluated on *both* the written and the oral components.

### Who sits on the Qualifying Exam Committee?

At least five USC faculty who are all tenure-track. At least three members *must* identify as ASE faculty and at least one must *not*. In reality, all committee members may be either Core or Affiliate, but faculty must be aware how they are being counted (eg: as an “inside” AMST faculty, or as an “outside” psychology faculty) and be consistent in such an identification. It is *imperative* that when you fill out both the Graduate School’s and ASE’s paperwork (see below) that each faculty indicate the appropriate affiliation. If you chose an Affiliate faculty member to serve as your “outside” person on the Qualifying Exam, and you wish to keep them on the Dissertation Committee, their role as “outside” faculty member must be maintained. If you are in doubt as to the status of a particular faculty member, ASE has a list which is updated annually and serves as the Graduate School’s basis for affiliation. You can have more than five committee members, including faculty from other campuses, if you can show that they have a particular expertise that USC lacks—such a person, however, does not take the place of your USC “outside” committee member.

### What paperwork do I need to complete?

Students must obtain from and submit to the Director of Graduate Studies the *Request to Take the Qualifying Examination* form at least 30 days prior to the QE. It is recommended that students complete the paperwork in January for a spring QE. In addition, ASE requires that you submit to the DGS 1) the QE Agreement form, 2) a copy of the ASE Course Requirements and Advisement Form, and the 3) Language Requirement Form.

### How do I prepare for the QE?

You should work closely with your committee in terms of developing the four fields and their respective reading lists. Your advisor should guide you through this process, but it is ultimately your responsibility to meet with each committee member and have them sign-off the ASE QE Agreement Form.

**Who Writes the Exam?**

The Committee Chair writes the actual exam. They solicit questions from all committee members and develop an exam that ensures that: 1) all questions can reasonably be answered in 10 pages, double spaced; 2) the questions reflect the agreed-upon bibliographies; and 3) that the student has some choice of questions in each field.

**How do I decide when to take my Qualifying Exams?**

At the PQM the committee will offer guidance as to when you should plan on taking the Qualifying Exams. For most students this will be towards the end of their third year. For some, it will be a bit later, and for some a bit earlier. In any event, the Qualifying Exam must be taken by the beginning of the fourth year.

**After my PQM, can I add or remove members from the Qualifying Exam Committee or change my fields?**

Yes, you can change both the composition of the committee and the fields after the PQM, but not after you file the Qualifying Exam Agreement Form. If you wish to change the committee after you have made the *request to take the qualifying examination*, then you must fill out the paperwork again. All such changes should be worked out closely with and approved by your advisor.

**How many units must be completed before I take the Qualifying Exams?**

In order to take the QE you must have completed or be in the process of completing 48 units with a GPA of at least 3.0. You can take the QE in March, for example, if you will have completed 48 units at the end of the spring semester.

**What programmatic requirements must be satisfied before I take the QE?**

In order to take the QE you must have completed ALL programmatic requirements. This includes the 1) methodology requirement, 2) language requirement, 3) disciplinary concentration, 4) required core courses, 5) research seminar, and 6) any other requirements.

**Who is responsible for scheduling the exam dates with committee members?**

The student is. The student should choose, in consultation with their advisor, a one-week period when they would like to take the exam (given the general guidelines established by the committee). The Oral portion of the examination must take place within 60 days after the start of the written. It is the students' job to find a 2-hour block of time and place when all committee members can convene for the Oral (sending committee members a Doodle poll is a good idea). It bears repeating that the student is responsible for scheduling the exam dates with committee members.

**What if my advisor and/or committee member are on leave when I am planning on taking the exam?**

First, inquire if your committee member(s) will be available to participate in the QE when they are on leave. If they are in town, many will. In some cases, out of town faculty will return to campus for a few days and you can schedule the Oral around their availability. Remember: you need all your committee members for the Oral.

Committee members can be sent either hard or electronic copies of your examination. If a committee member is unable to participate, you can try adjusting your exam dates, but if that will not work, then you may need to consider an alternative committee member. It's okay if someone you work closely with cannot sit on your Quals—they can still sit on the dissertation committee.

**Can I take the Qualifying exam during the summer?**

Yes. However, it will be extremely difficult to schedule an oral during the summer since faculty are actively engaged in their own research, meaning many will be out of town and unavailable. As such, it is generally not a good idea to assume a summer exam without consulting all committee members well in advance.

**How is the written exam administered?**

The committee chair must prepare the exam and typically gives it to the ASE staff who then give it to the student at the agreed upon date and time. Another option is for the committee chair to email the exam to the student. In either case, there must be a clear record of the day and time the exam was given and when it was collected. When the student has completed the exam, they must email their answers to the ASE staff who will then distribute it, along with the exam questions, to the committee.

**Where can the exams be taken?**

Anywhere you wish.

**Can I consult with anyone while I am writing the exam?**

The only person the student is allowed to consult with regarding the exam is the committee chair, who should be available for clarifications.

**How soon after the exams will I know the results?**

At the oral the committee chair will inform you whether you passed or not. You can only Pass or Fail the exam.

**If I don't pass the exam, can I take them again?**

If the committee approves, students can retake the exam. However, they must wait 6 months.

**What Course numbers do I register for when preparing for the exam?**

If you will have completed 48 units prior to the QE, register for GRS 800. If you have not yet completed 48 units and are in the process of completing them the semester of your QE, register for however many units you need to bring you up to 48 (through either coursework or DR). In order to enroll in GRS 800 students must contact the Graduate School to obtain D-clearance. Students who register for GRS 800 receive zero units but are charged for 2 units which maintains their full-time status.

**What is the role of the outside committee member?**

A USC faculty member not in ASE can serve as an outside committee member in the qualifying exam committee and/or dissertation committee. The outside member

is expected to represent the Graduate School. They will ensure that the committee has followed a fair process. Additionally, the outside member will have a vote in the qualifying exam decision. Outside members are not expected to serve as a reader for one of the fields. They can choose to serve as a reader and to submit exam questions if the chair and the rest of the committee agree. This decision should be made very early in the process.

**Other Questions?** Consult the Catalog and/or call the Graduate School.

**Constituting the PhD Guidance (qualifying examination) Committees; Constituting Dissertation and Master's Theses Committees;  
And Processing Requests to Take and Reports on Qualifying Examinations**

Action & Form	TIMING	REQUIREMENTS	HOW PROCESS WORKS
Establish Guidance Committee <i>Appointment of Committee form</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be at least 2 semesters before qualifying exam</li> <li>Guidance Committee has responsibility for supervising the student's program of studies &amp; preparation for qualifying exam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Minimum of 5 tenured or tenure track faculty; at least 3 from Dept.;</li> <li>*1 from Dept. must be tenured;</li> <li>*Tenure track outside member from USC, but outside Dept.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student initiates paperwork</li> <li>Fillable PDF on Grad School website</li> <li>Committee members sign</li> <li>Student submits to Dept. Chair's office</li> <li>Dept. Chair sends to Dean for signature (exceptions to requirements must be approved by Dean)</li> <li>Dean's office sends form to Dept. after signature</li> </ul>
Ready for Quals <i>Request to Take Qualifying Examination</i>	At least 30 days before start of the examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum of 3.0 GPA</li> <li>Minimum of 24 units</li> <li>Guidance Committee approved &amp; on record</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student initiates paper work</li> <li>Submits form to Dept. Chair's office</li> <li>Dept. verifies requirements are met</li> <li>Dept. send to Dean for signature</li> <li>Dean's office sends form to Dept. after signature</li> </ul>
Making an official record of the Quals results <i>Report on Qualifying examination</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*1 –2 days before the exam Comm. Chair requests <i>Report form</i> &amp; signed <i>Appointment of Guidance Committee form</i> from Dept.</li> <li>*Day of exam, both forms are brought to exam</li> <li>*Committee members indicate Pass or <u>Not Passed</u> on the form &amp; sign &amp; date</li> <li>*<i>Report form</i> is returned to Dept. within 2 days</li> <li>*<i>Report form</i> is returned to Graduate School within 5 days</li> </ul>	Established Guidance Committee on record in the Dept., i.e. having a signed <i>Appointment of Committee form</i> on file	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comm. Chair requests <i>Report form</i> &amp; signed <i>Appointment of Guidance Committee form</i> from Dept.</li> <li>Day of exam, both forms are brought to exam</li> <li>Committee members notify student &amp; indicate Pass or Not Passed on the <i>Report form</i>; then sign &amp; date</li> </ul> <p>Upon completion of the exam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student is advised by Committee to appoint Dissertation committee</li> <li>Original <i>Report form</i> is returned to Dept. for signature (in 2 days)</li> <li>Copy of <i>Report form</i> is returned (faxed) to Grad School (in 5 days)</li> <li>Copy of <i>Report form</i> is given to student; original filed in stdt. File</li> </ul>
Establish PhD Committee <i>Appointment of Committee form</i>	As soon as possible upon passing quals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Minimum of 3 tenured or tenure track faculty; 2 from Dept.;</li> <li>*1 from Dept. must be tenured;</li> <li>*Tenure track outside member from USC, but outside Dept.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student initiates paper work</li> <li>Fillable PDF on Grad School website</li> <li>Committee members sign</li> <li>Student submits to Dept. Chair's office</li> <li>Dept. Chair sends to Dean for signature (exceptions to requirements must be approved by Dean)</li> <li>Dean's office sends form to Dept. after signature</li> </ul>
Establish Master's Committee <i>Appointment of Committee form</i>	No specific timing required by catalogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum of 3 tenured or tenure track faculty;</li> <li>2 from Dept. who are recommended by Chair of Dept.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student initiates paper work</li> <li>Fillable PDF on Grad School website</li> <li>Committee members sign</li> <li>Student submits to Dept. Chair</li> <li>Dept. Chair sends to Dean for signature (exceptions to requirements must be approved by Dean)</li> <li>Dean's office sends form to Dept. after signature</li> </ul>
Change Committee <i>Change of Committee form</i>	No specific timing required by catalogue	Determined by which committee is being changed	Process is the same as <i>Appointment</i> <b>EXCEPT</b> if Committee Chair is being changed. Then the signature of the prior Chair is required on the form

# Qualifying Exam Checklist

Paperwork must be completed and submitted to the ASE Director of Graduate Studies at least one month prior to your exam date. Once these materials have been received and approved by the DGS, the student is free to schedule the examination. Students **must** submit these forms at least one month prior to the examination (earlier is recommended).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Appointment of Committee/Change of Committee Form  
[This form must be turned in to DGS before taking your qualifying exam. Your original Appointment of Committee form should have already been submitted at least two semesters before taking the qualifying exam during your PQMs. This form can also be downloaded from the Graduate School website.]

\_\_\_\_\_ ASE Qualifying Exam Agreement Form

\_\_\_\_\_ A Copy of your Four Fields and Reading List

\_\_\_\_\_ Course Requirements and Advisement Sheet

\_\_\_\_\_ ASE Language Fulfillment Form

\_\_\_\_\_ A Current Print Out of your Completed Course Summary from OASIS

\_\_\_\_\_ One paragraph bio/abstract to be updated in the graduate handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ Dates and Times of Qualifying Exams:

1) Written (one week) \_\_\_\_\_

2) Oral (2 hours) \_\_\_\_\_

## ASE: QUALIFYING EXAM AGREEMENT FORM

All students must submit to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) a copy of their four fields, reading list and the following cover sheet signed by each member of the Qualifying Exam Committee. The signature of each committee member attests to their having reviewed the reading list and approved it and indicates their programmatic identification for Exam purposes. The agreement serves to define the scope of the exam: Students are responsible for mastering the approved reading list and faculty examination is limited to the agreed-upon material. Once these materials have been received and approved by the DGS, the student is free to schedule the examination. Students **must** submit this form at least one month prior to the examination (earlier is recommended). No exceptions in scheduling procedures or timing will be made.

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

PRINTED NAMES  
OF COMMITTEE

SIGNATURES

DEPT. AFFILIATION

DATE

CHAIRPERSON			
OUTSIDE MEMBER			

**RETURN FORM TO:**

Kitty Lai, Student Services Advisor I  
Department of American Studies & Ethnicity  
Kaprielian Hall (KAP) 462, MC 2534

Please attach a copy of your four fields and reading list.

(ASE completes this section)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Director of Graduate Studies, signature and date)

Approved

Denied

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appointment or Change of Qualifying Exam Committee

For all changes of committee, please list the names of all committee members. Only the new member(s) and committee chair are required to sign.

**Units:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(minimum of 24 units in residence)

57

*Please complete the section below for all appointments and changes of committees. Dean of Outside Member's School only required if applicable*

	<u>Printed Name</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Date</u>
Student	_____	_____	_____
Department Chair or Program Director	_____	_____	_____
Dean	_____	_____	_____

### **The Pre-Qualifying Meeting:**

The PQM will be held at the end of the student's second year. At this meeting, the student will gather together (but staff will schedule) all those that 1) may be part of their QE exam, 2) have played a significant role in their intellectual development, 3) may be part of their dissertation committee, or 4) may have some other unique contribution to offer. The exact composition of the meeting should be developed by the student in consultation with their advisor and director of graduate studies (DGS), as appropriate.

The purpose of the meeting is fourfold. First, the meeting is an opportunity to identify problems (such as incompletes) and to offer intervention. Second, the meeting is one of the few opportunities that the department has to implement any necessary changes in the student's status and progress, including such things as recommending leaves, expulsion, etc. The meeting is the vehicle through which to act. Third, the convened faculty will provide guidance to the student to help them prepare for the QE, and, if appropriate, the dissertation. Finally, bringing together diverse faculty in one room will help put faculty from several disciplines all on the same page. There is only one rule regarding the composition of the committee: The committee must be comprised of more than one discipline. The meeting will be limited to one hour in length. This is to prevent it from being perceived as an 'exam' and to force faculty to say their key points in a succinct manner. The DGS, or their representative, will attend all PQMs.

Students must prepare the following materials for dissemination to PQM members prior to the actual meeting: A complete listing of all courses taken and grades earned; a CV which includes all professional accomplishments; a completed form indicating what ASE requirements have been fulfilled and which are outstanding; a scholarly writing sample; a PQM form; a 750 word preliminary dissertation proposal; and a 750 word statement of intellectual focus. In the statement of intellectual focus students should identify 1) their teaching interests and 2) discuss their future professional identity.

At the beginning of the PQM, the student will be asked to step out of the meeting room for a few minutes in order for the committee members to consult among themselves. On the PQM form the student will be asked to identify four potential fields (sample fields will be provided on the form). One of the goals of the PQM is to help the student refine the fields and develop an appropriate committee. At the PQM the faculty will offer prescriptive suggestions and decide *when* the student should take the Qualifying Exam. Some more advanced students might be ready in the Fall, but others might be encouraged to take them in the Spring or Summer. In any event, they must be completed by the beginning of the fourth year. Students are required to submit the necessary paperwork to the Graduate School at least 30 days prior to beginning the Qualifying Exam.

Here is a brief overview of what you can expect during the prequalifying exam meeting (PQM).

1. The invited faculty will review your ASE course requirements and advisement sheet to confirm that you are on track to meeting these obligations. At this point, the faculty and the student will discuss any potential concerns.

2. Most of the PQM will be taken up by a discussion of your proposed fields of study. This discussion will include the following:
  1. Will these fields prepare the student for their dissertation research?
  2. Do the proposed fields make you legible to the fields/departments you want to work in once the Ph.D. is complete?
  3. Will these fields enable you to teach classes in the departments/programs you wish to join?
  4. Which faculty will serve as readers for each of your fields?

Finally, the meeting will end with a brief discussion of the timeline and strategies for qualifying exam preparation.

### **The Mechanics of the Qualifying Exams:**

The Department of American Studies and Ethnicity requires that students select four fields for examination. The four written exams are followed by the oral examination, which is actually a meeting of you and your full guidance committee, usually lasting about two hours.

It is the job of the committee chair to guide the student through the process of preparing for and taking the actual exam. In addition to assisting the student in identifying the four fields, the chair should actively assist in the selection of the committee. Once the committee has been confirmed the student should meet with each committee member in order to develop four bibliographies. The bibliographies, developed in consultation with the committee members, then become the basis for the exam.

The QE must be taken after the PQM but before the beginning of the 4th year, as determined by the committee. Students must be approved to take the exam by both the Committee and the Graduate School. All program requirements, including the Language requirement, must be met before the student can take the QE. The purpose of the QE is to ensure students are ready to 1) embark on dissertation research, and 2) are prepared to teach in American Studies. The QE will consist of four content-based fields. One field is the *disciplinary and methodological field*; another is the *field of specialization*. In both of these cases, the student should use the field to prepare for dissertation research and to prepare for teaching in those fields at the undergraduate and graduate level. The third and fourth fields will be designed by the student in consultation with the student's committee. The exam committee will consist of at least 5 people, at least 3 of whom must be from ASE (Core or Affiliated), and at least one of which must be an "Outside" member. In reality, all committee members may be ASE affiliated, but for the purposes of the exam, at least one must identify as a non-ASE member. In other words, they would serve as a Psychology or Art History faculty member. It doesn't really matter which faculty is the outside member but what is important is that this person consistently be identified as the outside member. All committee members will be asked to submit to the committee chair 2-3 questions which can each be answered in approximately ten pages. The chair will then choose which questions to present to the student, ensuring that each of the four fields are covered and that the student is offered some choice in each category. The student will answer a total of four questions over a one-week period to be followed by an Oral Examination. If the written portion is deemed acceptable by the committee, the oral portion of the

exam may commence. The entire process cannot take more than 60 days. At the end of the Oral Examination the committee as a whole will vote to determine whether the student passed or failed the exam. A student must pass BOTH the written and oral portions in order to successfully pass the Qualifying Examination. A "pass" cannot be contingent on any additional tasks nor can there be any more than one negative vote on the part of the committee. Once students have successfully completed the Oral Examination, they are advanced to PhD Candidacy (aka, ABD, 'All But Dissertation').

The qualifying exam process forces you to confront an entire field and demonstrate your understanding of that field. What you are striving for is not just mastering rote data, but understanding what it all means in a larger context, an interpretive framework. There is an expectation in the field and in the discipline that somehow or other you have mastered a body of material to such a degree that your committee is comfortable sending you off to create an original piece of scholarship in the dissertation.

To a large extent, what constitutes a "field" is a matter of negotiation between you and your individual committee members. Any real field is, finally, a compromise between what you want to do and what your faculty member and your committee really think you need to know. So, when you talk to a faculty member, you should be willing to put forward what your interests are and you should also be open to hearing what is intellectually current in that area of activity. Your fields should build a base for your future work as an American Studies or Ethnic Studies scholar, a teacher, a researcher. Most importantly, many of your fields should be interdisciplinary.

The extent to which you factor in the job market in your selection of fields can be an important aspect to your decision. This should be a consideration, but not necessarily a driving force in your selection of fields. Having a field in an area indicates an ability to teach that subject to prospective employers. You can sell yourself based on your fields. You can prove that you've had that field and you can get written letters of recommendation from the people you've studied with. It also helps to have been a Teaching Assistant in a particular field.

Although the content of the four fields is to be negotiated between the student and the committee members, the parameters of two of the fields must adhere to departmental guidelines. These fields are: 1) the *disciplinary and methodological field*; and 2) the *field of specialization*. The disciplinary and methodological field is the culmination of your coursework that fulfills the disciplinary and methodological requirement. As a scholar, you will often be asked by peers, more senior professors, and grant agencies what your discipline and your method are. While the two overlap, they are not the same. Furthermore, while many ASE graduate students see themselves as interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary scholars, the reality is that they will be entering an academic world that very much defines itself through disciplinary conventions. Thus, it is crucial that ASE graduate students be able to discuss with authority at least one of the disciplines and one of the methods they plan to use in their dissertation. The disciplinary and methodological field in no way precludes ASE graduate students from being interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary, since ASE graduate students can use one or both of their self-

defined fields to address other disciplines and other methods. Examples of disciplines and related methods are:

***Discipline***

English/Literature

History

Anthropology or Sociology

Art History or Film Studies

Geography

Political Science or Sociology

***Method***

Literary/Textual Analysis

Historical/Archival Analysis

Ethnography

Visual Analysis

Spatial Analysis

Quantitative Methods

The *field of specialization* defines the primary field in which your dissertation is located. There may be more than one field that the student thinks their dissertation can be located in, but the field of specialization asks the student to name one (without precluding the possibility of using a student-defined field to name another field of specialization). Fields of specialization can be named most easily by looking to the subspecialties of disciplines, departments and programs that currently exist within the academy. Sometimes these subspecialties exist as departments or programs in their own right: ethnic studies, gender studies, queer studies, labor studies, cultural studies, etc. Sometimes these subspecialties are specific to disciplines and departments: 19<sup>th</sup> century American history, Asian American literature, Third World cinema, African American art, etc. Sometimes the field may instead be defined theoretically: Marxist theory, postcolonial theory, feminist theory, psychoanalytic theory, etc.

In both the disciplinary and methodological field and the field of specialization, students should seek to acquire a knowledge of the canonical texts and debates as well as to develop a reading list that relates to their dissertation research. The student should also use the fields to prepare themselves to teach those fields at the undergraduate and graduate level. The student should be able to develop syllabi for courses in these fields by the end of the qualifying exam process.

Overall, as students develop these two fields and their two self-defined fields, they should strive for balance and diversity rather than narrow specialization. For example, the student who wishes to write a dissertation on 20<sup>th</sup> century Chicano literature and film is ill-served by these four fields: Chicano studies (field of specialization), literature and literary analysis (disciplinary and methodological field), Chicano literature, and Chicano film. The emphasis falls too strongly on Chicano specialization. A better set of four fields might be: Chicano studies (field of specialization), literature and literary analysis (disciplinary and methodological field), film and visual analysis, and border theory. Under literature and literary analysis, and under film and visual analysis, the student can incorporate Chicano texts. But the broader rubrics of film and visual analysis and border theory allow the student to have conversations with a wider range of scholars outside of Chicano studies.

GRSC 800, "Studies for Qualifying Exam" is designed for students who need to maintain full-time enrollment status for fellowship purposes and have already completed the required number of units. The course will now exist as GRSC-800a, GRSC-800b, and GRSC-800z. GRSC-800a and GRSC- 800b will not require D

clearance. However, because two semesters of preparation for the qualifying exam should suffice in the vast majority of cases, students enrolling in GRSC-800z will be required to get D clearance from the Graduate School. In addition, the student's program will be expected to issue a warning letter laying out academic expectations and a path toward timely completion of the PhD.

- Students enrolling in their 1st semester of GRSC-800 should enroll in GRSC-800a.
- Students enrolling in their 2nd semester of GRSC-800 should enroll in GRSC-800b.
- Students enrolling in their 3rd semester of GRSC-800 should to enroll in GRSC-800z. \* GRSC-800z requires D clearance from the Graduate School. The student's program will be expected to issue a warning letter that establishes benchmarks and a path forward for timely completion of the degree.

The Graduate School requires continuous registration. Unless you have a formal leave of absence from the department, you have to be a full-time enrolled student every semester or you lose your advanced status. You must also maintain full-time status to be awarded a teaching assistantship, to keep your visa (in the case of foreign students) and to receive financial aid. If you leave the Department without obtaining a formal leave of absence, the only way to return is to reapply for graduate admissions.

To remain a student in good standing, you must take all the examinations at the same time as your cohort: 1) PQM by the end of your second year; 2) Your qualifying examinations before the beginning of your fourth year; 3) Approval of your dissertation prospectus during your fourth year. In addition, to remain in a student in good standing, your respective advising committee forms must be submitted and approved at each relevant stage: 1) After the PQM, you must have a qualifying examination committee form submitted and approved; 2) After passing the qualifying examination, you should submit a dissertation committee form before enrolling in AMST 700 and writing a dissertation prospectus. Either of these committees can be reconstituted by submitting and getting approved another committee form.

### **Master of Arts**

The department does not accept applicants for a Master of Arts degree. All graduate work in American Studies and Ethnicity at USC is taken as part of a PhD program, and the MA in American Studies and Ethnicity is intended only as a transitional degree in the process of completing requirements for the PhD, although in some cases students may be invited to attempt a terminal MA.

After completing at least 30 units, taking AMST 500 and at least one research seminar, maintaining a GPA of at least 3.0, making successful academic progress and taking the qualifying exam, students will either be granted a transitional master's degree and continue on towards the PhD or be granted a terminal master's degree.

In rare circumstances, students may petition to write a master's thesis in lieu of passing the qualifying exam to receive a terminal master's degree. The master's

thesis option must be requested by the graduate student and must be approved by both the student's academic advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies of American Studies and Ethnicity. After approval, the graduate student has no more than one (1) year to complete this option. The master's thesis must be a minimum of forty pages, and be read and approved by the student's academic advisor and a second faculty reader.

### **Preparing for the Qualifying Exams:**

There are two separate aspects to preparing for the exams: how you study to gain mastery of a field and how you physically/emotionally get set to take the actual exams. Gaining mastery of a field is what you are doing from the day you begin the graduate program. There is no way to "cram" for the qualifying exams. Either you have read, processed, discussed and interpreted the material, or you haven't. Meet with your individual committee members to discuss which books you should be reading and give yourself plenty of time to get through those reading lists. Make sure you are comfortable with the "factual" foundations of your field. Set up reading groups with other graduate students if you can.

There are some things you can do that will make the exam process more successful:

- Remember that these exams are physically demanding. In addition to getting plenty of rest, try to maintain your normal routines as much as possible prior to and during the exams.
- If you can, give yourself a written practice exam at home. Mirror the conditions of the actual exam with regard to time. Collect questions from previous exams and work on those. Ask your advisors for practice questions.

Psychologically, the best thing you can do is accept that the purpose of these exams is to measure what you have learned and understood about your fields. Remember that most people in the department are not interested in finding out what you don't know —they are interested in finding out what you do know.

The examination may not be reported as being passed if there is more than ONE dissenting vote. Ph.D. examinations cannot be passed conditionally. A pass on the examination cannot be made contingent upon other factors such as the preparation of extra research projects. If you fail the exam(s) and your committee agrees that you may retake them, you may do so at the discretion of your committee, no sooner than one month after your orals and no later than six months. If the student does not undertake the exam in this time period, there are no other opportunities to re-take the exam. Also, the second attempt is the final attempt for re-taking the qualifying examinations. If a student fails them a second time, that is grounds for dismissal from the Department. See "General Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree" in the University Catalogue:  
<http://catalogue.usc.edu/uscgraduate/policies/>

While ASE discourages remote participation, if absolutely necessary a maximum of 2 committee members may participate remotely.



## Dissertation Progress Meeting

The dissertation progress meeting is a routine, annual meeting that will take place each fall semester for all ABD students. The DPM is designed to make sure that the student's dissertation committee remains informed about the student's progress, and to provide the student with an opportunity to receive detailed advice about both the intellectual content of the student's dissertation and the logistics of completing it. The DPM will occur in the first three weeks of the fall semester. The student must provide all committee members and the DGS with the proper forms (see below).

The chair of your committee will need to assess your timely completion of your dissertation to the DGS **by October 15. Please note that the timely submission of this report has bearing upon student's eligibility for continued funding and internal grant funding. Please send electronic documents to [kittylai@usc.edu](mailto:kittylai@usc.edu) with a cc to [asedgs@dornsife.usc.edu](mailto:asedgs@dornsife.usc.edu).**

**For students who are in their first year after passing the qualifying exam,** the Dissertation Progress Meeting (DPM) will be a meeting with the dissertation chair (which can be via zoom). The chair will write the report on the student's progress and email it to the Director of Graduate Studies.

**For all other students in later years,** the student can meet with the dissertation committee members individually, and then with the dissertation committee chair for a conclusive discussion. The chair will write the report on the student's progress to the Director of Graduate Studies. The chair and the student have the option of calling for a collective meeting of the dissertation committee if necessary (especially if the student's project or committee have changed significantly).

All students must email all committee members (including the chair), Kitty ([kittylai@usc.edu](mailto:kittylai@usc.edu)), and cc the DGS ([asedgs@dornsife.usc.edu](mailto:asedgs@dornsife.usc.edu)) with the following documents at least one week prior to any meeting:

1. time to completion form (which will help you organize important information before having to submit Dornsife's dissertation completion plan form, due every April 15—you will receive an email prompt about this each Spring semesters). Please note that page 2 of the time to completion form asks you to complete a job market questionnaire;
2. up to date CV;
3. dissertation abstracts (one short of 150 words; and another longer of no more than 1,000 words);
4. up to date biography

For all students, the dissertation chair will write a summary of the meeting which the chair will forward to the student, the committee, the DGS, and Kitty, who will keep the summary in the student's file. The summary will be used to help determine the department's fellowship nominations for the next year. Before the spring review of graduate students, the DGS will review the summary and ask the dissertation chair for an update on the student's progress.

Below is the Time to Completion Form (2 pages in length) (this will also be emailed to you each Fall semester):

**TIME TO COMPLETION FORM**  
**Department of American Studies & Ethnicity**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Passing Qualifying Exams \_\_\_\_\_

This form is intended to chronicle the progress of all ABD students in ASE's Ph.D. program. It ensures that students and committee chairs (whose signature is required below) are on the same page early each Fall semester. In addition, completing this form will help you prepare for the Dornsife Dissertation Completion Plan Form that you will submit by April 15<sup>th</sup> (ASE will email you this form each Spring semester). A copy of the Time to Completion Form will be passed along to each member of your Ph.D. dissertation committee, and a copy kept in the ASE Department office. A new version must be filed each academic year by October 15<sup>th</sup> until you file your Ph.D. dissertation and receive your degree.

Have you filed your official dissertation committee? \_\_\_\_\_

List your official dissertation committee members: Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Month and year which you submitted (or intend to submit) first chapter to your chair \_\_\_\_\_

How many chapters do you plan for your dissertation? \_\_\_\_\_

How many have you turned in to your chair? \_\_\_\_\_

Month and year you intend to complete a full draft of your dissertation: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are within a year of completion, have you scheduled your defense? \_\_\_\_\_ Date? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your funding situation for this academic year? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your funding status for next academic year? \_\_\_\_\_

If you have not secured funding for next year, what fellowships or other funding do you plan to apply for?  
\_\_\_\_\_

With this form, please also submit an electronic version of: (a) a more detailed timetable outlining your intended dissertation progress (chapter completion and submissions, research activities, revision schedules) and (b) your dissertation abstract (1-2 paragraphs) [note: (a) & (b) can be merged into one attachment]

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Advisor/Committee Chair Signature

**JOB MARKET QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**Department of American Studies & Ethnicity**

This form is intended to aid you in preparation for the job market. We understand that your priorities may change as you find out more about the job market and available jobs. But please give us a good sense of your thinking about the job market to this date.

Are you currently on the job market? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, when do intend to enter? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you considering any areas outside of academic employment? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list disciplines, sub-disciplines, or fields in academic jobs you intend to seek:

\_\_\_\_\_

What types of departments or institutions would you ideally like to work in?

\_\_\_\_\_

Where do you currently get your information regarding academic employment possibilities?

\_\_\_\_\_

Below is the Dornsife's Dissertation Completion Plan Form (2 pages in length), which all ABD students must submit each Spring semester by April 15 (ASE will email you this form each Spring semester):



## Office of Graduate Programs

### Ph.D. Dissertation Completion Plan

#### To be completed by the Student:

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Year of Entry to Ph.D. Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Passed Qualifying Exam: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of previous Leaves of Absence: \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Advisor's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please outline your dissertation completion plan, listing specific items, dates, and deadlines:

Continue, if needed, on the next page.

Plan outline (continued from page 1):

- ☐ By checking this box and entering my name below, I certify my dissertation completion plan as complete, and I understand that making timely academic progress is a requirement for continued enrollment in the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please save this completed PDF form, with your name in the filename, and email to your advisor for review and approval.

**To be completed by the Faculty Advisor:**

**Statement of Endorsement**

- ☐ By checking this box and entering my name below, I certify my agreement with the dissertation completion plan and I will be available for guidance throughout the period of the plan.

Please enter your name here, or use  
a digital signature, to certify your  
completion of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**When all sections are complete, please forward to the GRADUATE STAFF ADVISOR.**

**Advisors: If all sections of this form have been completed electronically, please upload it directly to the Graduate Student Database. If this document is in paper form, please scan to PDF format and upload.**

## The Dissertation

AMST 700 (Theories and Practice of Professional Development) was created as a vehicle to help students get started on the dissertation after the Qualifying Exam. AMST 700 will be offered every fall. In addition to addressing professional development issues, AMST 700 also requires students to develop a dissertation proposal (or 'prospectus'). Students must have completed their qualifying exams before enrolling in AMST 700. They are strongly encouraged to enroll in the course in the fall semester following their qualifying examination, unless pressing research reasons prompt them to delay enrollment. Students cannot delay enrollment longer than the third semester after the successful completion of their qualifying examination (normally the fall semester of their fifth year). They must also be in residence in order to take the course and fulfill the requirement. At the end of the class, students will present their proposals to the larger ASE community. This, however, does not constitute the formal "Defense" of the prospectus (rather, it is an opportunity to showcase the progress you have made during AMST 700 and serve as a trial run for your formal defense). In early November, students enrolled in AMST 700 should reach out to the chair and members of their committee to schedule the formal prospectus defense, which needs to be completed by January 31 (of the semester following your enrollment in AMST 700). After the prospectus defense, the chair of your committee will email the DGS to confirm successful completion.

AMST 701 (Contemporary Theories of American Studies and Ethnicity): Effective Fall 2024, all students enrolled in AMST 700 (offered each fall semester) must also take AMST 701 (offered each spring semester). Once students complete AMST 700 in the fall, they must register for AMST 701 the following spring.

The rationale of this requirement is two-fold: first and foremost, it serves to keep students on track with their dissertation projects, as students craft their dissertation prospectuses in AMST 700 and draft a dissertation chapter in AMST 701; in addition, some competitive USC fellowships require a completed dissertation chapter for eligibility, so AMST 701 provides an efficient and effective way to prepare for such funding opportunities.

Any student seeking permission to postpone taking AMST 701 must acquire an exemption from the Director of Graduate Studies, who will consider such requests and take into account such issues as fieldwork obligations, overall progress in the program, and health-related matters.

Remember: AMST 701 is only offered each spring semester, so plan accordingly.

The dissertation committee consists of at least three persons, one of which must serve as an "Outside" member. Like with the Qualifying Exam, the outside member can be either an Affiliate faculty or have no affiliation with ASE. However, people who served as "inside" members on the Qualifying Exam cannot be switched to an "outside" member for the dissertation.

After the qualifying examination has been passed, an interdisciplinary dissertation committee of at least three faculty members from the examination committee must approve a dissertation prospectus before full time research commences. Only at

this point is a student admitted to candidacy for the PhD and will thereafter concentrate on the dissertation.

Finding your topic may seem a difficult feat. The "right" topic exists somewhere in the intersection of what interests other people in the field and what interests you. You have to connect with the literature, yet find that question or argument you can feel passionate about. You have to get in touch with whatever the subjective things are that you care about.

One way to approach the selection of a topic is to look at what's out there. What are the critical works in your field? What kinds of articles are coming out in the important journals? What hasn't been addressed yet in the debate? What are the four, five or six key questions you want to ask in defining your topic?

Another consideration in the selection of a topic is the availability of sources. You have to have sources for your research and if those sources are not available, or are too far away for you to access, then you may need to change or modify your topic.

Graduate School regulations stipulate that you have a minimum of three committee members to guide you through the dissertation process. In most cases, the Chair of your guidance committee (your principal advisor) becomes the Chair of your dissertation committee. The other members of the dissertation committee should be chosen based on what they can contribute to your project. In some cases, the entire five-member guidance committee is converted to the dissertation committee because of the expertise each member can bring to the dissertation.

On a very practical level, you should structure your dissertation committee with two objectives, or sets of objectives, in mind. First, who are the people you can, and want, to work with? You want people on your committee who are interested in your work, willing to take the time to read through it and able to give you suggestions. Second, you should try to get the most senior people available who also meet the first set of objectives. Assuming you want a job in academia, the more prominent your committee members — or at least your committee Chair — the more helpful their participation will be. These are the people who will be writing your letters of recommendation once you enter the job market.

In addition to your official committee, you should also be building a wider network of scholars in your field from around the country. These are people who will have a primary interest in your project and so can give you support and feedback at specific points in your research and writing.

Do not approach your dissertation as though you were writing a book; rather, you are writing a book-length piece of original research. When you get a job, that's when you turn your thesis into a book. It's two very distinct stages, and the level of expectations that you should demand of yourself should be different for a dissertation than it should be for a book.

### **Defense of the Dissertation:**

Once the student has written the dissertation the University has a number administrative requirements that the student must fulfill before the PhD is awarded



(see University Catalog). Both the University and ASE requires that a dissertation defense be held. Upon the approval of the entire committee, the student will schedule a defense of the dissertation. The first part of the defense, which will be open to the University community, will consist of the student making a 20-30 minute presentation of their research and key findings. This will be followed by an open discussion after which the committee chair will then convene a closed meeting consisting solely of the committee. Upon its conclusion the candidate will be notified of the outcome and further discussion may ensue.

Students can invite fellow students, faculty, friends, and family to observe the presentation and participate in the open discussion. The presentation and discussion should be treated as serious academic affairs, however, and not as a social occasion or celebration. Online audience participation via skype or other formats will not be permitted, due to technical challenges.

There are three possible outcomes. First, a dissertation may be accepted without revisions. Such a dissertation should be considered as having "passed with distinction." Second, a dissertation will be accepted with revisions. The student has six months to complete the revisions and file the dissertation after receiving the necessary signatures. Third, the dissertation is not considered passing, in which case the student must defend a revised dissertation again at a later date.

Note that successfully passing the defense does not mean that the student can now be called "doctor" or has the degree. The student must still complete all revision requests, obtain committee approval, and file the dissertation with the Graduate School.

Students who wish to walk in the Ph.D. hooding ceremony in May, should seek the approval of the DGS before registering to participate in the ceremonies. Only those who have finished their dissertation and defended (or are very close to defending) will be hooded. If a defense is not scheduled by April 1, the DGS may request that your name be removed from the hooding ceremony script.

## **THE PROSPECTUS**

Your prospectus is basically a proposal. The structure of the prospectus will vary, depending on who you are working with. The dissertation prospectus is also a critical component when you are applying for grants. The clearer the idea, the more grounded you are in what you are going to do your dissertation on, the more likely you are to get funding. In order to facilitate the dissertation proposal process, ASE has developed a course entitled, "Theories and Practice of Professional Development" (AMST 700). The course is titled to provide a vehicle to support students in preparing the proposal as well as assist in their professional development. At the end of the class, students will present their proposals to the larger ASE community. This, however, does not constitute the formal "Defense" of the prospectus (rather, it is an opportunity to showcase the progress you have made during AMST 700 and serve as a trial run for your formal defense). In early November, reach out to your chair and members of your committee to schedule the formal prospectus defense, which needs to be completed by January 31 (of the

semester following your enrollment in AMST 700). After the prospectus defense, the chair of your committee will email the DGS to confirm successful completion.

The prospectus can be a daunting task. To help make it more manageable, start with the title. This should give a fairly good idea of what your dissertation is about. Then review the larger, scholarly world in which this thesis is set. What are the debates? Be specific. Then move on to your thesis, the questions you want to answer, and how those questions fit with, and contribute to, the larger debate. If you are far enough along, outline the project by chapter. As you do your research you are going to find that you will be constantly revising your topic. You will be revising chapters—you may even be revising the focus. You should also include, in the prospectus, anything you can on the sources and theoretical approach you will use to answer your questions. If you are going to develop a hypothesis and are having trouble doing so, don't worry. In many cases, the hypothesis comes about after you have finished the research and begun writing.

What is really important about a prospectus is not the answers, but the questions. Your research questions have to be answerable, while the (eventual) hypothesis needs to be falsifiable. What are the really important questions you want to ask and how do these fit within the field? In other words, the prospectus can be seen as an intellectual wish list. Here is the topic you are dealing with, here is how the profession is dealing with it, and here are your questions.

#### Suggested Readings:

- Joan Bolker. *Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998).
- John A. Goldsmith, John Komlos, and Penny Schine Gold. *A Chicago Guide to Your Academic Career* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001).
- Eric Hayot. *The Elements of Academic Style: Writing for the Humanities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).
- Mary-Claire van Leunen. *A Handbook for Scholars*, revised edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).
- David Sternberg. *How To Complete and Survive A Doctoral Dissertation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981).
- Kate Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Sixth Edition Revised by John Grossman and Alice Bennett (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
- William Zinsser. *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2016).

## **FUNDING**

### **Stipend Disbursement:**

At the beginning of the academic year, the Graduate School enters tuition and stipend awards for each fellowship recipient on the Student Information System. Fellowship stipends are usually paid around the 26<sup>th</sup> day of each month, from August through May. In an effort to accommodate student travels at the end of each semester, the December stipend is paid in November and the May stipend is

paid April. Students must complete the following requirements to receive their monthly stipend:

1. Students must be admitted to a degree-seeking graduate program,
2. Enrolled full-time for that semester,
3. Have a valid local address listed in the USC Student Information System, and the USC Accounts Payable or USC Payroll systems, and
4. Submit a copy of their US social Security Card along with a completed W-8BEN if they are a non-resident alien (international student).

The Graduate School enters stipends for the fiscal year and the USC Accounts Payable department is responsible for generating checks for US citizens and eligible non-citizens (permanent residents). Those checks are then forwarded, via US mail, to each fellowship recipient's local address. It is essential that the local address (not the billing address or the permanent address) on the USC Student Information System is correct to ensure prompt delivery of a stipend check. Students may also update their address at any of the five Touch-USC kiosks located on campus. Electronic deposit is available and students can sign up in the Accounts Payable Disbursement Control office, (Parking Structure B, mail code 1984, (213) 740-2281).

This is an overview of funding available to graduate students in the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity. The processes for obtaining these funds vary. There is funding for which students apply directly, i.e. fill out an application. There is also funding for which there is no direct application process. This includes fellowships awarded to students upon admission and funding for which the student must be nominated by the department.

*Please note – the information that follows is intended to be a useful guide but the deadlines listed below change frequently and should always be double-checked.*

### **Available Fellowships:**

Fellowships at USC can be divided into a variety of different categories, and are administered by a variety of different entities. For example, fellowships may be administered and awarded by the Department itself, the College, the Graduate School, other USC entities, or outside foundations. The USC Graduate School can provide information on many of these sources. Some fellowships are only available to entering graduate students, a few to those at mid-career, and others only to those at the dissertation stage. Some fellowships cover full tuition, fees, and a stipend, while others may cover only research expenses or consist solely of a flat amount of money.

### **Cost of Education (COE) Funds**

Every year, Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences also provides the department with a limited amount of funds to be used to enhance the educational experiences of Ph.D. students in the program, as well as for the recruitment of the incoming cohort during the admissions cycle. Our total amount is based on the number of Ph.D. students in their first five years of the Ph.D. program. The funding is coded for the following purposes: recruitment, professionalization, travel awards, and top-offs (financial aid). These funds are distributed at the discretion of the ASE Graduate Committee, and have typically included calls for proposals for fall travel, spring travel, and summer support.

The ASE Graduate Committee has decided that to be eligible for these funds, ASE Ph.D. students must be: 1) actively pursuing the Ph.D. (students pursuing the M.A. or having completed the Ph.D. degree are NOT eligible); 2) not receiving substantial other awards for the same request and/or period (especially having received substantial summer support for a summer request); and 3) be a Ph.D. student in good standing with the department (this involves taking required exams at the appropriate time as your cohort and submitting all respective advising committee forms for approval at each relevant stage in a timely fashion).

### **Graduate Assistantships**

Either as part of a multi-year funding package or as a single year award, graduate assistantships are often a key part of the funding of a graduate career. Of course, graduate assistantships are also a key component of the educational process for Ph.D. students, providing either teaching opportunities as assistants to faculty in undergraduate courses or working in close contact on research projects under faculty supervision.

### **Teaching Assistantships**

Teaching assistantships are available to graduate students in American Studies and Ethnicity in a variety of fields, disciplines, and schools. One purpose of the annual evaluation is to determine the best placement of students in teaching positions, to ensure that their training and experience as graduate instructors correspond with their educational goals and aspirations. Teaching for a professor who may serve as an advisor is one way for students to build better relationships with faculty. Teaching assistants should ask their instructors for classroom observations. This will help these instructors if they write letters of recommendation for students, in which they can cite the students' teaching performances and styles.

Currently, teaching assistantship assignments are determined by the department chair, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies.

The following lists some of the available positions over the past few years, although new opportunities arise every year and other past possibilities end, depending on various factors. In addition, the college has recently decided to create a pool of available TA's. In the Spring, the college will solicit the CVs of potential TA's and provide a central bank for departments.

The Department of American Studies and Ethnicity currently has twelve courses which require a teaching assistantship. These courses are:

- AMST 101: Race and Class in Los Angeles
- AMST 111: Sex in America
- AMST 135: Peoples and Cultures of the Americas
- AMST 140: Borderlands in a Global Context
- AMST 150: The American War in Viet Nam
- AMST 200: Introduction to American Studies and Ethnicity
- AMST 206: The Politics and Culture of the 1960s
- AMST 250: The African Diaspora
- AMST 252: Black Social Movements in the U.S.

AMST 274: Exploring Ethnicity Through Film  
AMST 285: African American Popular Culture  
AMST 301: America, the Frontier, and the New West

The following units have agreed to consider Ph.D. students in American Studies and Ethnicity for positions in their courses, depending on their unit's needs:

- Department of History
- School of Religion
- Department of Sociology
- Writing Program
- Department of Anthropology

### **Research Assistantships**

Research assistantships are positions to support faculty research under direct faculty supervision. A standard assistantship is a half-time position, requiring you to work between 15 and 20 hours per week, and it covers tuition, fees, and a stipend similar to that of a teaching position. But research assistantships can also vary widely, from a quarter-time position to a negotiated hourly position that does not include tuition supplement or payment of fees.

Most research assistantships are generated by faculty grants from outside foundations or government entities, and are, therefore, not necessarily secure from year to year, and may appear or disappear depending on available funding. The Center for American Studies and Ethnicity will attempt to post as many research assistantship opportunities as available, but your own network of faculty advisors is another important resource for finding out what is available.

### **University Funding and Outside Employment**

Whether a Fellowship, RA-ship, or TA-ship, most award letters have the following language:

A condition of the award is that you maintain full time student status and not accept any contemporaneous employment, either within or outside the university. Exceptions are rare and are granted only with the prior written approval of your department Chair and the College Dean of Academic Programs. You may, however, accept employment June 1 through August 31 without impairing your Award eligibility.

We recognize that in some instances an exceptional opportunity arises that would contribute significantly to a student's intellectual development. For this reason, students may request in writing permission for occasional outside employment. This request must be authorized by both the Department Chair of ASE and the College Dean. Claiming financial hardship is not a sufficient reason to pursue additional employment during the academic school year. We realize that graduate school is a difficult time in terms of one's personal finances. However, we also believe that you should be aware of the fiscal hardships prior to enrolling and plan accordingly.

Please be advised that the Department will investigate rumors of extraneous employment. If you have any questions, you should speak to your advisor.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following document is from USC's Graduate Student Government (<http://gsg.usc.edu/>). Written by Peter J. Koettters, GPSS Health Sciences Campus Liaison, the Graduate Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities was adopted February of 1999. Portions of it were adapted from the University of California at Irvine Graduate Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. Many of the above rights and responsibilities are described elsewhere in the USC literature. See the USC Catalogue for the University's official views on graduate student rights and responsibilities, SCampus, the USC Mission Statement, and the USC bylaws for more specific information.

### **Graduate Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

#### *Background and Description:*

*This document is designed to be a general guide in order to inform graduate students of their rights and responsibilities in broad terms. Graduate students are defined in the Constitution of the Graduate and Professional Student Senate as "any student enrolled in a graduate or professional program and classified as a graduate student by USC." Many of the items contained within are already specified as rights or responsibilities of students in official university literature, often in greater detail than presented here (see endnotes). Footnotes identifying the previously published University literature that enumerates these rights are not provided since such references would assuredly be incomplete (mostly due to the manifold nature of the documents that describe the University's policies, rules, and bylaws). Thus, an exhaustive survey of these rights and responsibilities in order to identify those that are truly novel has not been undertaken.*

*This document is not intended to apply to undergraduate students. Although many of the rights and responsibilities described herein apply equally well to undergraduates, some do not. Whereas the rights and responsibilities of students in general are well stated in SCampus (University Governance: Policy statements: Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities), the particular situation of a graduate student is not addressed. A graduate student is at times educator and researcher as well as pupil. This tripartite existence, together with the exceptional influence of a faculty advisor or mentor upon the life of a graduate student, would seem to demand a unique set of rights and responsibilities. Thus, USC graduate students have drafted this document as an attempt to satisfy this desideratum.*

### **USC Graduate Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

*Graduate and Professional Students have a right to the following:*

*A graduate student has a right to be respected as a person of merit and junior colleague upon gaining admission to a graduate program.*

*Graduate students have a right to an accurate description of the availability and the likelihood of financial and resource support within their program.*

*Prospective and currently enrolled graduate students will be provided a thorough description of the requirements and qualifications necessary for academic employment, training or financial support at the university. Assignments of office or lab space to departments and programs shall consider the need for adequate graduate student space.*

*Graduate students have a right to specific and concrete requirements for achieving an advanced degree. These requirements shall be communicated clearly to the student upon entrance to the graduate program.*

*Prospective and currently enrolled graduate students have a right to know the expected time to degree completion and the average time to degree completion within their specific graduate program. This information shall be furnished to prospective students.*

*Prospective and currently enrolled students have a right to know a program's student attrition rate, and, if available, the predominant reasons for lack of degree completion. This information shall be furnished to prospective students.*

*Graduate students have a right to have their progress towards achieving an advanced degree be evaluated in an objective manner and based on criteria that are understood by the graduate advisor and the student.*

*Evaluations shall be factual, specific, and shall be shared with the student within a reasonable period of time. Evaluations that should be in writing include: annual progress reports or research appraisals, decisions on qualifying examinations, and unusual or additional program requirements.*

*The reasons for unsatisfactory performance on programmatic examinations should be stated clearly to the student in a written evaluation.*

*A graduate student has a right to regular feedback and guidance regarding his or her academic performance.*

*Each graduate student has the right to enlist an official faculty advisor who will help the student in achieving his or her program objective. The student and faculty advisor should arrive at and maintain a mutually agreeable schedule of evaluative and / or supervisory conferences.*

*Graduate students have the right to a fair opportunity to correct or remedy deficiencies in their academic performance.*

*Dismissal of a student from a graduate program for academic reasons shall occur only when the student has been issued:*

- Specific, written performance information,*
- Advance written notification that he or she may be dismissed for specifically identified academic reasons, and*
- Has been given a fair opportunity to amend his / her academic record.*

*Graduate students have the right to be free from unjust discrimination in all matters relating to the university, including but not limited to discrimination on the basis of: race, gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, religion, or political beliefs.*

*Graduate students have a right to reasonable confidentiality in their communications with professors.*

*A professor should not discuss a student's performance with other students.*

*Discussions among faculty regarding a student's performance in a graduate program shall be of a professional nature, and shall be limited to a student's academic performance and fitness as a graduate student.*

*Graduate students have the right to refuse to perform tasks if those tasks are not closely related to their academic or professional development program. Graduate students shall not be exploited to the personal advantage of any faculty member.*

*Graduate students have a right to co-authorship in publications involving significant contributions of ideas or research work from the student. The student shall receive 'first authorship' for publications that are primarily the result of creative research and writing performed by the student. Faculty and graduate students should agree upon the order of authorship as early as is feasible, commensurate with their respective levels of contribution to the work.*

*Graduate students have the right to be incorporated into the decision-making process within their department or academic program, including but not limited to decisions on curriculum, funding and school governance.*

*Graduate students reserve those rights not specifically enumerated in this document, but otherwise specified by the university, the academic community, or the nation.*

*Graduate and Professional Students have the following responsibilities:*

*Graduate students have a responsibility to conduct themselves, in all educational activities, in a manner befitting an academician or professional in their field of study.*

*Graduate students have a responsibility to devote an appropriate amount of time and effort toward achieving their degree, except when special circumstances apply.*

*Graduate students have a responsibility to uphold accepted academic standards, including but not limited to:*

- accurate and honest reporting of research results,*
- ethical research methodology and scholarship, and*
- responsible teaching practices.*

*Graduate students have a responsibility to participate in the campus community.*



*To make an effort to contribute to the academic reputation and the social environment of their academic program.*

*To make an effort to enrich the university.*

*Graduate students have a responsibility to ask questions that promote their understanding of the academic and financial requirements their specific graduate program.*

*Graduate students have a responsibility to understand the proper and expected relationship between faculty mentor and graduate student, and to actively participate in the development of an amicable and effective partnership.*

*To have an awareness of time constraints and other demands imposed on faculty and staff.*

*To communicate clearly and regularly with faculty mentors and advisors, especially in matters related to degree progress.*

*Graduate students have a responsibility, through word and action, to show respect to the university and all its employees, to respect the rights and responsibilities of other students, and to show respect to the communities that surround our campuses.*

*Graduate students are subject to other responsibilities not specifically enumerated herein.*

*Omission of a responsibility from this document does not relieve them of any obligation.*

*Graduate students have an obligation to be aware of the responsibilities that they bear as a graduate student, and to adhere to the standards of conduct that apply to them.*

*For more information on GPSS, visit their website at <http://www.usc.edu/org/gpss/>.*

## **OTHER ON-CAMPUS GRADUATE SOURCES**

### **American Studies and Ethnicity Graduate Student Union (ASE GSU)**

American Studies and Ethnicity Graduate Student Union(ASE GSU) was established in the fall of 2002. The purpose of the organization is to advocate for graduate student needs to ASE staff and faculty and the larger university community, and to facilitate the professional development of graduate students in the department. The organization consists of five officers – two Co-Chairs, a Treasurer, a Historian, and a Representative to the Graduate Student Government – who are elected by the entire ASE graduate student body each year.

ASE GSU sponsors a variety of professionalization and networking events each year. Current programs include a Faculty Speaker Series, which invites affiliated

faculty to present their work to students in an informal setting. The purpose of this series is to establish connections between faculty who are less involved with the Department and students who may wish to work with them. In addition, ASE GSU sponsors a Professionalization Series, which is designed to give students the skills and knowledge they will need to successfully join the academic community first as students and eventually as faculty. The Professionalization Series features such topics as writing a successful curriculum vita, conducting effective library research, and making the most of academic conferences. Finally, ASE GSU may host social events every month, such as "listening parties," where students are invited to share their poetry, fiction, or art.

ASE GSU welcomes input and invites involvement from all currently enrolled graduate students in the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity. To get in touch with the organization, send an email to [ase.gsu@gmail.com](mailto:ase.gsu@gmail.com).

### **GSG**

The **Graduate Student Government** is recognized as the official voice of the graduate and professional student body. Elected officers and student representatives link graduate students with the larger university community by tackling issues specific to graduate students, striving to improve the overall academic experience, and planning social events to provide a venue for interaction beyond the academic realm.

Executive and Full Board Representatives are elected each year to serve you. They serve as advocates for you on issues such as graduate student rights, health insurance, housing and TA workload to the administration. Funds from your programming fee are allocated to support activities that enhance your overall experience at USC ranging from an interdisciplinary student conference to tailgate parties before the football games. Graduate and professional students serve on a variety of university committees to represent your interests. Money is made available for your events, ideas, and activities. Publications, such as the Graduate Trojan and GSG web site, keep you informed of issues and activities that involve graduate students. <https://gsq.usc.edu/>

### **Student Clubs & Services**

USC hosts a variety of student-run clubs and activity groups that cater to a variety of different needs. Many clubs offer mixers that provide nice outlets for meeting like-minded students. A complete list of student organizations and contact information can be picked up at the Front Desk of Topping Student Center. Another list including the organizations' emails and websites is also available through the Student Organization webpage <http://campusactivities.usc.edu/organizations/>. The Peer Leadership Consultants also have a listing on their webpage including each organization's PLC <http://campusactivities.usc.edu/peer-leadership-services/>.

## TEACHING

Teaching experience — and the ability to demonstrate your effectiveness as a teacher — is becoming more and more important. We see it reflected in job descriptions. More and more job descriptions are asking for teaching experience.

Update your curriculum vitae each time you teach a new course. Request letters of reference from professors for whom you work as a teaching assistant. We will be happy to keep the letters on file for you, along with the summary of your teaching evaluations for each course.

As you become an advanced graduate student, opportunities to teach your own course will certainly arise. Although USC prohibits graduate students without their Ph.D.s to teach undergraduates on their own, virtually all the surrounding community colleges, liberal arts colleges, and California State universities are always looking for part-time instructors.

As a department aimed to prepare you for a tenure-track position, we **discourage** you from accepting these positions. First, such positions violate the provisions of almost all fellowship and teaching assistantship support at USC. Secondly, compensation for teaching these courses is normally less than one-half of the USC TA pay-rate, a situation that clearly is exploitative of young instructors. Thirdly, our experience is that these teaching positions normally delay progress towards completing the Ph.D. and, in the end, detract from your competitiveness on the job market. What initially appears to be a unique teaching opportunity turns out to be highly exploitative and detrimental to your overall career as a scholar and teacher.

A more constructive way of obtaining valued college teaching experience is through dissertation or postdoctoral fellowships that have teaching components that will allow you to develop your own course. Or many of these local positions are available during the summer, when you are free to obtain this valuable teaching experience if you are not provided alternative summer funding or employment. ASE is also considering developing a Teaching Fellows Program that will allow advanced teaching assistants to teach their own course at one of the surrounding colleges or universities during the academic year with supplemental teaching pay and close teaching mentorship.

### **The Teaching Portfolio**

A Teaching Portfolio is what you use to sell yourself as a teacher. It shows what you have done and how you have done it. Its purpose is to demonstrate what you can teach, from surveys to specialized classes, and how you would teach them. Teaching portfolios are not standardized within the academic profession, but there are some generally agreed on components.

First, your portfolio should contain a statement articulating your teaching philosophy. Very few graduate students have thought about what their teaching philosophy might be, yet it's something everyone should begin thinking about from the day they enter the graduate program.

Second, the portfolio should document your teaching efforts. If you have been a Teaching Assistant, what were your duties and responsibilities? Did you grade

papers and exams, lead discussion sections, give lectures, help formulate exams, counsel students on their research? If you have been fortunate enough to teach your own course you'll want to provide documentation of that experience(s), including the syllabi, course dimensions and goals, the outlines, tests, and methods you've used in facilitating discussion.

A third element of the teaching portfolio is evaluations — peer evaluations, faculty evaluations and certainly student evaluations. These will all reflect on how successful you have been in achieving your teaching goals.

Finally, you may want to provide videotape of your performance. If you want to go through a really humbling, and occasionally humiliating experience, get yourself videotaped in front of a classroom. This can be as revealing as anything you will ever do. You will pick up all the little oddities and eccentricities of which most of us are unaware. But this kind of exercise can be invaluable for improving your effectiveness as a teacher, particularly if you ask your peers to help you evaluate the tape. Then do it again, and again, until you have a respectable video for your portfolio.

For more information on teaching, contact the Center for Excellence in Teaching. You'll find teaching manuals, TA Guidelines, and many other kinds of information from various institutions around the country. They also have an extensive website at <http://www.usc.edu/admin/provost/cet/>.

## CONFERENCES

Conferences offer you a chance to see how the world of academic research works, to get involved in the intellectual exchange within your field, to meet people closely connected to your field and to make yourself known. These benefits occur whether or not you are presenting a paper, as long as you make the effort to introduce yourself to people and talk about your work.

The trick is meeting people. Ask your advisor to introduce you to scholars working in your area. Go to the informal gatherings. Get in the hallways. Talk to people. If there's nothing going on and you can't find anybody, simply go to the hotel lobby or bar and sit there. Just be visible. Sit on a sofa so somebody else can join you. If you see a group of people who look like they are at the conference, just go up and join them. Some people at academic conferences are there to visit with old friends and they may not be too receptive. But most of the people at these conferences are very warm, friendly, and supportive people.

Once you have started making these connections, you'll often find one thing leading to another. A person you meet at a conference may make you aware of a book or paper you hadn't known of previously. Or you may start to correspond with people you've met at conferences, people who can help with your research. You may also find that connections you've made at past conferences lead to your involvement in a panel to present a paper.

Tip: When you start attending conferences, take a small notebook to record names, addresses, business cards, research topics, reference suggestions and any other

information you can glean from presentations or informal conversations. Use the same notebook for all conferences. When you start researching your dissertation, this personal reference manual may prove invaluable.

Conferences vary a great deal in terms of size and focus. The large national conferences offer an opportunity for greater variety and more contacts. On the other hand, these conferences are easy to get lost in. You may find the smaller conference specializing in your area is both more useful and less intimidating.

Perhaps the best way to approach this is to go through the relevant journals and newsletters, as well as the Center bulletin board dedicated to upcoming conferences and calls for papers, and look at what conferences are being held this year and where. Then try to evaluate how much benefit each conference will yield given its location, your interests and the kinds of people who are likely to be attending. Some of this will depend on your financial resources. Local conferences mean you don't have to worry about airfare or lodging expenses. There's some logic to attending any local conference that has any connection to your work, no matter how remote, at least in the beginning. This is an inexpensive way to get exposure to the conference environment and begin meeting people.

There are various places on campus and off-campus to look for travel funds. First, check with the Director of Graduate Studies to see if the Department has allocated any monies toward conference travel. Over the past few years, the Graduate Studies Committee has disbursed Cost of Education (COE) funds to department Ph.D. students for fall travel, spring travel, and summer support (including travel). Also, USC provides some limited funding for graduate students attending conferences.

You should also ask around within the department, find out who is going to which conferences (or has been before) and talk to people about which conferences offer the best return for your time and money.

There are various places on campus and off-campus to look for travel funds. First, check with the Director of Graduate Studies to see if the Department has allocated any monies toward conference travel. Also, USC provides some limited funding for graduate students attending conferences, with the amount depending on how far you have to travel. Because these funds are limited, you have to plan fairly well in advance. For more information on travel funds offered by USC, visit the Graduate Student Government at <https://gsg.usc.edu/>. Other on-campus sources for travel money include the Norman Topping Scholars ([http://www.usc.edu/studentaffairs/gateway/programs\\_services/norman\\_topping\\_scholars.htm](http://www.usc.edu/studentaffairs/gateway/programs_services/norman_topping_scholars.htm)) and the Center for Feminist Research (<https://dornsife.usc.edu/cfr/>). In addition, often the organization holding the conference will have some funds available for graduate students, particularly those who are presenting papers. If you want to attend a conference, but have limited financial resources, contact the conference organizers and ask if they have any money. At the very least, they may be willing to waive the registration fee. Before spending any funds, make sure you check with the granting source on their rules concerning what you can spend your money on, the best means of payment, and how you can be reimbursed.

In the case of out-of-town conferences, you may be able to reduce the expense by sharing a room, finding someone who lives in the area to host you, or by staying at a less expensive hotel near the conference site. You can also save money by skipping the breakfast and luncheon events at the conference, which are generally a bit pricey. On the other hand, if you are attending the conference alone —and don't know a soul — one or two of these events may be worth the investment. This is a quick and fairly painless way of making contact with other scholars around the table.

As a graduate student you should consider presenting papers if you "are ready to present"—meaning if you have *something* to present. While most graduate students won't be at this stage until their third or even fourth year of graduate school (unless you are presenting at a conference showcasing graduate student work), some seminar papers from first or second-year students may be appropriate submissions to a conference. The great value in presenting papers lies in the critiques you get from other members of your panel. If you go into a presentation expecting to disseminate your ideas to a fascinated audience and become famous, you'll likely be disappointed.

You should certainly consider presenting papers once you've started writing your dissertation. Try turning a chapter — or even the entire thesis — into a paper. This will sharpen your thoughts and give you feedback (via the session comments) on your work as it is in progress.

Keep track of what conferences are being held, the "Calls for Papers" and what the deadlines for submissions are. You can find this information in the various newsletters published by scholarly associations. Then, organize a panel of other scholars and submit your collective papers as a panel, with a moderator and/or commentator. This is by far the preferred route — to organize a panel rather than just submitting a paper. When you submit a single paper, the Program Chairs see it, don't know what to do with it and — if you get on the conference program at all — either stick it in a panel you would just as soon not be on and/or put you at the end of the conference, in the last session on the last day when everybody's headed home. So, one, it's harder for them to place an individual paper and two, you may not get a very good venue. If you can't organize a panel, try to limit your submissions to regional conferences. They are often more sympathetic to single paper submissions and will make a greater effort to match you with a panel.

Keep track of the participants at conferences of associations you are interested in. Over time, you'll develop a fairly good list of who is doing what. When you have a paper ready for presentation, get on the phone and call people who are doing the kind of things you do. Initially, this may be other graduate students. If this is the case, try to get a fairly well-known scholar to agree to act as commentator and/or moderator for the panel. Panels usually consist of three papers, a chair and a commentator, although sometimes one person serves as both commentator and chair (moderator).

One way to go about this is to ask one of your professors. In this case you have somebody built right in who might know graduate students or faculty at other schools who would join your panel.

Another option is the growing list of student-organized conferences. These are often the best places to gain your first experience in presenting your work to a wider audience. In Fall 2002, for example, a group of USC students led by Ph.D. students in American Studies and Ethnicity organized a conference on research on Los Angeles as a result of the graduate seminar they were enrolled in together in Spring 2002.

## **GETTING PUBLISHED**

There are hundreds of journals out there, most of which are published two to four times per year. The academic publishing process is long and time consuming. The average length of time, from submission to publication, is two to three years for most journals. When you submit an article, it is read by the journal's editor, who either rejects it out-of-hand or sends it out — as an anonymous article — to two or three people in the relevant field to be refereed. The referees return the article to the editor with their comments and evaluation or return it with requests for a rewrite based on the comments of the referees. In rare cases the editor will accept the article as written (or with very minor revisions). Once the article has been revised to the editor's satisfaction, it may be put on the schedule for publication. Be aware that being invited to resubmit an article does not guarantee publication. The editor still has the right to reject it, even after you have made the requested revisions.

Seeking to publish a paper as a graduate student is a matter up for debate. Some professors feel you should start publishing as soon as possible while other believe the publishing aspect of your scholarly career will come in due time. As with many issues relating to your academic development, you should discuss this with your advisor. Publishing becomes a reality for most students when they are at the point of writing the dissertation.

Publishable papers have something original to say. This is the key criterion. It has to be something somebody wants to read about because people don't know about it already, or haven't approached it in your particular way. But if a paper doesn't really have anything new, original or fresh to say, it most likely won't be accepted for publication. Before you submit a paper to a journal, have several people (including your advisor/s) read it. Never submit a work in progress; submit the best possible draft you can write.

Another way of "getting published" is through book reviews. Published reviews get your name out there, give you something on your CV and serve as a kind of endorsement of your academic credentials. If a journal is willing to publish your review they are, in effect, saying you are someone whose judgment should be respected. The trick is getting asked to write a review. It's actually not legitimate just to send in a book review because it might indicate you have an ax to grind.

Book reviews are solicited by the journal's editor, usually from published American Studies or Ethnic Studies scholars. You may be able to find a local or semi-professional journal willing to let you write the occasional review, but don't expect to write for a major journal unless you have published a book. Another option is to



ask your advisor or other faculty members to pass along your name to journals who may send them requests for reviews in certain fields or on certain topics; busy faculty often are asked to recommend others who might take on the tasks that they are unable to perform.

What you can do is find out if a local journal accepts unsolicited requests to become a reviewer. If they do, send a letter introducing yourself and telling them what your field is. Then list five or ten new books in your field as examples of books you feel qualified to review. A lot of times these editors are just trying to get things processed and out — if they have some of those books you've listed lying around, and haven't found a reviewer yet, they may just send them off to you.

### **Electronic Reviews:**

In the recent past, graduate students have found more opportunities to get themselves published through electronic journals by writing book reviews and sometimes submitting articles. Specifically, H-Net Reviews often submits calls for book reviews. For more information, check their website at <http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/reviews/>.

For more information on writing articles and reviews, and for a complete listing of the historical journals available, refer to: Dale R. Steiner. *Historical Journals: a Handbook for Writers and Reviews*. 2nd edition. (Jefferson, NJ: McFarland and Co.)

### **Some Guidelines for the Evaluation of Manuscripts:**

*Note: This is a sample of the kinds of guidelines a journal might provide to editors and readers who are evaluating manuscripts for publication. Standards and guidelines will vary between individual journals.*

What is the importance of the subject? Is this a major general argument about the course of history or a minor, but crucial footnote about the past? Or something in between? In short, where does this paper fit in the scholarly literature in terms of its subject matter?

What are the main themes and/or subthemes of the author? What has the author set out to accomplish? Is the contribution largely in the realm of new data, new interpretation, or both?

Does the author succeed in accomplishing established goals? If not, perhaps s/he makes greater progress in some other direction. Judge it as to the intended and the unintended.

Does the author place the subject in its proper intellectual context? Does the author state the limitations of previous scholarship and show why this paper is necessary? Spot-check some of the prominent secondary sources listed in the footnotes. How much does this paper go beyond what others have already said — very far, some, a little, none?

How is the paper organized? Is it clearly argued? Does it begin and end properly? Is there a parallel between beginning and conclusion? Does the argument flow smoothly in the main body of the text? Is the order in which topics are introduced the most effective for this subject? What needs to be added? What is peripheral and can be compressed or cut?



In general, what seem to be the shortcomings in terms of style, argument, focus, evidence, etc.? What are the main strengths?

Does this paper suggest other areas for possible future research? Where does the author see it leading; where do you see it leading? Are there more opportunities for additional research?

How might you proceed to improve this paper to enhance its publication potential? How would you upgrade its quality to appeal to journals of higher status in the profession?

## **GETTING A JOB**

Obtaining a fulltime, tenure-track job will be the goal of most students in our Ph.D. program. It is wise to look at job announcements for these positions early in a graduate career in order to understand both the disciplinary and interdisciplinary job markets. You can view current jobs posted in American Studies at the the ASA's website, located on the American Studies Crossroads site at <http://crossroads.georgetown.edu>.

Or, you may search both American Studies and related discipline's general job listings at on-line H-Net's Job Guide at <https://www.h-net.org/jobs/home.php>.

For students joining the job search, there are several steps they can take in preparation. The Center for Excellence in Teaching offers several workshops geared to preparing graduate students for the job market from creating teaching portfolios to mock interviews. For more information on these workshops, visit its website at <http://cet.usc.edu/index.html>.

Use the checklist below as further ways to prepare for the job search. This checklist was prepared for the American Studies Crossroads Website by Mary Corbin Sies from the University of Maryland.

The following checklist was created to summarize steps in the generic academic job application process for entry level American Studies candidates from start to finish. Applying for academic jobs requires a lot of preparation time--more than neophyte applicants usually realize or have. It is especially difficult to prepare materials for applications and interviews when one is struggling to meet deadlines for completing a dissertation. This checklist is intended to give you a sense, at a glance, of everything you MIGHT be asked to do or to provide so that you can manage your time as well as possible.

### **Checklist For Job Application Process:**

1. Update or establish a placement file with Interfolio.com. Please begin this process in August if you plan to be on the job market that academic year. Interfolio.com will create a job placement file for you and coordinate your letters of recommendations for job placement and postdoctoral applications. It is best

to obtain updated letters of recommendations each year. You are responsible for organizing your other credentials, including a curriculum vitae, précis of your dissertation, list of courses/comprehensive exams, and summaries of teaching evaluations.

Some deadlines may be as early as August 15<sup>th</sup> and some programs may list a very early deadline at the last minute. Please complete your placement file and your own credentials file well in advance of the first job deadlines so that you are not compelled to do a fast or sloppy job of it.

2. Begin checking job ads from September on. Regularly check these sources as appropriate for your particular field of study:

- \* Chronicle of Higher Education
- \* Modern Language Association (MLA) Job letter
- \* American Historical Association (AHA) Perspectives
- \* American Studies Association (ASA) Newsletter
- \* College Art Association (CAA) Careers bulletin
- \* SAH Newsletter
- \* the appropriate job bulletin for your field
- \* don't neglect online sources or equivalents of the bulletins above for faster notice of new postings.

3. Keep your advisor(s) and Interfolio apprised.

4. Do your homework: Research specific jobs in the college catalog collection and through your gossip networks. Display this knowledge in your application materials.

5. Send out applications--being careful to meet the deadlines. Send what the search committee asks for; follow instructions, in other words. Usually they will ask for the standard items in your credentials file: cover letter, C.V., letters of recommendation (at least 3), dissertation précis or research summary. Keep the précis short. If the search committee wants a full writing sample, they'll ask for it. Sending tons of paper before it's requested may irritate some members of the committee. Many colleges or universities will require an original transcript sent directly from your university.

6. Set up a system of information control so you can keep track of your progress for each job.

7. Once the initial screening begins, you may be asked for additional materials. Send supporting documentation as requested. This stage of the search usually begins in November and continues through late January or a bit later. These materials may include

- \* course syllabi or proposals
- \* course evaluations
- \* offprints or preprints of articles
- \* all or part of your dissertation
- \* statement of teaching philosophy

8. Plan to attend the major conventions in your field. If you are really serious about getting a job, you need to attend these annual meetings to engage in the

networking, scholarly exchange, and schmoozing of publishers' representatives that is necessary for career advancement. In American Studies, these meetings might include

- \* American Studies Association in late October or November
- \* American Historical Association or Modern Language Association in early January
- \* College Art Association in February
- \* Organization of American Historians in late March or early April
- \* Others as appropriate to your field

9. Prepare for online interviews. Interviews that used to take place at scholarly conventions almost always now take place online over Zoom or another online application. Be sure you have the right technology, internet connection, and on-screen background necessary for these fifteen to thirty-minute interviews. Undertake additional research on the department.

10. Prepare for convention interviews. Undertake additional research on the department, including research and teaching interests of faculty members. Prepare good raps on your dissertation research, future research plans, how you'd teach courses you know they need taught, and what else you'd like to teach. Have a good set of questions to ask them that demonstrates that you've done your homework about their department, institution, and location.

IMPORTANT: If you are interviewing in the dreaded "job pit" at one of the big annual meetings, be sure to familiarize yourself with that scene before you interview. There's nothing quite like the contagious panic and nervousness that pervades a gigantic room with 50 tables and 50 simultaneous interviews going on and no privacy.

11. Prepare for campus interviews. These "flybacks" may occur as early as December but usually take place between January and March. Have a 45 min. presentation on your research ready to go. Rehearse it.

12. Wait to hear the search results. Search committees follow their own timelines in these matters. You may receive an offer within a day or two of your campus visit or 4-6 weeks later. You may receive a rejection call or letter within a week of your visit, several weeks later, or never.

Some additional advice on managing your time in the job application process:

- Be generous in calculating the amount of time you need to manage this process well.
- Know what you have to do and prepare in advance. It is terribly difficult to invent a syllabus for a new course or write an impressive job talk when your interview is a week away.
- Keep good records so you know where you stand w/each position.
- Keep in touch with your gossip network and work it for all it's worth.
- (I'm sorry to say this, but) Plan to lose three months on your dissertation: Nov. through Jan or whenever the interviewing ends.

What should you include on your C.V.? The most important points to summarize:

- institutions granting degree
- research and teaching fields

- publications
- teaching experience and list of courses you've taught
- academic awards and grants
- references w/phone numbers and full addresses

Other items to consider including:

- evidence of additional talents as appropriate for the job
- conference papers
- book reviews
- service or administrative experience
- professional memberships and offices held

What not to include:

- \*business experience unless it relates to academe or to the specific position
- \*detailed personal information

**IMPORTANT:** Use your word-processor to tailor the c.v. to the specific job.

What to put in a cover letter:

- mention where you saw the job posted
- your basic fields (tailor appropriately)
- a summary of your past research
- a summary of your future research
- teaching experience and interests
- what you can do for this particular department

**IMPORTANT:** The purpose of the cover letter and application is to obtain an interview. So, ASK for an interview; indicate whether you'll be attending the usual conventions.

**ALSO IMPORTANT:** You should emphasize certain parts of your credentials and talents for certain jobs. Graduate degree-granting institutions will be more interested in research than teaching. Most other institutions will be primarily interested in your teaching experience and approaches.

**Sample Interview Questions:** (gathered from the ASA Crossroads Website) Academic Job Interview Questions for New American Studies Ph.D.s. At the 1998 ASA Meeting in Seattle, the ASA Students' Committee held twelve mock interviews for a hypothetical American Studies tenure-track job. Scholars from a variety of disciplines participated as interviewers. Here is a list of some of the questions that interviewers asked, posted in the interest of American Studies students seeking academic jobs. The Students' Committee invites discussion on these and other potential questions.

### **General Questions:**

Tell us about yourself.

Do you consider yourself to be a scholar, a teacher, or an administrator?

Where do you think American Studies stands today?

Questions on Scholarly Work

Tell us about your dissertation.

Who is on your dissertation committee?

Explain your use of theory/methodology in your dissertation.

Why has there been a recent interest in the area of your dissertation topic?

What makes your project an American Studies/interdisciplinary project?  
What makes your dissertation "new"?  
What journals will you be working with as you move towards tenure?  
What will your next research project be?  
Questions on Teaching  
What kinds of students have you worked with in the past?  
How would you deal with teaching a primarily white / African-American / diverse / older /commuting / working student body?  
What methods would you use to teach an American Studies course?  
What five texts would you use to teach a survey course in American cultural history?  
Describe the course that you taught.  
Tell us about a time that you used an innovative teaching method.  
If I asked you to teach a graduate seminar, what would it be about?  
What would you want your students to get out of an introductory American Studies course?

**Additional Questions on the Interviewers' Minds:** (gathered through post-interview discussions)

What kind of colleague would this person be?  
What would it be like to have lunch with him/her?  
Does this person seem to be trying to put me on the defensive?  
Has this person researched our department/program history and the interests of our faculty?  
Does this person have good questions for us?  
Does this person seem enthusiastic about the prospect of getting this job?  
Does this person seem interested in students?  
Does this person seem like he or she will be a good teacher for our particular student body?

Compiled by Maureen E. Reed  
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**STUDENT HEALTH AND INSURANCE**

USC requires that all students have health insurance. With some exceptions, most Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, and Fellowship recipients will have the student health center fee and student health insurance fee paid by the University. Be sure to check with the Department's administrative staff to find out your status, if you are unclear. If you are not covered, consider enrolling in the USC health plan for coverage. Go to the Student Health Center for information and enrollment forms or visit them on-line at [http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/Health\\_Center/insurance/index.html](http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/Health_Center/insurance/index.html).

**Student Health Center:**

The Student Health Center provides the following services: primary care, basic emergency care, an urgent care clinic, Saturday clinics, specialist clinics, and a pharmacy. You are eligible to use the Health Center as you are enrolled in classes and a Health Center fee is listed on your fee bill. If you are not taking classes (as in summer) you must pay the appropriate fee for use of the Health Center. If you are eligible, most care is free. There are nominal charges for some lab tests, prescriptions, orthopedic appliances, and copies of medical records. Should you have questions, call 740-5344.

### **Dental Care:**

Dental care is not covered by your Health Center fee or by health insurance. During 2001-2002, the Provost's Graduate Student Advisory Committee decided to raise the additional stipend for a 50% graduate assistant by an additional \$530, the amount that is equal to the annual cost of Delta Dental coverage for a single graduate assistant, rather than provide direct coverage. Students who want dental coverage may purchase it as they see fit, or should see a private dentist or consider the USC Dental School for inexpensive dental care. Call the Dental School at 740-2800 for details.

## **LIBRARIES AND COMPUTING**

### **Libraries**

The University of Southern California Library system is a system of 17 libraries and additional specialized departments located on the University park campus. It holds approximately 2.8 million volumes, 453,200 government documents, 3 million photographs, 3.6 million microforms, a large and expanding collection of electronic databases, and receives more than 21,000 journals and other serial titles. Of particular note are its collections in architecture, cinema, international and public affairs, American literature, regional history, marine science, philosophy, Latin American studies, and Korean studies, and an extensive collection of photographs chronicling the history of Southern California. Consistent with its mission of delivering information to benefit learning, teaching and research at the University, the Library, in cooperation with University Computing Services and other campus groups, is actively engaged in creating, developing, and accessing digitalized resources.

Some main campus libraries that you will use are Leavey Library (LVL) and the Doheny Memorial Library (DML). Any books or journals in Doheny may be obtained by recalling the item on line. For information on this process, go to <https://libraries.usc.edu/>.

A USC library card must be obtained for library privileges. See the person at the main circulation desk at Leavey Library to sign up for a library bar code. You must have your I.D. card with a current registration sticker. The card is valid for one semester only. You must renew at the beginning of each semester. Be sure to check the due date of any materials you check out. You are responsible for returning materials on time.

### **Information on Computing**

In addition to the ten computers (seven PCs and three Macs) the Department of American Studies and Ethnicity maintains at the Center for American Studies and

Ethnicity, USC maintains an extensive computer network that can be accessed from several public user rooms around campus, by modem from a home computer. An extensive array of software is available on the campus network, and services such as electronic mail, database searching, and bulletin board access is provided free of charge to graduate students. The Computing Center offers advice and training sessions on using the system and its software. The key to this world of information is a computing account.

To encourage greater student use of university computing services and to ease the process of getting online, UCS has instituted a new procedure for issuing computer accounts to students.

Computer accounts will be created automatically for all students enrolled in degree programs. Accounts must be activated via the Web ([www.usc.edu/firstlogin](http://www.usc.edu/firstlogin)). To access this form, students can visit one of five public computing areas (Leavey Information Commons, KOH 200, SAL 125, or WPH B34 on the University Park campus, or Norris Medical Library on the Health Sciences Campus). In these facilities, students will find step-by-step instructions on how to activate new accounts. The Web address is: <http://www.usc.edu/isd/>. Go to "Info for New Students" and you're on your way!

Students who wish to connect to the university network by modem will need to install and configure PPP software on their personal computers. Free PPP software can be downloaded from public machines in UCS user rooms.

Automatic accounts will be available to enrolled students two weeks before classes begin. For more information on automatic accounts, please feel free to contact either UCS's Customer Support Center or Computer Accounts Administration office at x05555, or send email to ([consult@usc.edu](mailto:consult@usc.edu)).

For complete information, consult the Schedule of Classes.

### **Email**

Each student is issued an email address. Although we realize that some students have multiple accounts and addresses, we require that all enrolled ASE students maintain and check their USC accounts. Your USC email is a key way we can find you and contact you, which is especially important in light of the degree and frequency with which some email addresses change. You will often receive important messages from ASE faculty and staff on your USC account. To obtain a USC email account, please go to <http://www.usc.edu/firstlogin>.

### **HOUSING**

On-Campus: The USC Student Housing Office (213.740.2546) is in PSX.

Off-Campus: Most graduate students choose to live off-campus. On-line resources to apartment hunting include sites like [www.apartmentguide.com](http://www.apartmentguide.com), [www.nupac.com](http://www.nupac.com), [apartmentlist.com](http://apartmentlist.com), and there are management companies across the city. The major Los Angeles newspaper (***The LA Times***) as well as smaller community newspapers (***Hollywood Press***, ***Santa Monica Evening Outlook***, ***The Daily***

**Breeze** - Redondo-Hermosa-Manhattan Beach areas, **Star News** - Pasadena area), **Northeast Newspaper** - Eagle Rock, El Sereno, East Los Angeles areas, have listings for apartments and houses for rent. You can also check listings in the student newspaper (**The Daily Trojan**). There is a classified advertising paper (**The Recycler**) which has many listings. Finally, you may wish to simply walk around a neighborhood you like and look for vacancy signs.

Non-University housing near the USC campus is limited and therefore, fills up early.

The area north of campus, known as "North University Park", is generally considered to be a safe area. Because the area is small, availability is limited and landlords are able to charge more, making it difficult to find a bargain. However, there are a number of older places with "character" that are not too expensive and entirely livable. These must be sought out early, but try anyway - you might be lucky. One advantage of living in this area is that you can easily walk or bike to campus.

Before you begin your off-campus search for housing there is one very important purchase you should consider making - a **Thomas Brothers Street Atlas of Los Angeles and Orange Counties**. These are available at the USC Bookstore (next to the Commons) or at just about any bookstore in the LA area. With the "Thomas Guide" you will be able to locate any street address in LA and Orange counties quickly and easily. Even long-time Los Angeles residents find a "Thomas Guide" to be extremely valuable.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING**

The transportation system in Los Angeles is called the Metropolitan Transit Authority (**aka known as the METRO**). The phone number for Metro information is (323) 466-3876 and the Metro website is [www.metro.net](http://www.metro.net). There is excellent express bus service from several cities into the downtown area. Some routes include stops right at or near USC. You can usually get between any two places in the LA area by bus, but one or two transfers may be required. The fare is \$1.50, plus 35 cents for a transfer. The MTA offers an excellent "trip planner" which will map out trips for you in a matter of seconds (<https://www.metro.net/riding/>). Discount MTA bus passes are available and may be purchased from USC Transportation Services. The Los Angeles Metrolink system also connects downtown to different parts of the region. Tickets range from \$3 to \$10, depending on when you travel and where you go. USC offers a student discount for the Metrolink. Information for USC discounts can be obtained from Transportation Services website at [transportation.usc.edu](http://transportation.usc.edu).

Within downtown Los Angeles, the DASH service is a bus service that offers frequent and cheap (\$.50) shuttle across various sections of the city. For more information on schedules, visit their website at <http://www.ladottransit.com/dash/>.

USC operates both a Tram Service and an Escort Service. The tram service provides transportation to the housing areas off campus, to the Health Sciences Campus, and to campus parking lots Monday through Friday. You can also call the Escort Service to transport you to locations within approximately one mile from the center of campus (including off campus housing area). If you are working late at night in



the lab, it is a good idea to call Campus Cruisers (213.740.4911) rather than walk to the parking structure alone. See **SCampus** for information and schedules. If you live close to campus you may want to commute by bicycle. Keep in mind, however, as in most urban areas, the rates for stolen bikes can be high, so take precautions. Don't park your bike outside unlocked, keep it in your apartment and, while you are at school, keep it in your office/lab. Bicycles must be licensed - see procedures in **SCampus**.

If you commute by car you would be wise to invest in a USC Parking Permit, which will entitle you to park in certain designated areas on campus. See the "Schedule of Classes" for details. You obtain a parking permit from the Transportation Office, located in Parking Structure X. Or you can fill out an on-line form at Transportation Services website, <http://transnet.usc.edu/>. There is some off-campus street parking but it is scarce and not very safe. There are also time restrictions for street parking - be sure to read the posted signs before you leave your car. Regardless of where you park, you should always lock your car and make certain that you leave nothing of value (tape deck, books, clothes, tennis rackets, etc.) in a place where it can be seen from the outside of the car.

Los Angeles County sponsors a service called "Commuter Computer" which is designed to help commuters form car pools. If you would like to car pool and are having trouble finding partners you can submit your name and commuting schedule to the "Commuter Computer", 213/380-RIDE, and it will attempt to match you up with other people who have similar commuting needs. You can also find out about ridesharing in the ridesharing office (x03575), located in Childs Way Building I.

All information concerning transportation services (parking, ridesharing, etc.) can be found at the transportation services website:  
<http://www.usc.edu/transportation>.

## OTHER INFORMATION

### **Banking:**

At the University Village, there is one bank, **Bank of America**, which offers bank cards as well as checking and savings accounts. If you open a savings account with them, they will cash your personal checks. Automatic teller machines are available there and on campus (near Moreton Fig at the Tutor Campus Center).

A particularly good way to meet your banking needs is the **USC Credit Union** (Student Union), which is on campus and offers good deals on checking and savings accounts. The Credit Union currently has two automatic tellers on campus (near the Ronald Tutor Campus Center and Kings Hall). More information about the USC Credit Union can be found at [www.usccreditunion.org](http://www.usccreditunion.org).

### **Supermarkets:**

A Ralph's Supermarket is located at Vermont Avenue, at the corner of Adams Boulevard. A Smart and Final store is located on Vermont Avenue directly across from campus. Whole Foods Market is located at 788 s Grand Ave in Downtown. Trader Joe's is now open at the University Village across from campus on Jefferson Blvd and Hoover.

**Other Important Locations:**

A United States Post Office is located at 3585 S. Vermont Avenue (directly west of the University). There is also a Mail Stop at Parking Structure X that provides a limited number of postal services.

The California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is located at 3615 S. Hope Street, 2 blocks east of campus. Be sure to phone ahead for appointments at (800) 777-0133 or go online to the DMV website([dmv.ca.gov](http://dmv.ca.gov)).