

A chance for sincerity

An earnest signage proposal by the students of USC
with the intent to rebuild trust with their administration.

Designed by the
Advanced Design Projects Team
Cover

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Dear Carol Folt,

You reached out to the design department expressing a desire for Roski students to create a signage campaign for the upcoming spring semester and we, a group of seven talented and passionate artists and designers from DES 402: Advanced Design Projects, implore you to seize this as an opportunity for sincerity, as we have. We implore you to explore the aesthetics for an empathetic restructuring of USC as a whole. With a number of dishonorable instances, the inappropriate raising of tuition during a pandemic, a lack of accountability and action for your systemic inequalities, and the current handling of the policies surrounding Covid-19 safety, the relationship between your students and the administration has been severely strained. There are many things your students need to hear from you this spring, and messages akin to “we’re all in this together” are not one of them. What your students need from you is sincerity and accountability if you have any hope of rebuilding the trust of your Trojan Family. **Through this opportunity, we hope to give future Trojans the family that was promised to us but was never delivered.**

Our initial reaction

Upon receiving the brief, your design students found this proposal disrespectful and frankly hurtful. The obvious continuation of the administration’s desire to produce insincere PR drove our class into a frenzy. **Initially, none of the members of the class wanted to help design your signage for fear of association with the immature handlings of very serious and upsetting situations within the USC community.** We find it important to make you aware of the relationship you have with your art and design students.

Designing beyond

Seven of us then endeavored to respond to the tone-deafness of your proposal, through satirical deliverables. It took us only a moment to realize that as designers and humans, we were better than our counterpart, and that we needed to use this opportunity to help our fellow USC students heal. **We decided to put our belief in the potential for both design and USC to do and be good.**

Offering a chance for redemption

We wish that the solution to rebuilding trust was as easy as a gratifying message, but it is not. The first step in empathizing with your students is showing accountability for the ways that you have hurt us, by publicly apologizing for your transgressions. We recognize that as students, we do not know the full scope of running an administration or the tough predicament of avoiding lawsuits with vague corporate apologies. **We are here to offer you the chance to do what no university has ever been courageous enough to do, and deliver an earnest message your students desperately need to hear. Carol Folt, we ask that you consider our proposal if you truly prioritize your students over your business.**

Sincerely,

Your students pleading for
the same in return

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The brief

An overview, analysis, and interpretation
of the design brief given by President Carol Folt

Roski Students' Signage Project

Approached by Glenn Osaki, Senior VP, Chief Communications Officer
Project initiated by President Folt

Background

Reuters has already done a story on our signage, but Folt wants to do more and wants our students to design.
Administration can be involved as much or as little as we want
IYA may also be invited

Timeline:

Flexible: Fall 20 or Spring 21
Might like to get some banners up soon, but to expand on that through the year.

Parameters

Either individuals or class projects
Signage may be instructional, directional or other
Could be humorous
Can go beyond traditional materials:

- Print
- Projections on buildings
- Video
- Social media

Production

The university will produce and provide a budget

The official brief *

*The brief and its content given to the
DES:402 Advanced Design Projects class.
No additional information, content, or context was provided.

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Overview

When our professor, Jason Ellenburg, delivered us your brief (as shown above) we, as a class, were taken aback by it's lack of content and depth, vagueness, and insincerity. As designers, we are familiar with our fair share of briefs and the need to independently fill in gaps of guidance and information. We can only hope that the presentation of your request was to allow for open-ended creativity, but what was shown was the lack of effort that was put into it's construction - **as if the president's first direct address to the Roski community and it's students was not worth more than 5 minutes of writing.**

Analysis

We find it necessary to include our interpretation of the brief's key points to provide context for our analysis:

"Rueters has already done a story on our signage"

USC cannot afford bad press and is seeking relief

"Signage may be instructional, directional or other"

USC is unaware of what message students need

"IYA may also be invited"

USC and Folt do not see/value Roski's individual voice

"Might like to get banners up soon"

USC is seeking environmental graphics for an on-campus semester

Interpretation

Our interpretation of the brief and it's key statements have lead us to speculate that President Carol Folt and the administration are asking directly or indirectly for help guiding their voice in hopes of rebuilding their relationship with the students and the public.

Our design proposal will respond to this underlying request while meeting all of the guidelines laid out in the brief. It is our intent to use this brief and the administration's outreach as an opportunity to constructively heal USC's past, and strengthen it's future.

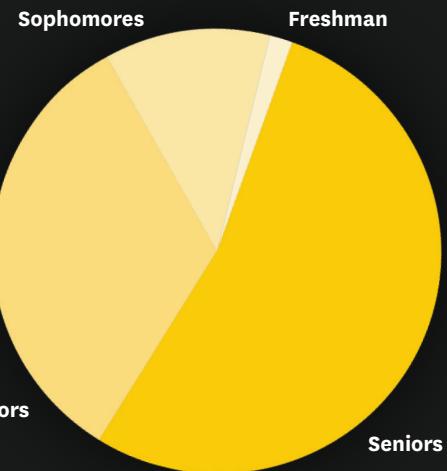
Carol Folt, we ask that you keep an open mind to this proposal, as we have to your brief.

Student testimony

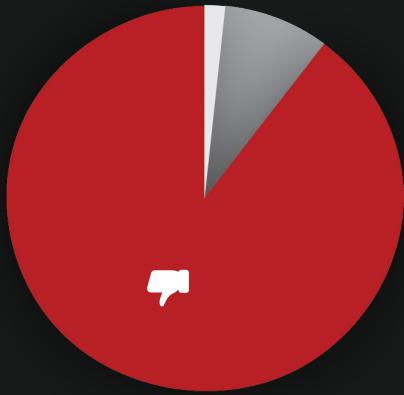
Testimonies and survey results collected
from 60 USC students to support our proposal

Student testimony of USC: Evidence for our proposal

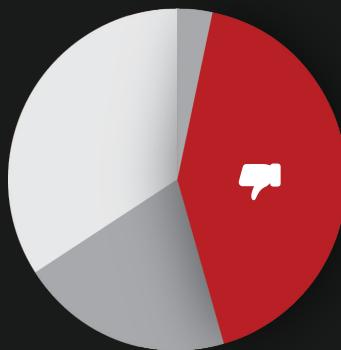
As part of our research, we formulated a survey and asked students to voice their honest opinions concerning a series of systemic transgressions within the USC community. Ten unbiased questions addressing multiple issues were posed, where students were allowed the opportunity to voice their own feelings through a written response. The survey results and written responses from the 60 students who took part are evidence of a devastating relationship strain between the administration and its students. Additionally, this survey serves to support this proposal's implementation.



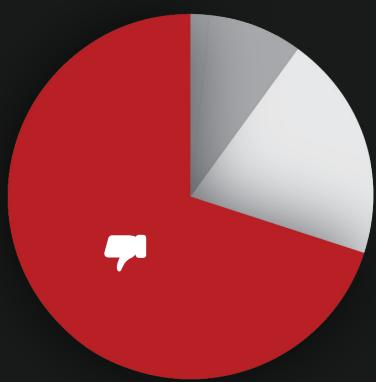
“ The USC administration presents an image of listening to the concerns of students when it really is trying to **preserve the interests of wealthy donors.** ”



Remote classes do not reduce the quality of education that USC offers its students.

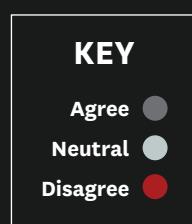


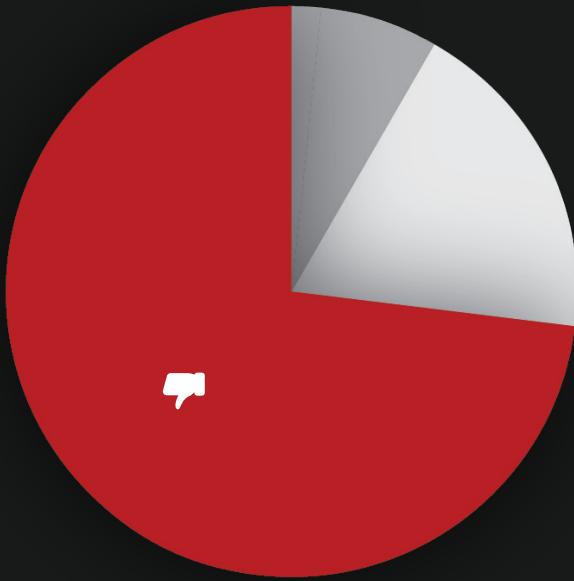
USC has maintained a **sincere** line of communication with its students in regards to the university's collective COVID-19 response.



As a student, I feel that the school has the quality of my education and academic satisfaction as their top priority.

“ USC has maintained a line of communication with students regarding the COVID-19 matter, but it wasn't entirely honest. Prime example being the constant delayed announcements of cancelling school on campus. ”

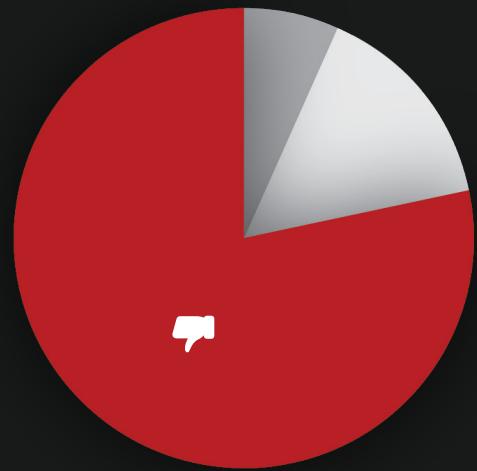




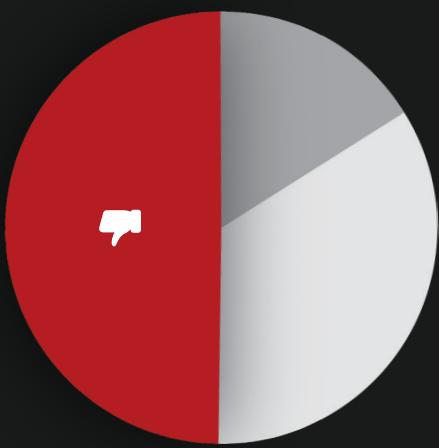
“ USC has a misguided response to testimonies of racism and chooses the wrong battles while ignoring larger ones. ”

USC's response to increasing student testimonies of racism on campus was appropriate, comprehensive, and proportionate.

“ I understand that our institution is facing economic consequences due to the pandemic, but some individual families are significantly worse-off and are struggling to pay tuition. USC responded by cutting financial aid, further worsening the financial position of struggling families. ”

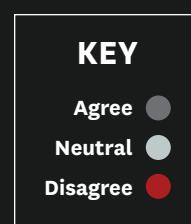


USC genuinely listens to the social and economic concerns of its student body and responds swiftly and appropriately.

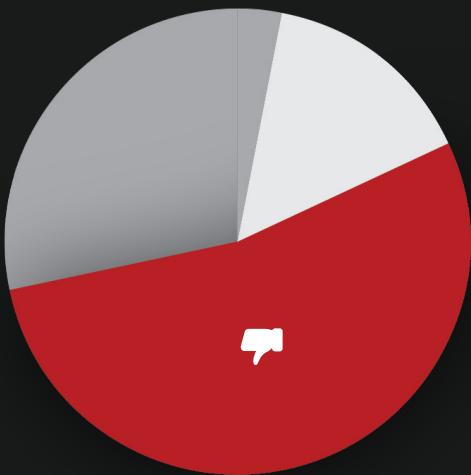


“ I have not heard of a single mental health initiative to encourage students to seek extra support during this time. ”

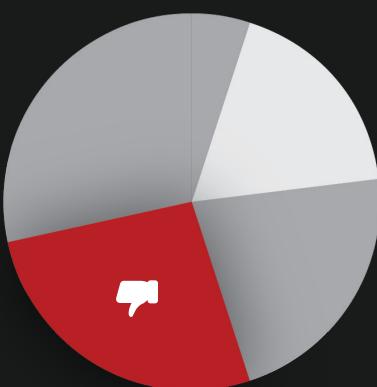
I feel satisfied and supported by USC's accessibility to mental health programs and resources.



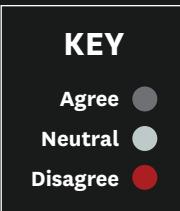
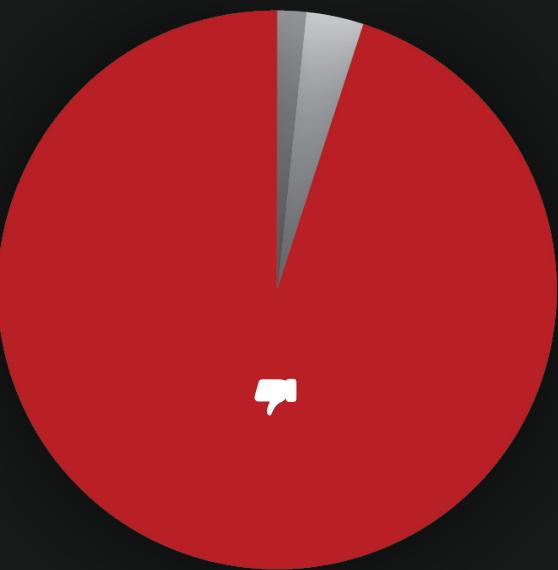
“ Numerous schools around the world acknowledge that they're going to make less money, but they're taking the hit in the stead of their students. USC has made it apparent they don't want to. ”



USC has maintained a clear and informative line of communication with its students in regards to the university's collective COVID-19 response.



Supposing USC's recent actions and behaviors continue on this trajectory in the next year, I would consider taking a semester or year off.



USC's 3.5% raise in tuition is appropriate considering they are projected to lose dramatically more money than any previous year to the impacts of COVID-19.

“ There is very little transparency between the administration and the student body. I will not trust what the administration says about the upcoming plans for the spring semester. ”

While the results of this question may appear beneficial, 33 out of 60 students would consider not returning. Including the 10 “neutral” students, USC would incur a potential loss of \$2.5 million

Design proposal

Design challenge, objective, target audience,
key message, deliverables, and budget

Challenge

To restore the trust, transparency, honesty, and sincerity between the administration and students of the Trojan family.

Objective

The design strategy implements **a three-phase plan** to USC's signage and handlings of systemic change:

Printed signage campaign publicly apologizing and taking **1** responsibility for the institutions current transgressions

Change.usc.edu website and MyUSC alterations **2**

Sentimental instructional, directional, and supportive signage **3**

Target audience

The immediate reception of the posters will be from the students and faculty members of USC, but the full scope of our campaigns reach is far greater. Being the third largest private university in the united states, and arguably the most visible, **the example set by USC in taking an earnest approach in it's communication strategy by empathizing with students will set the precedent for other institutions to follow in a similiar fashion.**

Key message

The administration is not deaf to complaints of insincerity and questionable morals due to the past couple years of scandals. USC has disappointed both the students of USC and the parents who have so graciously made up our Trojan Family. They owe our family an apology. USC is embellished in plaques permanently honoring families who have fiscally contributed to its history. USC will offer its students plaque-like signage this spring semester to begin refocusing it's priorities and taking accountability for its mistakes.

Deliverables

- 1 Email Apology signage
- 2 Online Classes Apology signage
- 3 Student Athlete Apology signage
- 4 BIPOC Student Apology signage
- 5 Mental Health Access Apology signage
- 6 General Student Apology signage
- 7 Change.usc.edu Cultural Journey redesign
- 8 Change.usc.edu Institutional Critique and Petition Directory
- 9 Change.usc.edu Petition webpages
- 10 MyUSC Wellness Check-in widget
- 11 Wellness Check-in responsive webpage
- 12 "Next Steps" affirming signage

Budget

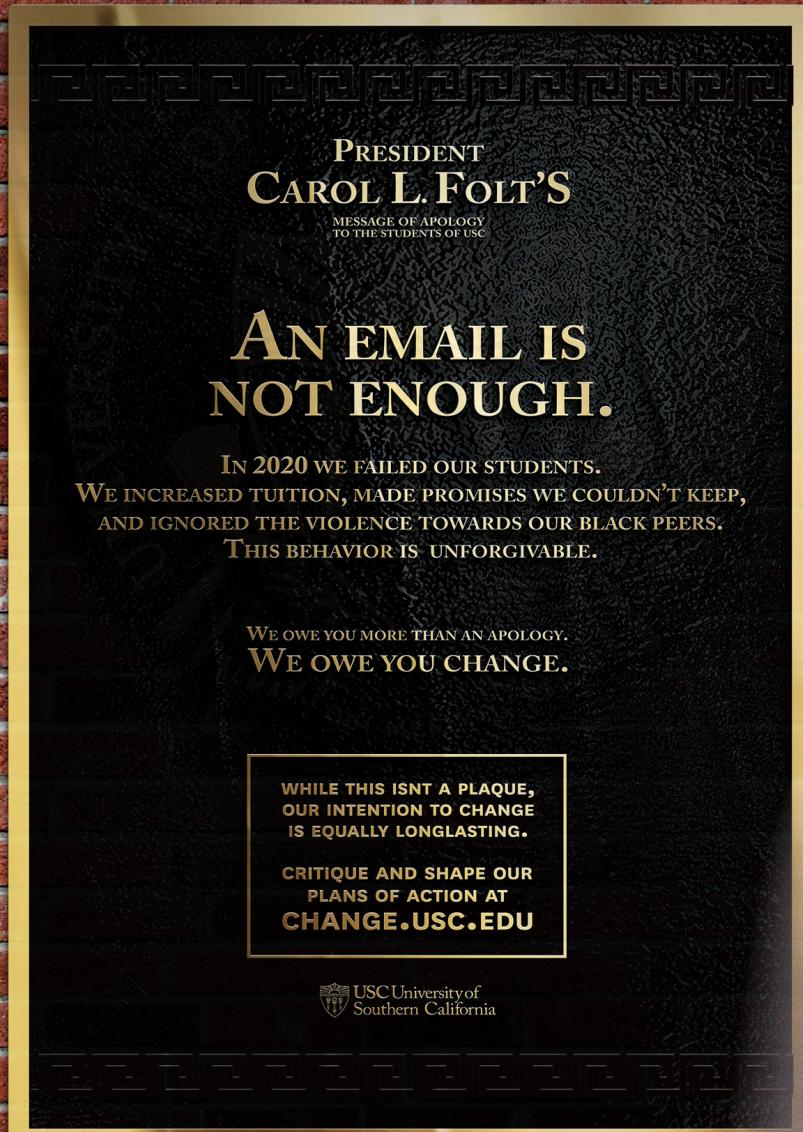
While USC could easily produce these proposed designs in house, **we insist that the administration reach out to a local sustainably minded print shop for means of production of these posters, banners, and other printed materials.**

The sustainable printer of our choosing is
L.A. based *IndiePrinting*

Phone: 213.745.6395
Email: files@indieprinting.com

Deliverables

A speculative mockup series of the designed
posters, banners, and website to be implemented



Poster mockup on the University Campus

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PRESIDENT CAROL L. FOLT'S

MESSAGE OF APOLOGY
TO THE STUDENTS OF USC

WE'RE SORRY FOR LEADING YOU ON-LINE.

CLASSES WERE NOT IN PERSON.
WE PROMISED YOU THE SAME EDUCATIONAL VALUE
AND IT WAS A PROMISE WE COULD NOT KEEP.

WE OWE YOU MORE THAN AN APOLOGY.
WE OWE YOU CHANGE.

WHILE THIS ISN'T A PLAQUE,
OUR INTENTION TO CHANGE
IS EQUALLY LONGLASTING.

CRITIQUE AND SHAPE OUR
PLANS OF ACTION AT
CHANGE.USC.EDU



USC University of
Southern California

Poster mockup on the University Campus

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PRESIDENT
CAROL L. FOLT'S
MESSAGE OF APOLOGY
TO THE STUDENTS OF USC

TO OUR VALUED STUDENT ATHLETES,

ENTERING FOOTBALL SEASON DURING
A GLOBAL PANDEMIC WAS IRRESPONSIBLE.
WE SINCERELY APOLOGIZE FOR PRIORITIZING
COLLEGIATE SPORTS OVER YOUR SAFETY.
WE ARE FULLY COMMITTED TO PROTECTING
YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY.

WE OWE YOU MORE THAN AN APOLOGY.
WE OWE YOU CHANGE.

WHILE THIS ISN'T A PLAQUE,
OUR INTENTION TO CHANGE
IS EQUALLY LONGLASTING.

CRITIQUE AND SHAPE OUR
PLANS OF ACTION AT
CHANGE.USC.EDU

 USC University of
Southern California

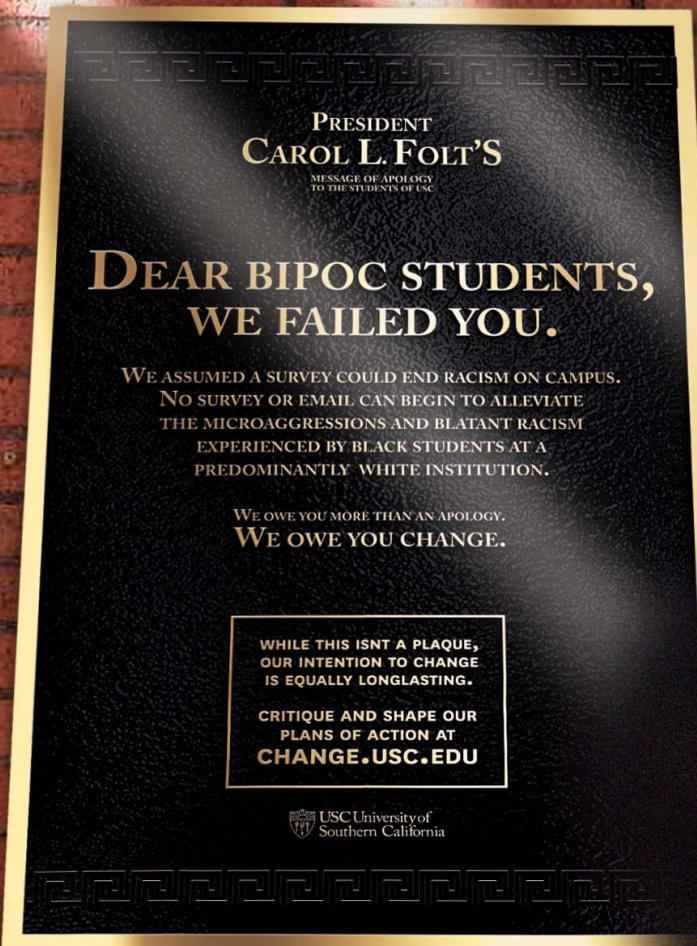
Stevens
Academic Center

JOHN MCKAY CENTER

Banner mockup on the John McKay Center

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Poster mockup on the Von KleinSmid Center

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PRESIDENT
CAROL L. FOLT'S

MESSAGE OF APOLOGY
TO THE STUDENTS OF USC

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH COMES FIRST.

SUCCESS CANNOT COME AT THE EXPENSE OF STUDENT WELL-BEING. WE OFFER YOU OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHIES FOR NOT PROVIDING ADEQUATE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES. WE WILL CONTINUE TO DO ALL THAT WE CAN TO IMPROVE WELLNESS FOR OUR STUDENTS AND OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY.

We owe you more than an apology.
We owe you change.

While this isn't a plaque,
our intention to change
is equally longlasting.

CRITIQUE AND SHAPE OUR
PLANS OF ACTION AT
CHANGE.USC.EDU



Poster mockup on the **Annenberg Center**

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Poster mockup on the University Campus

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Commitment to Change



News USC Culture Journey Class Action Settlement Admissions OCR 2020 Reporting and Support Resources

Search



The University's singular focus must continue to be the students, patients, and community we serve. They are the center of our academic and medical mission, and we owe them our very best. Our shared commitment must be to ensure that all of our students step onto campus feeling energized, motivated, safe, and confident about their USC experience. Our dedicated faculty and staff work constantly and tirelessly towards this goal.

A member of the faculty, addressing the very purpose of a University, remarked that "we are the light of the human mind." Our light has dimmed recently. By working together, with passion and commitment, we will restore trust and heal our community. It is because of that Trojan passion and commitment that USC will light the human mind more luminously than ever before.

UPDATES

USC Culture Journey: launching 'Student Petitions' to amplify the voices of our student body

October 2, 2020

Student Petitions is the next development of the USC Culture Journey Initiative to explore our values, align the supportive behaviors that bring those values to life and develop opportunities to improve our systems and processes. By creating this platform for change, our community is engaged in shaping our culture together.

Speaking Out Loud: Enough is Enough, a university-wide dialogue

June 2, 2020

The USC community has been shaken by and deeply impacted by recent events around racial and economic inequity. Please join the USC Center for Black Culture and Student Affairs (CBCSA) for a university-wide dialogue on Wednesday, June 3rd, 2020, at 1 pm PST for Speaking Out Loud: Enough is Enough. This forum will provide a safe space for Black students, staff, faculty, and allies to decompress and have some rich dialogue about anti-blackness and the many systemic issues that plague the Pan-African community in America.

Faculty, Staff and Students Chart USC's Future Through 'Culture Journey'

March 25, 2020

(Trojan Family Magazine) Thousands are voicing their values and vision for how the university should reshape itself, through a process underway across USC's campuses and partner institutions.

JaBari Brown brings his dedication to service to a new role as culture facilitator



From the moment he first saw the University Park campus as a prospective undergraduate student in the mid-'90s, JaBari Brown knew he wanted to be part of the USC culture. "It was just one of those things where, I could see myself here," he said.

New role in USC Student Health bridges medical and mental care



Jennifer Hsia, USC Student Health

Jennifer Hsia, USC's new behavioral health consultant, wants to emphasize how both mind and body issues can impact a student's health.

Violence prevention specialist aims to cultivate community of respect at USC



Change.usc.edu Homepage redesign

A revamp of the USC Commitment to Change website is much needed as the poorly-placed hero image and inconsistent spacing throughout the site reeks of insincerity. The last update was 4 months ago, and no tangible changes have been made since. USC students feel outraged and humiliated with each scandal, but feel powerless to make a change. This outright neglect of student needs may work for now, but it will not be sustainable.

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Commitment to Change



News USC Culture Journey Class Action Settlement Admissions OCR 2020 Reporting and Support Resources

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USC Culture Journey Continues

The Culture Journey is USC's university-wide initiative to explore our values, align the supportive behaviors that bring those values to life and develop opportunities to improve our systems and processes. Our community is engaged in shaping our culture together.

Culture Journey Update, October 2020: Student Petitions

We are very excited to share the latest update on the USC Culture Journey! See the message from the co-chairs of the Working Group on University Culture on the journey's progress and how we are developing a platform for students to share their voice and help enhance the future of USC.

[Check out the student-led petitions and movements.](#)

Our goal is to have our **students feel valued and supported in the spring**. This platform is the start of addressing concerns, and ensuring the implementation of the unifying (core) USC values and behaviors we made together in the fall.

Stay tuned! The journey continues and will support USC student needs.

Culture Journey Update, July 2020: Our University's Values

We are very excited to share the latest update on the USC Culture Journey! See the message from the co-chairs of the Working Group on University Culture on the journey's progress and how we are developing our values, aligning behaviors and prioritizing systems and processes that support and improve USC.

[Check out the eight values and six recommended actions in this report.](#)

Our goal is to have our **unifying (core) USC values and behaviors in the fall**. Those will be embedded in our Code of Ethics and supported across USC through improvements to our HR processes (people development, leadership development) and communications, addressing concerns, well-being and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

Stay tuned! The journey continues and will support USC's enhanced culture.

Recent Journey Milestones

- **You shared your voice.** More than 4,400 USC staff, faculty and students participated in 175-plus culture sessions (Town Halls and Discussion Sessions) from January to April to share their input on values, behaviors and the systems and processes needed to support and improve USC.
- **We continued to hear from you.** With the help of our Culture Network, we continued discussion sessions during the pandemic in an online format to ensure that everyone had an opportunity to share their voice. Your input brought us to the **eight values** most frequently identified by our community as **high priority** and the **changes needed in six key systems and processes**.
- **We partnered with our community.**
 - In April and May 2020, we **met with our governance bodies** — Working Group on Culture, Academic Senate, Staff Assembly, Undergraduate Student Government, and Graduate Student Government — to share USC-wide community feedback from the culture sessions.
 - We shared the initial values, behaviors, systems and processes identified in those sessions as "most critical" to our culture change and asked for their input to continue refining these into recommended values and actions.
 - From June to August 2020, we are **meeting with all our deans and unit leaders and their leadership teams** in 22 schools and 13 administrative units to share their specific school's or unit's community feedback from the Culture Sessions. We are asking for their perspectives on USC-wide values, behaviors and recommended actions (systems and processes). And we are sharing a variety of options on culture activities and initiatives that schools and units can partner with us on to involve their communities in the culture transformation.
 - **We are also partnering with Human Resources** on DEI, well-being, and efforts to address concerns, which were identified as other areas of culture focus at USC and are being led by other university groups, committees and governance bodies.

USC CULTURE JOURNEY CONTINUES

[Student Petitions](#)

[President's Culture Commission Members](#)

[Working Group on University Culture](#)

 "I think society tells us that we need instant results and instant impact. And there should be a sense of urgency around fixing things and doing the right things. But long-term healing [and changing culture] takes patience and continuous work. It doesn't get fixed by one certain action or one certain statement or one action plan. It's a series of things, building upon days and days of work."

— Debbie Lee, past president,
Undergraduate Student
Government

 "If we can change the culture at USC and we can improve the quality of the work experience for the employees, then that will have a radiating impact on people's health."

— Chantelle Rice Collins, associate
professor of clinical occupational
therapy

 "If we as individuals don't start behaving differently, how do we expect the university to be different? It's especially true for those in management or supervisory positions, as they set the tone for the people who report to them."

— Felipe Osorno, executive
administrator for continuum of care
operations and value improvement

Change.usc.edu

Cultural Journey redesign

You told us that long-term healing requires continuous work, not just a certain statement or action plan. So what has the Working Group on University Culture been working on, outside of a single action plan and statement made 3 months ago? If 175-plus culture sessions have led to no tangible changes, then we must question whether the intentions of USC have been to amplify student voices or to silence them.

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Commitment to Change

USC University of Southern California

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Student Petitions

Student Petitions is part of USC's university-wide initiative to explore our values, align the supportive behaviors that bring those values to life and develop opportunities to improve our systems and processes. By creating this platform for change, our community is engaged in shaping our culture together.

  Start a Petition



September 28, 2020
USC should provide more accessible mental health support
5,047 Supporters



October 2, 2020
USC allow students to elect Pass/No Pass for any class
3,897 Supporters



October 5, 2020
Tell us whether Spring semester will be online or not already
2,163 Supporters



October 3, 2020
Abolish Social Greek Life at USC
1,204 Supporters

All Student Petitions

Change.usc.edu

Institutional critique & petition directory

The Student Petitions feature is the next step towards rebuilding and enhancing the future of USC. A public platform for students to voice their concerns will lead to organic and genuine insights for USC researchers more effectively than polls. Students are tired of the insincere surveys and memos. Launching this initiative is a tremendous opportunity for USC to make students feel heard, represented, and supported.

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Commitment to Change



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STUDENT PETITIONS

USC allow students to elect Pass/No Pass for any class

October 2, 2020 Cameron Carmen

Dear USC,

We know that last semester you elected to give us the option to pass/no pass due to the sudden switch to an online semester, but you don't feel its necessary this semester because we knew it would be an online semester from the start. However, this does not feel fair because the only option we have as USC students is to continue our degree online or delay our graduation date.

Coronavirus as a pandemic has only gotten worse since we left school in May, and the psychological effects of being inside for a majority of the week and having to move back home is taking a toll. If coronavirus was a valid reason to enact that policy last semester, it is even more valid now. To add on to that, students are also at the forefront of a very difficult time even aside from the pandemic. We are dealing with tackling racial inequality, an upcoming election that has high stakes, fires going on in our home state of California, and the added pressure of a shortened semester.

Please, with all that is going on do not try to bring our grades back to our "normal" grading system. Students should have the opportunity to elect certain classes as pass/no pass so we can have reduce our stress and not have to worry about our GPA during such an unprecedeted time.

Reasons for Signing

Katina Ortiz 2 hours ago

And some professors are overloading major course content to be taught through boring audios or are either rushing to get through material every lecture. Material we don't cover is expected to be learned on our own, and this happens in every class. The overload of work and stress is ridiculous.

3,897 Trojans have signed.

- Talia Malchin signed 48 seconds ago
 Dane Archer signed 2 minutes ago

Sign Petition
using your USC NetID



Change.usc.edu

Student petition pages

How can we facilitate positive change in a participatory and student-centered manner? Each student petition may only be accessed by USC students for safety while simultaneously preventing the spread of false information. Each petition will list student's reasons for signing and a specific section for USC to address student concerns.

Designed by the Advanced Design Project Team
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myUSC

[Customize](#)

hi, Kevin



Services

[Wellness Check In](#)[Registration & Fee Summary](#)
confirmation of registration and fees[Blackboard](#)
online learning[Courses](#)[Web Registration](#)[OASIS](#)
academic records[Gmail](#)[Undergraduate Advisement](#)[Pay My Bill](#)

MyUSC

Wellness Check-In widget

Students are at the forefront of a turbulent time, and USC is aware that mental well-being is at an all time low. USC launched a campaign for students to seize the awkward and reach out last semester, but such a powerful institution should follow up on their promise. USC can work on lowering barriers to accessing mental health resources such as hiring supplementary staff to accommodate a temporarily greater need and implementing a shortcut on a page that students frequent every day.

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MyUSC Wellness Check-In

This wellness check-in feature enhances the existing structure of Mindful USC, making mindfulness enjoyable and accessible. Students experience challenging times in different ways, and this check-in will efficiently direct students to the help they need. We propose the launch of a chat feature, where USC students can effortlessly connect with a counselor and get direction and stability.

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Final thoughts

A realistic conclusion to this proposal including next steps, student demands, and final words

PRESIDENT
CAROL L. FOLT'S

MESSAGE OF APOLOGY
TO THE STUDENTS OF USC

WE'RE SORRY FOR LEADING YOU ON-LINE.

CLASSES WERE NOT IN PERSON.
WE PROMISED YOU THE SAME EDUCATIONAL VALUE
AND IT WAS A PROMISE WE COULD NOT KEEP.

WE OWE YOU MORE THAN AN APOLOGY.
WE OWE YOU A BETTER EDUCATION.

GOOD OR BAD,

**MAKE
EVERY
MOMENT
YOURS.**

D CHERISH ALL OF THEM.

WELCOME,
AND
WELCOME BACK



Next steps: Working in tandem with affirming signage

If you have successfully communicated your apology and plans for change, as well as received feedback from the students as well as acted on them, we believe a great next step for USC is to, simply, continue to do more good for students. This is a great point for the welcome back campaign you initially asked for to come into play. Although putting up banners and posters showing off our school and saying, "Welcome Back," can get the message across, why not add something different or communicate the message in a different way to empower or motivate the students?

In tandem with our apology signage, we can also implement a signage campaign with motivating and empowering messages that we feel most, if not all, students can relate to.

This is not at all difficult to do, yet it speaks so much more for students than the simple "Welcome Back" or "Fight On".

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AND IT WAS A PROMISE WE COULD NOT KEEP.

WE OWE YOU MORE THAN AN APOLOGY.
WE OWE YOU A RECONCILIATION.

YOU ARE USC

UNIQUE. STRONG. CAPABLE.

WELCOME, AND WELCOME BACK



Designed by the Advanced Design Projects Team
27

PRESIDENT
CAROL L. FOLT'S

MESSAGE OF APOLOGY
TO THE STUDENTS OF USC

WE'RE SORRY FOR LEADING YOU ON-LINE.

CLASSES WERE NOT IN PERSON.
WE PROMISED YOU THE SAME EDUCATIONAL VALUE
AND IT WAS A PROMISE WE COULD NOT KEEP.

WE OWE YOU MORE THAN AN APOLOGY.
WE OWE YOU AN EXPLANATION.

HEY YOU,

YOU LOOK GREAT TODAY.

KEEP YOUR HEAD UP,
BE CONFIDENT,
AND BE YOU.

HOPE YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL DAY



Designed by the Advanced Design Projects Team
28

Proposal Stipulations: Our demands moving forward

Tuition

- 1 **A justification for the raising of tuition** during a pandemic when other organizations have found methods to reduce the financial burden placed on its students during an economically turbulent period.
- 2 **An additional apology** for the cutting of financial aid accompanied by an explanation as to why it was necessary to do so.
- 3 **Administrative actions to make amends** for these transgressions through a lowering of tuition in future semesters, compensation, or increased financial aid packages.

Communication

- | | |
|--|---|
| A public apology from the administration for its vague and tactless communication efforts. | 1 |
| A more forthright approach to future announcements. | 2 |
| A redesign of the Change.usc.edu platform , allowing for student critique of the administration's approach. | 3 |
| The formation of student driven committees to address systemic changes within the USC community. | 4 |

Mental health resources

- 1 **The formation of campaigns promoting the mental health resources available to USC students** in order to provide preventative care instead of reactionary services.
- 2 **The implementation of the Wellness Check-in widget in the MyUSC portal.**
- 3 **An increased number of supplemental mental health counselors** for the immediate needs of this semester's student body.

Proposal Stipulations: Our demands moving forward

Addressing racial and cultural transgressions

- 1 Ensuring fair representation of minority communities **within the student body** through admissions, campus councils focused around addressing issues of disparity around campus activities and culture, and hiring faculty of color initially.
- 2 **Actively and consistently listen to, validate, uplift, and support the voices of BIPOC students, workers, and faculty.**
- 3 **The offering of substantial scholarships for BIPOC students,** especially for those majoring outside of STEM.

Designer Demands

Compensation for the implementation of the signage in this proposal and future designs created for USC's Communication Department.

As mentioned in the budget section of the brief, we ask that the university employ an outside eco-friendly and/or a marginalized-owned print company.

Whether our proposal is accepted by the administration for use on campus in the coming semesters or not, **we expect to meet in person or through a video conference with President Folt in order to discuss our proposal and the necessary reformation of the USC community.**

1

2

3

Dear Carol Folt, Your student's final appeal

We leave this proposal with the administration and our president in hopes that it will provide some clarity as to how the relationship between the university and its students can begin to be repaired. This proposal and this signage is not meant to amend or excuse the university's past transgressions, but rather to start a long overdue conversation and movement towards the change we all need. Having received an open-ended, general brief for the spring semester's campus signage, we took it upon ourselves to really contemplate what the student body needs to hear at this time. **That message must be based in honesty, transparency, and compassion, rather than appeasement and forged optimism.**

If our iteration is not chosen, we feel it will speak volumes about the university's priorities and true motives behind their efforts to connect with students. We see it as our responsibility that if this proposal receives no constructive action or response from you and the administration, we intend to submit it to news and media outlets.

It is a wonderful opportunity to be able to work closely with the higher-ups in our institution, but it would be erroneous to continue on the path of fabricated positivity and togetherness when in fact, the university has never been further out of touch with its students. We hope that if our vision does not come true, that at least the administration and Carol Folt will take a moment to reflect on the discrepancy between their stated goals and tangible actions. There is great value in taking the risk of breaking down the wall of formality and self-preservation if it means connecting with the hurt student body and showing some genuine, honest sincerity. Your design students are willing to help find that sincerity, if you are also willing.

USC has provided its students with unforgettable experiences and has the potential to be a point of pride, but given its recent handlings of several important issues, it's difficult to dignify our participation.

We hope that the university and our president, Carol Folt, will take action to back up their claims that we are indeed a Trojan Family, and to give us a reason to Fight On.

Sincerely,

Your students pleading for
the same in return