



Learner-centered teaching uncovers the best in students and their professors.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Joe Gaylord

Quarterly Updates
for Guidance Counselors
Spring 2010

Counselor News

Where teaching has no boundaries USC's faculty create a culture of deeper, broader learning

What kind of teaching does it take to prepare our brightest minds for an era unlike anything in our history? In which success increasingly hinges not only on having specialized expertise but a broad knowledge — the agility to constantly innovate, plus the skills to grasp new concepts and master emerging technologies? We believe the answer lies in professors who exemplify those qualities themselves: able to move fluidly across disciplines, break out of traditional roles and employ instructional methods that empower students to take charge of their own learning.

Achieving “breadth with depth” by studying across disparate fields is one of the university’s most cherished values, and applies to professors as well as students. As Executive Vice Provost Barry Glassner observes, “While people may talk about the need to be interdisciplinary, it’s in USC’s genetic makeup and permeates everything we do.” Accordingly, a growing number of faculty are not housed within a single department, but share appointments among colleges, where they build bridges between disciplines. Students pursuing double majors, or combining far-flung fields, find enthusiastic support from their like-minded professors. The faculty’s passion for opening new areas of inquiry has created one of the richest arrays of study options anywhere – nearly 300 undergraduate majors and minors and counting!

Conventional wisdom holds that major research universities should keep their most illustrious researchers working uninterruptedly in their labs. Proud to be considered among the country’s elite research institutions, USC has adopted a different philosophy. We believe the most fertile insights and deepest learning take place at the intersection of teaching and research. This is why all tenured professors teach undergraduate classes, and why it is entirely possible for undergraduates to find an Academy Fellow or Nobel Laureate at the front of their classroom, leading a field trip or inviting them onto a research team. Faculty regularly credit their students’ questions with triggering new avenues to investigate; for undergraduates, the benefit of hands-on experience in a seminal research project is immeasurable. *continued on page 3*

Spring is a great time to visit USC, with classes in full swing, and performances, cultural activities, recreational and athletic events in bloom all around campus.

USC named “Hottest College of the Decade!”

The *Daily Beast* has named USC #1 on their list of colleges transforming the country and creating a whole new class of first-choice schools.

Forever a Trojan!

Congratulations to football coach Pete Carroll, who has headed to the pros with the Seattle Seahawks. Carroll will continue to show his true colors by heading A Better LA, the nonprofit organization he founded to make a difference in the lives of inner-city youth.

Thanks! We received nearly 36,000 applications from spectacular young people who are clearly raising the standard for a new decade.

USC Faculty Facts

We have 3200 star faculty members, who also happen to include:

- 60 National Academy members
- 6 National Medal winners
- 2 MacArthur (“Genius Award”) Fellows
- ...and a Nobel Laureate

What does it mean to be a research university?

High school students sorting through their college options know that a “major research university” is not the same as a “small liberal arts college,” but what difference do all those labs and centers make? What sets research universities apart is their core mission not only to teach, but to create new knowledge and provide the steady stream of creative and technological innovations that change the way we live. This means that at any given moment at USC, breakthroughs are being pursued across every discipline and in every school. For undergraduates, that translates into hundreds of opportunities to work alongside the world’s foremost authorities in their fields. More often than you might think, the results can benefit your own students’ lives. In fact, if they have been to the movies, know a soldier stationed overseas, or are planning how to improve their SAT scores, your students might be interested to learn that USC research teams have recently:

Created the futuristic world in *Avatar*.

Director James Cameron called on a USC linguist to create the Na’vi language, while a USC anthropology team devised the tribal culture of Pandora. Plus, USC engineering professors and students invented the next generation of digital animation to create fully lifelike CG characters.

Developed a tool to help soldiers think faster.

Faculty and students at USC’s Institute for Creative Technologies are piloting a new interactive video game, *UrbanSim*, for US Army commanders and soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. The game trains them to quickly evaluate situations within the context of another culture, then react nimbly and appropriately to multiple problems in a fast-changing environment.

Discovered that cardiovascular fitness makes you smarter.

USC and Swedish health researchers just released the first-ever study proving that boys who improved their cardiovascular fitness between the ages of 15 and 18 significantly improved their intelligence scores; those who were most fit at age 18 were more likely to go on to college than their less in-shape counterparts.

For those who want to explore the true meaning of “endless possibilities,” a research university is the place to be.

■ Learn more at www.usc.edu/research.

Three ways for scholars to shine

With the addition of the Discovery Scholar designation and prize, USC now offers three prestigious university honors that students can earn upon graduation. All students who maintain at least a 3.5 GPA and meet their program’s requirements receive a Scholar designation on their diploma. For an additional graduation bonus, up to 10 students in each Scholar category are awarded \$10,000 cash prizes for their achievements.

USC Discovery Scholars: Honors creativity wherever it is found, rewarding students who have conducted original research meeting the standards of the wider academic community, or who have created outstanding works of art or attained the highest levels of artistic performance. The distinction is available in any area of study offered by the university, and all undergraduates are encouraged to apply.

USC Global Scholars: Recognizes students who have excelled in their studies at home and abroad, have become proficient in a foreign language and immersed themselves in another culture by either studying, working or volunteering in another country.

■ For more information visit www.college.usc.edu/scholars.

USC Renaissance Scholars: This flagship academic honor was first established by President Steven Sample in 2000. It is awarded to undergraduates who graduate with a major and minor in widely separated fields of study, thereby developing “the intellectual flexibility needed for life in the 21st century that the best thinkers of the European Renaissance displayed.”

■ For more information visit www.usc.edu/programs/ugprograms/renaissance.

USC Responds to the Financial Crisis

Financial aid to remain strong for incoming students

As the economy continues its bumpy ride to recovery, we remain committed to working with all admitted students and their families to make a USC education affordable. Here are a few important things to remember about financial aid at USC:

- The USC admission process is need-blind.
- We meet 100 percent of USC-determined financial need.
- USC has the largest university-funded financial aid budget in the country.
- Each year, we distribute over \$190 million of USC monies, and more than \$350 million from all sources, as financial aid to more than 9,000 undergraduates.

How USC is Helping Fuel the Economic Recovery

As one of the country’s top research universities, USC not only creates jobs for faculty, researchers and technicians, but continually stimulates growth in the wider economy through the development of new technologies and businesses. In 2009, an independent study credited the university with generating \$4.9 billion in economic activity in the region and beyond.

- For the coming year, USC will increase the pool of unrestricted university-funded aid for the second year in a row.
- Financial aid at USC is not dependent on state appropriations, endowment earnings or other outside economic forces.
- Our Financial Aid Office will partner with families as they move through the financial aid process and for the duration of their children’s undergraduate studies at USC.

We believe a world-class education is the best investment in the future.

■ Learn more at www.usc.edu/financialaid.

Trojan Voices

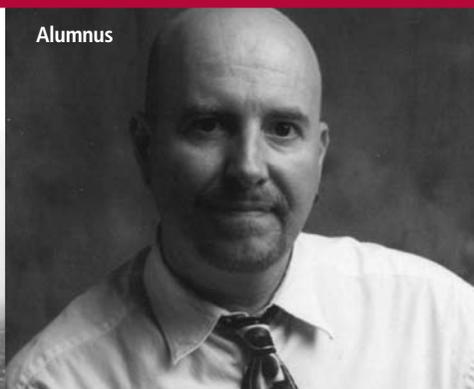
A current student, alumnus and professor share their perspectives

*A teacher affects eternity;
he can never tell
where his influence stops.*

Henry Brooks Adams



Student



Alumnus



Professor

When it comes to teaching, what really matters?

Colby Kennedy

*From Boston, Massachusetts;
BA, Psychology, 2011
Undergraduate Fellow, USC Center for
Excellence in Teaching*

My high school was one of the best in the state, with some outstanding teachers. Here I've been able to take my education to a whole new level, with top-notch professors and a rich research culture. As a psychology major, I find it tremendously helpful that my professors have research backgrounds, and integrate hands-on experience with classroom learning. Many teach in multiple departments, so they understand and encourage double majors and interdisciplinary studies. I've had great mentors, both formal and informal, and believe the qualities that matter most are approachability, mutual respect with students, and the ability to translate their experiences into meaningful, usable information. My appreciation of what it takes to create transformational learning has grown as an Undergraduate Fellow at the Center for Excellence in Teaching. There we join TAs and professors from all USC's schools and colleges to share perspectives and develop innovative techniques, striving to make more effective teachers and more engaged students.

Joe Williams

*BA in English, 1982;
Film Critic for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*

Many students who sign up for T.C. Boyle's fiction writing class think they could be America's next great novelist — just like Boyle once thought he could be America's next great rock star. But as he told me recently, the purpose of a liberal arts education isn't to impose an outcome; it's to help you discover who you are. I took Boyle's class in 1979. Both of us had recently arrived in Los Angeles — he from the fabled writing program at the University of Iowa, and I from suburban St. Louis. His class was a revelation, not so much for what it taught me but for what it allowed me. True, he underlined all the best phrases in my stories and encouraged me to send my work to literary magazines, but he never preached any particular rules of writing. He knew that every student had a unique voice that needed to be nurtured. Boyle always steered our class discussions away from pronouncements about what an artist should do — and toward ascertaining what the artist wants to do. Thirty years later, that's my guiding principle in the job I love.

Doe Mayer

*Professor, School of Cinematic Arts and
Amnenberg School of Communication and
Journalism; 2009-2010 Associates Award for
Excellence in Teaching*

I'm a media maker who has found teaching to be one of the most intellectually engaging ways to go through life; you must be open to the new ideas and youthful energy always barreling through the door. In Cinematic Arts, we've always believed that instruction must be learner-centered, and learning by doing is critically important. In the communications school, classes are also very applied in nature. For example, my students are currently studying the impact of media on social change issues by developing communication campaigns for nonprofit organizations. Great opportunities for learning often happen when different disciplines converge. In some of my classes I find biology and math majors sitting next to journalism and health promotion students, all stretching beyond the confines of their fields. When students are connected and enthused, motivation is never an issue. You don't have to say, "Get up and study." You have to tell them, "Stop, go to bed, remember to eat!"

USConnect puts it all together for your students

Counselors, be sure to let your students know about the new online resource that manages and organizes all their communications with USC. When students create an account and log in at usc.edu/usconnect, they will find everything they need to know, including their application status, checklists of documents received or still required, deadlines and dates, messages from different departments, scholarship information and more.

Where teaching has no boundaries *continued from front page*

A profound transformation began several years ago when a simple phrase was added to the university's strategic plan: "USC will become a learner-centered institution." Led by the faculty-run Center for Excellence in Teaching, that goal is becoming a university-wide reality, with senior faculty, teaching assistants and undergraduate fellows working together to foster new teaching methods. As Director Lawford Anderson explains, "We've turned education on its head—starting not with what we're going to teach, but with what students need to learn, building our courses to constantly support those outcomes. The result is energized students who understand how they learn best, and are equipped to succeed for a lifetime."

Counselor News

Quarterly News for College Counselors
Spring 2010

A college isn't a trophy; it's a match.



The University of Southern California admits students of any race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical disability or mental disability.

Important Dates & Deadlines

March 2: Student and family tax returns submitted to Financial Aid Office to ensure offer of eligibility before May 1.

March 2: Cal Grant application deadline for California residents.

March 15-20: USC Spring Break

April 1: All students notified of decision

April 2-25: Receptions for admitted students (on campus and 17 cities)

May 1: National Candidate's Reply Date

May 14: USC Commencement

July 5-18 & 18-31: High School Summer Certificate Programs (Two-week programs)

July 5-31: High School Summer Seminars (Four-week program, earn 3 units of college credit)

July 22 - August 9: High School/Middle School Girls Marine Science Camp on Catalina Island (One-week programs)

Calling all high school students

We've got some great ways to spend your summer!

Enrollment is now open! We encourage your students to make this a summer of discovery at USC. High school students are invited to explore new fields with some of our most inspiring professors, sample college life on our idyllic campus, and find new friends from around the country and the world.

Four-Week Summer Seminars: High school students who have completed at least the 9th grade and will be 15 by July 5th, 2010, live on campus and can choose from 25 different topics in the fields of architecture, engineering, global studies, visual and performing arts, writing, pre-health and pre-law. Courses feature hands-on learning, field trips, lab work and group projects. Students can earn 3 units of college credit.

Two-Week Summer Certificate Programs: In this program for students who have completed at least the 9th grade and will be 15 by July 5, 2010, students live and learn for two weeks on campus, sample a taste of what the USC architecture or visual communications programs have to offer, and tour one of the world's most creative cities.

Week at Marine Science Camp: The Phillip K. Wrigley Marine Science Center on Catalina Island expands the academic and career horizons of middle- and high school girls who want to study marine biology and oceanography with our women faculty members. Financial aid is available to qualified students. ■ [Learn more at cesp.usc.edu](http://cesp.usc.edu).

How to find your Admission Counselor

Visit usc.edu/uga and click on "Contact Us." Enter your high school's name in the "Find your Admission Counselor" box. You can also call us anytime at (213) 740-1111, or e-mail us at scounsel@usc.edu (our special email address for college counselors).

USC's Codes

ACT Code: 0470

Used for sending ACT scores

CEEB Code: 4852

Used for PROFILE® Application and SAT score

Federal School Code: 001328

Used for FAFSA application