
A Message from the President



This catalogue is a roadmap to an unmatched range of intellectual opportunities available here at the University of Southern California. In it you will find information on classes offered by our College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, the Graduate School, and 17 different professional schools.

I hope this catalogue will inspire you to consider new and inventive ways of pursuing a university education. More than any of its peer universities, USC is steadfastly committed to imparting breadth with depth to each of its students, especially at the undergraduate level.

As I see it, breadth with depth involves in-depth knowledge of two or more disparate fields. This is achieved, for example, by pursuing a major in the humanities and a minor in the sciences — or a major in the arts and a minor in the professions. The objective is not merely well-roundedness in the old sense. Rather, the principal objective is the unpredictable release of intellectual energy and the unanticipated change in perspective that occur by connecting within one mind two widely separated fields of thought.

To find the more recent heroes of this process of intellectual integration, we must look to what I call the Great Straddlers: to Thomas Jefferson in the 18th century, who made significant contributions in political theory, architecture, agronomy and higher education; to Charles Darwin in the 19th century, who brought Malthusian economic theory to bear on the puzzle of evolutionary change in the biological world; and to Ilya Prigogine in the 20th century, whose Nobel Prize-winning work in chemistry led him to explore even larger questions in philosophy and literature.

At the boundaries and bridgings between separated fields of knowledge, anything can happen. And even where there is not the reward of major discovery, there is the promise of a daring and exciting encounter as we seek in our minds to overcome the distance and sustain the tension between disparate ideas and modes of thinking.

Thus, I exhort you to take full advantage of this course catalogue. Be bold and creative in designing your USC education and inventing your future. Intellectual breadth and agility are the tools you will need to succeed in the 21st century.

Steven B. Sample
President