

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2019 • ISSUE 1

Dear Colleagues:

I am excited to share the Office of Experiential and Applied Learning, fondly known as ExL, through our first newsletter.

In the fall of 2018, the Dornsife College of Letters, Arts, and Sciences established the new office to bring together all for-credit learning beyond the traditional classroom.

From Cuba to Italy, New Orleans to New York, or right here in our local community, our students participate in immersive, purposeful experiences that connect the theory and practice, advance critical thinking, inspire curiosity, and promote the development of life skills.

The ExL Office is home to the DC Semester, the Center for Active Learning in International Studies (CALIS), the Department of Physical Education, the Joint Educational Project (JEP), Faculty Led Programs, Overseas Studies, and the Prison Education Program. In addition, ExL office staff manage SOAR/SURF/SHURE, the selection process for the Dornsife, Global and Discovery Scholarships, and Fisher Fellows Program. Please take a moment to learn more about our programs on the pages that follow.

We have been thrilled with the outpouring of support we have received from our Dornsife community of faculty, staff, and students. This year, over four thousand students participated in experiential learning opportunities through our programs.

This is wonderful though there is more work to be done as our goal is to have each Dornsife student participate in at least one Experiential Learning experience prior to graduation. Perhaps you have an interest in experiential learning. I welcome your thoughts and ideas. I am available via email – [tanderso@usc.edu](mailto:tanderso@usc.edu) or phone (213)740-1824.

As we come to the end of another busy year, I wish you a wonderful holiday season filled with much love, joy, peace, and perfect health and look forward to working with you in the new year!

Cheers!

Tammy Anderson  
Associate Dean, Experiential and Applied Learning

To learn more, visit our website:  
<https://dornsife.usc.edu/exl/>



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## JOINT EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

**BY SUSAN HARRIS, DIRECTOR**

Established in 1972, the USC Joint Educational Project (a.k.a. "J-E-P") is one of the oldest and largest service-learning programs in the United States. Each year approximately 2,000 USC students enroll in JEP's service-learning, work-study, and volunteer programs.

Over the years, JEP has been honored with numerous awards and recognitions for its pioneering contributions to the field. JEP offers a wide range of service-learning and community engagement opportunities in nearby schools, non-profit organizations, health-care facilities, and legal clinics. JEP partners with USC faculty who offer course credit for participating in JEP; the program offers opportunities for alumni, USC employees and student volunteers, as well.

All of JEP's programs combine hands-on experience with reflective practice, enabling

students to learn firsthand about the critical issues facing the communities surrounding USC.

In 2019, JEP celebrated their first international service program, partnering with Hong Kong Polytechnic University to provide students with a unique opportunity to engage the topic of homelessness through a global lens, both in Los Angeles and in Hong Kong. Moreover, JEP's Young Scientists Program managed to facilitate a once-in-a-lifetime event at Vermont Elementary, enabling ten elementary students to make amateur radio contact with an astronaut at the International Space Station (ISS).

In preparation for JEP's 50th anniversary in 2022, alumni, donors, faculty, and friends are invited to (re-)connect with JEP to collaborate, share memories or ideas for the future, and take part in the preparation for the celebration events that will be taking place.

*For more information, contact Susan Harris  
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# CENTER FOR ACTIVE LEARNING IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (CALIS)

BY TERESA HUDOCK, DIRECTOR

"Build the change!" is a liberty we have taken with a very popular maxim. The CALIS mission is to help create a transformation in social science education for grades 6-12 — and to have USC students be a driving force in the process.

In the push for change, what is the change? What are the new strategies and materials — and the paradigm shift that guides them? The shift is student-driven analysis and the foundation is case teaching with analytical tools.

Building began in the 1980s when Professor Steve Lamy came to USC with an outreach mandate, making public education in international relations one of his tenure-track responsibilities. He became a national leader in case teaching with a Pew Initiative in the 1990s. And when California was looking to establish an education resource center for international studies in Los Angeles, CALIS was established in 2000.

CALIS has earned national recognition for innovation in teaching secondary social science. Through the Teaching International Relations Program (TIRP), CALIS has placed up to 300 USC students annually in local high schools to team-teach global issues. TIRP teams are supported with our free online database that has recently hit one thousand entries — combining tools and cases with varied resources. As USC students teach locally, CALIS is able to reach globally to provide effective strategies and materials that link past-present-personal, local-global, and focus on policy options, ethics, competing perspectives and more. We promote teacher leadership and conduct professional development for school districts.

Our upcoming event in spring 2020 is in partnership with the USC Dornsife Global Policy Institute — A Saturday for high school students to work with USC mentors using problem-based learning to address the climate crisis.

*For more information, contact Teresa Hudock  
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## OFFICE OF OVERSEAS STUDIES

**BY PETER HILTON, DIRECTOR**

The Office of Overseas Studies offers 55 semester or year abroad programs in 28 countries and a summer program at Cambridge. In addition to diving into a different culture and on many programs immersing themselves in a foreign language, students can pursue internships, research, service learning, and volunteer work. They also join local student clubs and sport teams, live with host families, and forge enduring international friendships.

Learning often takes place outside of the classroom. Students learn about ancient history on the steps of the Acropolis, interview returned migrants in Oaxaca, attend art auctions in London, examine coral species at the Great Barrier Reef, shadow rural health care workers in South Africa, and much more.

*For more information, contact Peter Hilton  
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### Student Voices

**Collin Hennessey - USC Paris Spring '18  
(ECON/MATH major, Class of 2019)**

"I came here knowing no one and with little knowledge of the Parisian lifestyle. After my few months here, I have made some friends that I will have for life both inside and outside of my program. I live with a family in a chic "quartier." We speak French at home, but my host dad knows enough English to help me get by when the conversation goes beyond my abilities. Every day is an adventure. Even after 2 months of exploration, I still have much to see. The classes I am taking have been a highlight as well. In my art history course we discuss French art one day and then go to one of Paris' famed museums on another to see the art we are studying. It has been amazing to experience the French teaching style; my professor is direct and engaging in a way that you often cannot find in the US. My French skills have improved at an exponential rate."







## FACULTY LED OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS

**BY WENDY PEDERSEN, DIRECTOR**

Our Faculty Led Off-campus programs are courses taught off-campus here in the United States or Abroad by USC faculty from various Dornsife academic fields. This year we have programs in **29 countries** led by **57 faculty** across **24 departments**. These programs range from Fall Break (4 days) to Spring Break (1 week) to Maymester or PWP (4 weeks) or Summer (4, 6 & 8 weeks). We have two semester long programs, Washington DC Semester and Backpacking in Los Angeles, this spring. These shorter programs are great for students who want to study abroad but lack time and flexibility to study abroad for a semester or year.

This year we are happy to have added a new Fall Break program that travels to Lake Tahoe to explore sunken artifacts and 3D photogrammetric documentation. Other new programs include an astrology program in Florence, Italy exploring past and present understandings of the universe, several physical education immersions in Brazil, Mexico, and India, as well as a coastal biodiversity course that visits Catalina Island and Taiwan.

*For more information, contact Wendy Pedersen  
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# PRISON EDUCATION PROJECT

BY KATE LEVIN, CO-DIRECTOR

The USC Dornsife Prison Education Project (PEP), which creates opportunities for USC and incarcerated students to learn from each other in a rigorous and collaborative learning environment across a variety of academic disciplines, had another successful and powerful semester. At the California Rehabilitation Center, a medium-security men's prison in Norco, CA, PEP offered an "Intro to Screenwriting" course designed and taught by Colin Petersdorf '20 and co-facilitated by five other USC undergraduates. The course allowed over a dozen incarcerated students to immerse themselves in the screenwriting genre and culminated in each member of the class writing screenplays of their own.

At the California Institution for Men, a medium-security men's prison in Chino, CA, PEP inaugurated the "USC Faculty Forum," an eclectic and enriching series in which a diverse array of USC faculty offered guest lectures to a class of approximately twenty-five incarcerated students. The Fall 2020 series featured faculty from the Spatial Sciences Institute, Gender and Sexuality Studies, History, Quantitative and Computational Biology, the Writing Program, Education, Political Science, and more.

Professor Sarah Mesle of the Writing Program, who spoke at Chino on fantasy and dystopia, reflected, "It would be hard to exaggerate how profoundly—and, it felt, mutually—meaningful PEP at Chino felt. The students' intelligence, insight, and palpable energy are a testament to the value of PEP, a program that fully manifests USC's spirit of excellence-in-action at its best."

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or Nik De Dominic  
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# PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

**BY STEVE VANKANEGAN, DIRECTOR**

The Physical Education program at USC Dornsife has a variety of opportunities for students to improve their general health and strength through fitness related and recreational activities classes. Courses are designed to introduce students to various aspects of health and physical education principles through experiential learning. Students experience a hands on learning environment by connecting theory and fundamental skill instruction with application of those skills. With this exposure, knowledge, and skill, students are engaged intellectually and physically and are better equipped to make choices regarding achieving a healthy and active lifestyle.

Our goal in USC Physical Education is to host a program that is relevant, immersive, and transcendent through all stages of our students' lives. The Physical Education Program currently offers over 150 sections of 35 fitness and health related courses. Students can elevate their schedule by choosing classes from the following divisions:

## **Mind and Body**

Yoga • Mindfulness • Kundalini • Yoga Therapy •  
Yoga for Athletics • AcroYoga • Stress Management  
• Principles of Yoga Through Community Outreach



## **Outdoor and Safety**

Hiking • Backpacking • Surfing • Self Defense • Beach  
Volleyball • Principles of Self Defense and Personal  
Safety • First Aid • Beach Soccer



## **Sports and Activities**

Volleyball • Basketball • Soccer • Archery • Golf •  
Tennis • Handball • Swimming • Table Tennis • Futsal  
• Principles of Coaching



## **Health and Fitness**

Weight Training • Walking • Physical Conditioning •  
Cardio Group Fitness • Health Coaching



## **Maymester and Spring Break Opportunities**

Students can broaden their experiential learning through fitness by opting to deepen their education in one of our newly adopted study abroad programs. Whether students choose to learn about soccer culture in Brazil or study hatha and kundalini yoga in India, the immersion of practical concepts in historical settings gives participants in these courses an invaluable alternative to engaging in physical fitness no matter the setting.

*For more information, contact Steve Vankanegan  
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## WASHINGTON D.C. PROGRAM

**BY JEFFREY FIELDS, DIRECTOR**

This is the 6th year of the Dornsife Washington DC Program and we welcome one of the largest (26 students) and most diverse groups yet. The DC cohorts have always reflected the diversity of USC overall. This year's cohort includes three Army veterans, several international students, and a range of majors from international relations to public policy to NGOs and social change.

This cohort also represents our largest number of students working on Capitol Hill with internships secured with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi; Senators Charles Schumer and Diane Feinstein; Congressman Gil Cisneros; and Congresswoman Julia Brownley among others. Other internships include the Obama Foundation, CBS News, the Atlantic Council, and the U.S. State Department. We look forward to our arrival in Washington, where we now have over ten alumni of the DC Program working full-time.



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# UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

BY DEBBIE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR

The purpose of SOAR and SURF/SHURE is to connect students with faculty members and their research. It allows all students to be mentored one-on-one by USC faculty, introduces students early in their academic careers to the process of serious scholarly inquiry and fosters valuable relationships between students and faculty.

## Student Opportunities for Academic Research (SOAR)

The SOAR program provides funding to Dornsife undergraduates for participation as a research assistant in a Dornsife faculty member's project during the fall and spring semesters of the academic year. It also supports students participating in Maymester programs with a faculty led research component. Maymester courses are listed in the Spring 2019 Schedule of Classes, but are stand-alone offerings that provided exceptional opportunities for research and experiential learning off-campus, throughout the United States, and even abroad. Students in good standing, with a cumulative USC GPA of 3.0 or higher, are encouraged to apply for funding up to \$1,000.

## Summer Undergraduate Research Fund (SURF) Summer Humanities Undergraduate Research Experience (SHURE)

SURF and SHURE provide opportunities for USC Dornsife students to pursue research in conjunction with Dornsife faculty members, either on or off-campus during the summer semester. USC students have the opportunity to participate in a number of Problems Without Passports (PWP) courses that combine problem-based or inquiry learning research exercises with study in different locations worldwide. Students in good standing, with a cumulative USC GPA of 3.0 or higher, are encouraged to apply for research funding up to \$3,000.

These programs supported students during the 2018-2019 academic year as follows:

Program	Semester	Total Applicants	Total Recipients	Total Amount Funded	Range of Funding (per student)
<b>SOAR TOTAL 2018/2019</b>		<b>223</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>\$113,500</b>	<b>\$500 - \$1000</b>
<i>SOAR (non-Maymester)</i>	<i>Fall / Fall &amp; Spring</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>\$47,500</i>	<i>\$500 - \$1000</i>
<i>SOAR (non-Maymester)</i>	<i>Spring only</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>\$28,500</i>	<i>\$500 - \$1000</i>
<i>SOAR (Maymester)</i>	<i>Spring only</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>\$37,500</i>	<i>\$500 - \$1,000</i>
<b>SURF TOTAL 2019</b>		<b>178</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>\$449,000</b>	<b>\$2000 - \$3000</b>
<i>SURF (non-PWP)</i>	<i>Summer 2019</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>84</i>	<i>\$242,000</i>	<i>\$1500 - \$3000</i>
<i>SURF (PWP)</i>	<i>Summer 2019</i>	<i>79</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>\$207,000</i>	<i>\$2000 - \$3000</i>
<b>SOAR &amp; SURF TOTAL 2018/2019</b>		<b>401</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>\$562,500</b>	<b>\$500 - \$3000</b>

For more information, contact Debbie Williams  
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## FISHER FELLOWS PROGRAM

BY DEBBIE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR

The Fisher Fellowship Program is the first undergraduate program at USC Dornsife that enables first generation students with financial need to fully participate in the enrichment opportunities that are at the heart of college. Fellows are encouraged to participate in academic programs that involve international travel, field research, internships, academic conferences, and service to various communities. Fellows also choose service projects that give back to selected communities.

As of Fall 2019, we have a total of 16 Fisher Fellows:

- (6) Fellows in Cohort #4 (accepted in spring 2019)
- (11) Fellows in Cohort #3 (accepted in spring 2018) – 1 graduated in May, 2019
- (5) Fellows in Cohort #2 (accepted in fall 2016) – graduated in May, 2019
- (12) Fellows in Cohort #1 (accepted in fall 2015) – graduated in May, 2018

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## 2019 Community/Campus Projects:

**Reading to Kids** - a grassroots organization dedicated to inspiring children with a love of reading. It has been proven that reading enriches the lives of children and increases their opportunities for success.

**Spirit of Troy Halloween Event** – partnered with JEP to host activities while children were on campus for a trick-or-treat event.

**Trojan Shelter** – fundraised to help fund hygiene/clothing care packages for college students who are currently in the shelter.

**Dias de los Muertos Event** (Fluor Tower) – helped host activities for local elementary school children. Answered questions about college life as a first generation student.

**IvyG Conference** – participated in this conference for first-generation, low-income students to connect and empower each other.

**Celebration Dinner** – to celebrate our graduates and welcome the newest Cohort, the Fellows organized a dinner on April 19, 2019. Our guest speakers were Christian Ruvalcaba and Flavio Guzman.

