FEBRUARY 2022

A message from the Culture Team

Since President Folt first shared the USC Unifying Values in November 2020, our Culture Journey has made significant progress: it has been shaped by our community, is inclusive to all Trojans, and has been embraced by leadership. Last year, we spread awareness and socialized the values through our Spring and Fall Culture Activities, such as Community Panels, Lunch and Learns, Speaker Series, and Working Together Workshops.

Last semester, we began to focus on partnering more closely with schools and units and synchronizing our offerings with existing resource groups across USC. We have developed a Shared Vision for the Culture Journey as well as Four Strategic Priorities in accordance with USC’s six Unifying Values. We are pleased to highlight our latest progress and share our future direction to continue making a lasting impact at USC.

Sincerely,

USC Culture Team

The success of USC's mission requires a culture where:

1. All behaviors are guided by our unifying values
2. The institution's systems and processes support, define, and incentivize those behaviors
3. Modeling the values, sharing and speaking up are promoted in an environment where everyone feels safe and protected

Introducing Patrick Cates

Patrick joined the Culture Team in July 2021 after 13 years at the Marshall School of Business, where he served as the Chief of Staff, among other roles. He recently graduated with his Doctorate in Organizational Change and Leadership from the Rossier School of Education.

In This Document You’ll Find:

Updates from the USC Culture Team

• Culture Network Evolution
• School and Unit Partnerships
• Culture Highlights

Looking Ahead: Our Four Strategic Priorities

• Create Community Impact
• Expand the Culture Network
• Build Strategic Partnerships
• Measure and Report on Change
Culture Journey Updates

Culture Network Evolution
Last semester, we sharpened our recruiting, training and onboarding processes for both Culture Network Members and Culture Journey Partners to continue driving the Culture Journey forward.

Culture Network Role Refresh
Heard from Culture Network Members and realigned Culture Network roles to more accurately meet the needs of our evolving Culture Journey.

School/Unit Specific Values Check-Ins
Trained Culture Network Members to facilitate workshops that put the Unifying Values into context and illuminate potential growth areas.

Culture Journey Partners
Grew the Partner Network almost 30% to 635 Partners that subscribe to updates and actively engage in Culture Journey activities.

School and Unit Partnership Process
We have been working with Schools and Units on a continuum of support and partnerships. Currently, there are several Schools and Units who are actively engaging with the Culture Team, at various stages in the process. You can read specifics about a few of the partnerships in the Culture Highlights section at the bottom of this page.

CONSULT
Meet with representatives to understand needs of the school/unit.

STRATEGIZE
Create an informed plan for ongoing culture improvement.

SUSTAIN
Support through touchpoints, training, and engagement opportunities.

ASSESS
Use sessions and data to create a picture of the current culture.

EXECUTE
Support achievement of the goals (i.e. connecting to resources within USC).

Culture Highlights
Last semester, we launched several culture-related initiatives, both through our School and Unit partnerships and on a USC-wide level. Below are a few examples of programs that helped integrate the Unifying Values into USC communities.

Culture in Action Week
A week of culture events that included 4 panels on Monday–Thursday to discuss how the Unifying Values are being integrated at the organizational level.

Values in Onboarding
Added a history of the USC Culture Journey and Unifying Values learning into New Employee Orientation.

CommUNITY Day
In partnership with the School of Dramatic Arts, this event featured an opening address from leadership, diversity and inclusion strategist, Dr Omekongo Dabinga. 176 people attended.

Values Check-Ins
University Advancement and USC Libraries have completed 7 Pilot Sessions to measure how the Unifying Values are being lived within their communities.

Culture Toolkits
The Office of Culture, Ethics and Compliance created 3 university-wide Culture toolkits to help the USC community facilitate conversations and explore the values.

Discussion Sessions
Supported schools and units like Viterbi School of Engineering to hold open discussion sessions on values and behaviors (8 sessions facilitated at Viterbi).
Looking Ahead

Culture Journey Strategic Priorities

As we continue our Culture Journey, we look forward to further building out our four Strategic Priorities: Create Community Impact, Expand the Culture Network, Build Strategic Partnerships, and Measure and Report on Change.

Create Community Impact

Continue to engage the USC community through the Working Group on University Culture, Focus Areas on Culture, Culture Council, and USC-wide events.

• Creating and sustaining a meaningful governance structure that reinforces USC’s commitment to culture change.
• Undertaking strategic initiatives that impact our community (staff, faculty, and students).
• Establishing regular conversations and touchpoints with the community to solicit ongoing input for the Culture Journey.
• Hosting USC-wide speakers, panels and discussions to keep USC culture front of mind.

Build Strategic Partnerships

Continue to build and nurture strategic partnerships with senior leaders, schools, units, and other USC organizations.

• Connecting USC organizations to resources that exist within the network.
• Equipping USC organizations with more tools to help locate areas of challenge and strategize next steps.
• Partnering with USC organizations to create roadmaps for achieving culture-related goals.
• Highlighting local culture initiatives and inspiring a collaborative mindset.
• Leading and coordinating key projects.

Expand the Culture Network

Increase the number of Culture Network Members and Partners to expand the reach of the Culture Journey.

• Offering more trainings to equip Culture Network members with skills to support the Culture Journey.
• Completing a survey, analysis, and restructure of the Culture Network to meet the needs of the Culture Journey.
• Continuing to grow the Culture Network to build deeper connections to the community.

Measure and Report on Change

Build a system for regularly measuring and reporting on culture change in collaboration with our Working Group on University Culture.

• Assembling sub-committees to develop an approach to reporting on and measuring culture change.
• Developing the plan for measuring and reporting on culture with input from the USC community.
• Preparing regular updates for our community.
• Deploying tools that allow us to manage our data more effectively.
How You Can Facilitate Culture Change

Actively Listen & Communicate
Check out USC’s Center for Excellence in Teaching for online teaching pedagogy and tips for open communication.

Lead with Values and Honesty
Identify a mentor within your unit or someone you can seek advice from during a difficult situation. Consider setting up regular meetings with them to connect and follow up.

Create Care
Hold a Lunch & Learn session with Campus Well-being & Education, and raise awareness of critical well-being resources available for your school/unit.

Engage Differences as Strengths
Get to know your Diversity Liaison and any initiatives that are happening in your school or unit. If you don’t have one, talk with your supervisor or department head about what it would take to have a Diversity Liaison.

Take Responsibility
The Kortschak Center for Learning and Creativity offers resources that can help with accountability. Visit their “Goal Setting” page and learn how to make SMART Goals.

Better Ourselves
Recognize a colleague who you have seen demonstrating Excellence, or any of the other Unifying Values, using Top Notch Trojan or fill out a Values Recognition Card.

How You Can Stay Involved

JOIN
Join the USC Culture Journey partners at partnerforculturechange@usc.edu for monthly newsletters and events.

ATTEND
Attend our Culture Journey Events — and encourage others to do the same.

DOWNLOAD TOOLKITS
Download toolkits that you can use to help embed our values in your day-to-day experience.

Additional Resources

- Culture Journey Website
- Schedule a Consultation
- Replays of Culture Events
- USC Integrity and Accountability Code

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