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Counselor News

Quarterly Updates for Guidance Counselors Summer 2008



USC's *Visions & Voices* program brings
the arts & humanities into all students' lives.

Q&A with Dennis Cornell

Dennis Cornell is the Chief of Protocol and the Associate Senior Vice President of University Relations at USC. He oversees Visions and Voices: the USC Arts and Humanities Initiative, a cultural program for all USC students.

Please tell us a bit about your background, and how you came to be in this unique position.

It's a progression that all started with theatre. I first came to USC in 1979 as a graduate student in the School of Theatre. After graduation, I worked for the Center Theatre Group, gravitated toward casting, eventually became vice president of casting for Norman Lear, then took on executive positions at Columbia Pictures and Sony Television. For a change of pace, I returned to USC as a visiting Associate Professor, became Managing Director of the School of Theatre, and moved on to head up University Events. The Chief of Protocol role was created to designate an official "host" for the University, as well as place someone in charge of unifying the look and feel of all the special events around campus. Gradually, arts and culture were added to my oversight. One way to think of my role is as an executive producer on a television show. So many talented people work for me and help make things happen.

How did the Arts and Humanities Initiative begin at USC?

When the university reached its 125th Anniversary, we needed to come up with a plan that focused on the strengths of each school but could highlight the leadership and reputation of USC as a whole. It was decided to create an umbrella program under which all the various schools and academic units would fit. During this time, our new Provost, Max Nikias, arrived. Though he's an engineer by training, he focused his inaugural remarks on the cultural aspects of the university. As he put it, while the sciences and technology are a means to an end, the arts and humanities are an end in and of themselves.

How did the *Vision and Voices* program get its start?

The Provost wanted to make arts and humanities part of the daily lives of our students. USC had been going through a sea change in terms of its students. It was no longer the regional university it had once been – we were admitting more than half of our students from outside of California. With a national, and international, perspective, these students were clamoring for arts and humanities events. Our goal was not to have theatre students attend theatrical events or engineering students attend robotic demonstrations, but rather to expose students from one school to events initiated by a different school. After we came up with the concept, the Provost gave us three years to make it work. But by the first year, *Vision and Voices* was hugely successful, with twenty thousand students attending events that often had long wait lists and standing room only.

Aside from this cross-fertilization, what's so special about *Visions and Voices*?

Don't many universities have campus cultural programs?

What's unusual about *Visions and Voices* is that we don't sell tickets to the public. We offer these events free and only to students. If an event doesn't fill up, then we allow faculty and staff to attend. Also, these events are not merely entertainment. Each one incorporates some kind of reflective component. So, *Visions and Voices* offers not only the exciting experience of seeing the event, but it allows our students to engage in a dialogue, or even a debate, with the person behind the event, whether that be an artist, a director or philosopher,

continued on next page

Conversation with Dennis Cornell, *continued from page 1*

Is there a particular programming goal in mind?

We try to be really inclusive and have events from across the board – architecture, cinema, theatre, music, literature, science, you name it. We generally want to avoid having an overarching theme because that would control things too much, though sometimes there are obvious opportunities, like our 125th anniversary theme: Inventing the Future. This year's Parent's Weekend also has the theme, "USC Going Global," focusing on USC's international students and initiatives, such as our effort to be environmentally sensitive as a university, global warming, and our many overseas programs.

There are over 80 *Visions and Voices* events in the course of the year.

How do these programs get developed?

It's a rich mix. Approximately 100 faculty members submit proposals for events, each with a related reflective component and budget. Added to that is a series called "Dean's Events" with a minimum of two events that come from each Dean's own area of expertise. There's also the President's Distinguished Artist and Lecture Series, which last year featured television journalist and book author, Tom Brokaw, and the historian, David McCullough, as well as Yo Yo Ma and Itzak Perlman. And the program is capped with some Signature Events. The first occurs during incoming freshman week and is known as "Spark!" where we have DJs, dance performances, a def-poetry national champion, and films made by students. Luminaries participate in these – last year, for example, we had Spike Lee and Lily Tomlin. This coming year, we have the Trey MacIntyre Dance Group and the author, David Sedaris.

Do you hold all the *Visions and Voices* events on the USC campus?

Actually, we run 16-20 events annually off campus. Some examples last year included taking our students to see the opera, "Otello," to visiting the Bergamot Station group of art galleries, and going to the musical, "Avenue Q." These trips are extremely popular, so students apply through a lottery. We bus the students and provide them with food. Each of these external events includes a reflective component with a faculty member and one of the artists.

How do you measure the success of the *Visions and Voices* programs?

In terms of numbers, as I mentioned, last year, overall attendance at *Vision and Voices* events topped 20,000 students; we're anticipating that this year's program will have attracted more than 30,000 students. We get feedback through regular surveys, and were especially gratified to find that of those who attended an event for the first time, 95% said they would be happy to attend a *Visions and Voices* event again. And remember, this program has nothing to do with the coursework that students take toward their degrees.

But apart from the statistics, what I vividly remember are moments such as a freshman girl from Kansas standing up during one discussion and saying, "I would never see this in Kansas. I am completely overwhelmed by an evening like this." And that's what we're trying to do, create a special experience for our students. If we can get students thinking about who they are in the context of society and at the same time develop the next audience for culture and the arts in this country, then that is a huge achievement that I personally find emotionally satisfying and tremendously rewarding.

A line-up any student would love!

According to Daria Yudacufski, Managing Director of the Arts and Humanities Initiative, USC students have truly embraced *Visions and Voices*. Whether inspired by the event with award-winning journalist Ira Glass or by an event on the Rwandan genocide, the programs have had a major impact on the way students look at and experience the world. In 2008–09, students will continue to be inspired by the arts and humanities with approximately 100 events offered, including David Sedaris, the Tokyo Quartet, an animation festival, a Rolling Stones film festival, a concert of South African music, and much more.

*"Life is short,
but Art is long."*

– Hippocrates

*"Art teaches
nothing, except
the significance
of life."*

– Henry Miller

Arts, Culture, Action!

New art stops for your Los Angeles itinerary

Students planning their visit to LA will find a profusion of cultural possibilities. Especially noteworthy is the just-opened Broad Contemporary Art Museum, a vibrant addition to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art designed by architect Renzo Piano, where one of the most exciting contemporary collections anywhere is currently on display.

A great resource for travel planning is

<http://www.experiencla.com/> – the City's official site that lists all types of cultural events from theater, street festivals, visual arts, dance and music; plus walking tours and "adventures" that take you to over 20 of the most colorful sections of the city – including the Figueroa Cultural Corridor that is, literally, on USC's doorstep.



A Word From Our Students – *Artists in Action*

How does life at USC foster the development of students who choose to focus on the arts? We asked some students at several of our creative schools studying the arts at USC to describe their experiences.

Andrew Marshal

Senior from Walnut Creek, CA, majoring in Animation and Digital Art, School of Cinematic Arts.

I always considered USC to be the ultimate in film schools – it has a rich history, alumni like George Lucas and Robert Zemeckis, and the location is perfect – close to Burbank and Hollywood. When I visited, I saw that the campus is like a mini studio, with every production element right there – sound stages for filming and music scoring, a post production building for editing, animation labs with every software program you need, even a center for digital arts right across the street and USC's fully outfitted TV station.

I was hoping to find a lot of creative people who would expand my mind and take me to a higher level, and that's exactly what happened. In my third year, they introduced a new major in Animation and Digital Art, which is perfect since my goal is to become a director of animated films. There are only seven students in my major, and we've become very close. We'll keep in touch as friends and also be working together throughout our careers. The program gives students the most hands on experience possible, getting us internships, making connections and showcasing our films.

I'm now making my thesis film, working with a budget, hiring talent from around campus: voice actors from the Theatre School, composers and musicians from the Thornton school. It's a very collaborative process, and seeing it all come together is incredible.

Carrell Hambrick

Freshman from Alpharetta, Georgia, majoring in Fine Arts, emphasizing in sculpture, Roski School of Fine Arts

While I looked at a couple of art schools, I didn't consider them too seriously, as I thought it would inform my art better to be at a university with a diverse community. I have a lot of interests outside of art – for example, where else could I also have joined the surf club?

The main thing that attracted me to USC was the push to diversify one's education, a true liberal arts approach. They are very supportive of having double majors and minors; I plan to minor in philosophy or a language. The art department also has far more programs than I expected. It's easy to make friends, and you feel a very strong sense of community. I've gotten to know my professors, who are really experienced and active in the art world, so they know about happenings and gallery openings. Plus, we are always hearing about opportunities to exhibit and internships that are available through alumni and other connections. It's amazing how many things there are in LA – lots of great museums and galleries, and you are truly immersed. I've really appreciated the chance to hear artists who've come on campus to share their experiences and how they have developed their work.

While I'm still not sure of the exact direction my career will take, I know I will have a well rounded education, and I believe I will have lots of great choices.

Jake Bloch

Freshman from Santa Monica, California, majoring in Jazz Studies, emphasis on Drum Set, Thornton School of Music

I've been playing music for a very long time – in fact I gave up a social life in high school to invest a lot of time and energy in the jazz trio I had outside of school, starting our own label, producing an album and ending up by touring Japan. I looked at some music colleges, but really wanted a college life and a broader education, which is difficult to get at a conservatory.

Our department is very group oriented – they make sure to mix us up so everyone plays with everyone, and you find the people at your level. We have a staff person who is really good about letting us know about performing opportunities – we all do outside gigs, in addition to performing at the campus coffee shop. I also teach lessons, am doing an internship at Sony, and have even gotten my pilot's license. What has been especially exciting for me is meeting new, talented musicians. The students who get selected to come here are on the same page about music. As a result, you develop good musical bonds and lifetime friends. My favorite thing about USC is college life – the dorms, the friends, the independence and the broad, broad education. You never know where life is going to take you, and you need to be prepared for anything.

Mark Niu

2nd year student in Master of Professional Writing program, from Overland Park, Kansas, majoring in screenwriting and playwriting.

After several years of being a journalist, I wanted to do something more creative. I wasn't sure if I would be better at writing books, screenplays or sitcom episodes, so I wanted the most flexibility to discover what I could do best. The MPW program was a perfect fit since it is so unusual, one of the very few writing programs in the nation that is multi-disciplinary.

I had pictured USC as a private little campus off in its own little world and I didn't expect to find so many different kinds of people, and a school that is so embedded in the pulse of the city. It's been an amazing experience, especially when you go to class and have people read your work for the first time. Playwriting is something I didn't expect to fall into, but it turns out that the highlight of my time at USC has been a chance to have my play performed in the annual One Act Play Festival. Every year, four student submissions are selected, and each winner gets the real world experience of working and collaborating with a professional director, attending actor auditions and rehearsals, and having their work performed in a 250-seat theater to a sold out audience.

I've found, in learning different writing disciplines, that each one helps you get better at the others. And since everything is fickle in the writing industry, if you know how to do different things, not just screenwriting, but also playwriting, fiction, and even poetry, it overall gives you a better chance at surviving as a professional writer.

Internships with a Future – Opportunities in the Creative Fields

One of USC's fundamental goals is to prepare students to make a difference in their chosen professions, and our location in a world arts and entertainment capital enables us to provide unparalleled real world experiences. Beyond the storied "Trojan Network" of well-placed alumni who mentor and assist students in launching their careers, each creative school actively arranges internships and work opportunities for its students. A few notable examples:

The School of Architecture partners with many of the best architecture firms in the region to provide up to 20% of the fourth-year design class with paid internships.

The **School of Cinematic Arts** maintains a password-protected online Job Board with connections to internships at entertainment companies and talent agencies in areas such as script development, film and video production.

Fine arts majors at the **Roski School of Arts** can take a for-credit

internship course with placements in museums or the gallery world, or serve as assistants to working artists. They can also experience having their own shows, at the Helen Lindhurst Fine Arts Gallery.

The **Thornton School of Music** schedules numerous concerts for its twelve performing groups. A staff member serves as a clearinghouse, and connects students to paying performance jobs throughout the region. Music tracks produced by student artists are also offered for sale through the Trojan Bookstore.

The **Theatre School** has a long-standing partnership with the Center Theatre Group, the region's premier theatrical company, which operates The Mark Taper Forum, Ahmanson and Kirk Douglas Theatres. They offer internships in casting, press, management, physical production and other departments. Students can post their "head shots" on a password-protected casting site for viewing by entertainment industry professionals as well as fellow student filmmakers, from USC's School of Cinematic Arts.

Where Creativity Flourishes – USC’s Arts Schools

USC’s arts schools are numerous and grant a wide variety of degrees in their respective fields. As an overview, here’s a listing of these schools along with the undergraduate degrees offered. Each of these schools also has a graduate program that supplies

advanced courses, textures, and students to the mix. To determine specific deadlines and portfolio or audition requirements for applying to each school, please check their respective web pages.

School Name	Degrees and Programs Offered
School of Architecture	Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Science in Architectural Studies, Bachelor of Landscape Architecture <i>Minors</i> In Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Neighborhood Studies; Semesters Abroad For more info: http://arch.usc.edu
School of Cinematic Arts	Bachelors of Arts in Critical Studies, Animation and Digital Arts, Cinema and Television Production, Interactive Entertainment, Writing for Screen and Television <i>Minors</i> in Animation and Digital Arts, Cinema and Television, Screenwriting, Cinema and Television for the Health Professions, Performing Arts Studies, 2-D Art for Games, 3-D Art for Games, 3-D Animation, Video Game Design and Management For more info: http://cinema.usc.edu
Roski School of Fine Arts	Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Arts in studio arts <i>Minors</i> in Communication Design, Digital Media-based Imaging, Drawing, Painting, Photography, Sculpture, Two Dimensional Studies, 2-D Art for Games, 3-D Art for Games, 2-D Animation For more info: http://roski.usc.edu
Thornton School of Music	Bachelors of Music in Composition, Jazz Studies, Jazz Studies (Vocal), Music Education, Performance (any of the following: Classical Guitar, Studio Guitar, Piano, Organ, Violin, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, Harp, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Saxophone, French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba, Percussion), Vocal Arts, Music Industry, Bachelors of Science in Music Industry, and Bachelor of Arts in Music <i>Minors</i> in Jazz Studies, Music Industry, Music Recording, Musical Studies, Musical Theatre, and Performing Arts Studies For more info: http://usc.edu/music
School of Theatre	Bachelor of Arts in Theatre; Bachelor of Fine Arts with emphases in Acting, Design, Stage Management, Technical Direction <i>Minors</i> in Applied Theatre Arts, Applied Theatre Arts/Education, Theatre, Dance, Musical Theatre, Performing Arts Studies, Playwriting For more info: http://theatre.usc.edu

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up."

– Pablo Picasso

In the Best of Company

Can a USC education lead to a successful career in the arts?

We think so, and are proud of all our alumni, who can be found at the top of virtually every profession in the arts and entertainment world. A few you may have heard of include:

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Judd Apatow, writer-director | Ron Howard, writer-director | Michael Tilson Thomas, conductor |
| LeVar Burton, actor | George Lucas, director | John Wayne, actor |
| Richard Cook, Chairman,
Walt Disney Studios | Thom Mayne, architect | Forest Whitaker, actor |
| Peter Erskine, jazz drummer | Sam Peckinpah, director | Robert Yeoman, cinematographer |
| Frank Gehry, architect | Shonda Rhimes, producer | Robert Zemeckis, writer-director |
| | John Ritter, actor | |

A Tantalizing Taste of College Life –

Summer Programs for High School Students

For high school students, the opportunity to attend a summer program on a college campus can be a motivational, even life-changing experience. It's invaluable in many ways. Not only do students get the opportunity to make new friends with similar interests from around the country and perhaps discover a field of study that ignites their passion, but it also helps make "college life" real, leading to personal insights that will be crucial in determining what to look for when it comes time to find their best college match.

USC offers a wealth of summer seminars and programs, and our spacious, tree-filled campus is an ideal setting for a summer experience, not to mention the additional advantages of great weather, and easy access to Southern California's beaches, culture, and recreation spots. Each summer, we welcome nearly 500 students who will be entering 11th or 12th grade, from around the country and the world, to stay in our residence halls for up to four weeks and work in small groups with our best educators. Admission to these programs is offered on a rolling basis (first come, first served), and financial aid is available. Among the creative-themed seminars are acting workshops, basic animation, exploring entrepreneurship, an introduction to photography, introduction to video game design, introduction to art photography, digital and traditional methods for painting, playwriting, screenwriting, and numerous others. For full information go to <http://www.usc.edu/summer>

Here's a quick look at our most popular programs:

■ **Exploration of Architecture** – offered through the School of Architecture as either a two or four week course (the 4-week course earns college credit), this seminar provides an intensive in-depth

introduction for students who are considering entering college to study architecture. Activities include studio work, projects, and tours of world renowned Los Angeles architectural highlights.

■ **Art: A Studio Experience** – offered through the USC Roski School of Fine Arts, students in this month-long program take intensive studio courses that teach art techniques, art theory, and the practicalities of portfolio presentation. Field trips to many well-known art locales are also part of the mix, including the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Eli Broad Foundation Art Collection. Summer ends with an exhibition at the Lindhurst Fine Arts Gallery on the USC campus.

■ **Discover Engineering** – Students use the abundant resources of USC's Viterbi School of Engineering to learn about the possibilities in engineering – including aerospace, biomedical, chemical, civil, environmental, industrial, systems, and mechanical engineering. Activities involve hands-on assignments and industry field trips. Since it's often difficult to get a clear idea of what engineering is really like while in high school, this course can truly open doors for students.

■ **Science Camp for High School Women** – offered at USC's satellite campus, the Phillip K. Wrigley Marine Science Center on Catalina Island, approximately 20 miles off the coast of Los Angeles. A state-of-the-art laboratory allows students to examine both marine and terrestrial life. Physical, chemical, and biological components of island life are studied, creating a well-rounded view of its ecosystem. Discussions about diverse careers in environmental, biological, and physical sciences allow potential future scientists to learn about career paths.

Some Summer advice for a smoother Fall – *from our students to yours!*

When we ask our entering Freshmen what they would do differently about applying to college if they had to do it again, one of the most frequent answers we get is: "I would have started on my application essays over the summer." Even a little time spent thinking about the questions over the course of a summer can lead to deeper insights and a much less stressful fall. So, for those who want to take advantage of this hard-won wisdom, following are the three essay topics on this Fall's application:

(Choose one for a 500-700 word essay)

■ The 18th-century French philosopher Denis Diderot said, "Only passions, great passions, can elevate the soul to great things."

Describe one of your passions and discuss its contribution to your personal growth.

■ Thomas Edison failed many times before successfully inventing the modern electric light bulb. He said, "If I find 10,000 ways something won't work, I haven't failed. I am not discouraged, because every wrong attempt discarded is another step forward." Reflect on an accomplishment you achieved in an unlikely way.

■ Newton's First Law of Motion states that an object in motion tends to stay in motion in the same direction unless acted upon by an external force. Tell us about an external influence (a person, an event, etc.) that affected you and how it caused you to change direction.

USC Office of Admission –

Summer contact information

Office of Admission and Financial Aid Counseling Center phone (213) 740-1111 fax (213) 821-0200

Campus Visits for scheduling campus tours or information sessions, visit <http://www.usc.edu/visitusc>

Counselor News

Quarterly News for Guidance Counselors Summer 2008

Do we have your correct information?
If not, please e-mail us at scounsel@usc.edu

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

Counselor News *Quarterly Updates for Guidance Counselors*

USC's Codes

ACT Code: 0470
Used for sending ACT scores

CEEB Code: 4852
Used for PROFILE Application and SAT scores

Federal School Code: 001328
Used for FAFSA application



Reflections on Admission

- Tim Brunold, Associate Dean and Director
of Undergraduate Admission

As I complete another year, I am constantly reminded of what an art the admission process is, and the great responsibility that has been entrusted to all of us in higher education. What's truly remarkable is that the process is taken so seriously, and virtually everyone involved is driven by a common goal: to find a place where each young person can develop his or her unique talents and prepare for a successful future. It is indeed a challenging process, but the results are greatly rewarding. In our case, USC was more popular this year than ever. We received a record 35,800 freshman applications for 2,600 spaces in our fall 2008 freshman class. This year's extreme selectivity was bittersweet, since we had to turn away thousands of very able students. Another factor contributing to in this year's lowest ever, 21% admission rate, was our desire to enroll fewer freshmen in the fall, to assure that those who become Trojans will receive a level of education and college experience that is unsurpassed in the world. Early indications suggest that our enrolled class will be the most diverse and accomplished we've ever had join us – which is also a tribute to the work you do. So, have a well-deserved summer break, and if your travels bring you to Los Angeles, be sure to give us a call.

Important Dates

May 16 Commencement –
congratulations class of 2008!

July 6 - August 7
High School Summer programs

August 20 Move in Day

August 25 Fall classes begin

October 15
Fall 2009 Part I Application Due

December 1
Fall 2009 Scholarship Application

*A college
isn't a trophy –
it's a match.*