**Course Description and Overview**
Building a character is one of the fundamental skills required in an actor’s toolbox. Through exercises, reading, class discussion and especially in-class application, we will investigate and practice the many ways of building of a character for the stage and screen. This class is open to intermediate and advanced actors. Exceptions made at professor’s discretion.

**Learning Objectives**
The student/actor will learn historical context and perspective re: the idea of what a “character” is; and by the end of term the student will have a clear understanding and the beginning capability of building a character (emotionally, physically and mentally) for either a play or film as would be required of them in the professional world. The student will also investigate and practice subtext primarily through the works of Ibsen, Chekhov and Pinter.

**Prerequisite(s):** Beginning Acting
**Concurrent Enrollment:** none
**Recommended Preparation:** Performance experience.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials:**
**Books:**
*An Actor Prepares* : Constantin Stanislavski  
*True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor*: David Mamet

**Plays:**
*A Doll’s House* by Henrik Ibsen, [http://www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)  
*An Enemy of The People* by Henrik Ibsen  
*Ghosts* by Henrik Ibsen  
*Everyman*: [http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/everyman.asp](http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/everyman.asp)  
*The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov; [http://www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)  
*Uncle Vanya* by Anton Chekhov  
*Betrayal*: by Harold Pinter

**Articles:**
Commmedia dell’Arte: [http://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/genres/commedia-dellarte-iid-21363](http://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/genres/commedia-dellarte-iid-21363)
Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments
The class is a combination of lecture, in class exercises and participatory scene study.

Assignment Submission Policy
Written assignments shall be hard copy submitted or e-mailed to the teacher the day the assignment is due. Absolutely NO late papers accepted.

Additional Policies
Due to the participatory nature of this class, attendance at ALL classes is mandatory. Attendance will be considered when grading. Late assignments will be immediately reduced by 1 letter grade, unless prior arrangements have been made with the teacher. Cell phones, computers, pads, etc. shall only be used in class to access appropriate and pertinent information.

Grading:
The final course grade is determined according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>A (4) = 100-96</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>B+ (3.3) = 89-86</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B (3) = 85-84</td>
<td>84%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B- (2.7) = 83-80</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>C+ (2.3) = 79-76</td>
<td>76%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C (2) = 75-74</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C- (1.7) = 73-70</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>D (1.3-.7) = 69-60</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Failing</td>
<td>F (0) = 59 and below.</td>
<td>59%</td>
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Grading Scale for SDA: A indicates work of excellent quality; B of good quality; C of average quality; D of below average quality; and F indicates inadequate work.

Grading Breakdown

- There shall be no unexcused absences.
- No late assignments, projects, exams, papers, or exercised shall be accepted unless advance extensions have been arranged between the student and the teacher or unless exceptional circumstances occur.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character Observation #1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Character Observation #2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term: Character Observation #3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Solo Character Performance</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In class participation-discussion</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In class participation-rehearsals</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Performance: Scenes</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Written: Final Paper</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Week 1:
- Warm up: theater exercises and games
- Discuss and review the semester’s goals, requirements, deadlines
- Discuss the acquisition of all required texts and handouts, theater games and exercises
- Prototypes, Stereotypes and Archetypes
- Physical: Outside in-exercises in class
- Choose a deadly sin and perform in class.
- Read Everyman
- Read A Doll’s House
- Discuss history and context of Modern drama beginning with Ibsen.

Week 2-7:
- Warm up: theater exercises and games
- Discussion of reading(s)
- Scene work
- **Homework:** assigned reading, scene work

Week 8:
- Warm up: theater exercises and games
- Midterm presentation of character + written component
- Class feedback and constructive criticism of mid-term presentations
- **Homework:** read/memorize individual sonnet/monologue

Week 9-15:
- Warm up: theater exercises and games
- Discussion of reading(s)
- Scene work
- **Homework:** assigned reading, scene work

Final Day of Class:
Thursday May 1st, 2014 and DUE DATE for the written critique of a production (**No late papers accepted**).

**Important dates:**
- Spring Recess: Mon-Sat March 17-22
- Classes End: Friday May 1
- Study Days: Sat-Tue May 2-5
- Exams: Wed May 13: 8-10 AM

**Building characters with subtext: The rest of your life**
Written Assignments:
Character Biography 1
Character Biography 2
Midterm: Character Biography 3
Final paper

Final Examination Date:
Wednesday, May 9th 8-10 AM

Statement for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP: http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Statement on Academic Integrity
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one’s own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another’s work as one’s own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, (www.usc.edu/scampus or http://scampus.usc.edu) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis
In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

Additional Notes:
  o Students must be in proper rehearsal attire at the start of class promptly at 8AM.
  o No food or drinks allowed in class. (Water is allowed and encouraged.)