**USC**School of Dramatic Arts

**THTR 316: Advanced Movement for Actors**

**Spring 2016—Monday/Wednesday — 10:30-11:50pm**

**Location:** PED 202

**Instructor: Louise Peacock**

**Office:** JEF 202

**Office Hours:** Mondays 2 – 3pm

**Contact Info:** lpeacock@usc.edu

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**Course Description and Overview**

This module will introduce students to the techniques of theatre clown performance. We will explore the importance of key techniques such as ‘pleasure to be in the moment’, ‘accepting failure’, ‘complicité’, ‘focus’, ‘status’ and ‘improvising’. Students will develop their own clown persona and will have the opportunity to experiment with and develop skills in clown devising and clown scene creation.

**Learning Objectives**

* **To develop a clown persona**
* **To learn to deploy clown techniques such as complicité, play, looks and drops.**
* **To develop the ability to play in the moment with an audience**
* **To improvise, devise and develop short pieces of clown theatre**

**Prerequisite(s):** THTR 216

**Co-Requisite (s):** N/A

**Concurrent Enrollment:** N/A

**Recommended Preparation**:

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

Handouts will be given in class as necessary

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| **Week** | **First Class** | **Second Class** |
| 1 | The Importance of Play and Pleasure to be | Complicité |
| 2 | No Class – Martin Luther King’s Birthday | Accepting Failure |
| 3 | Finding your Clown Persona | Finding your Costume |
| 4 | Finding games and reinforcing pleasure to be | Presenting your clown (assessed) |
| 5 | Working with props and Developing your persona | Solo Improvisation (assessed) |
| 6 | No Class – Presidents’ Day |  |
| 7 | Looks and Drops  (Cat and Mouse) | Looks and Drops  (Samurai) |
| 8 | Focus and Upstaging | Status |

**Outside of class mid-term individual meetings with instructor to be scheduled during weeks 8 and 9.**

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| **Week** | **First Class** | **Second Class** |
| 9 | Pathetic Clown | Open class |
| 10 | Improvisation: Park Bench | Improvisation: The Washing Machine |
| 11 | Duo Improvisation | Duo Improvisation |
| 12 | Duo Improvisation assessed presentation | Group Improvisation: Bus Stop |
| 13 | Boss Clown and status revisited | Working with music |
| 14 | Clown Fairy Tales | Group Improvisation Preparation |
| 15 | Group Improvisation Preparation | Group Improvisation Preparation |
| 16 | Group Improvisation Preparation | Clown Scene Assessed Presentation |

**Description of Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments**

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***Grades are not dictated* by the instructor’s subjective opinion of talent or artistic preference.**

***Grades are dictated by***

* **Constructive feedback on classmates’ clown work**
* **Willingness to play, to be in the moment and ability to apply clown techniques**
* **Willingness to experiment and apply the constructive feedback of instructor and students on one’s own process, clown persona and clown techniques**
* **Meeting all assignment deadlines: reading, writing, acting (No late work accepted)**
* **Preparedness for class (remembering red nose, any props and/or costume indicated by the instructor)**
* **Availability to fellow classmates to rehearse outside of class**

**Note: *If a student misses classroom rehearsal because of a partner’s unavailability to rehearse outside class, the available partner will not be penalized as long as a discussion with me and all involved occurs before the deadline. Otherwise everyone will be held equally accountable*.**

***Grading Scale for SDA:***

**Excellent: A (4) = 100-96 A- (3.7) = 95-90**

**Good: B+ (3.3) = 89-86 B (3) = 85-84 B- (2.7) = 83-80**

**Average: C+ (2.3) = 79-76 C (2) = 75-74 C- (1.7) = 73-70**

**Poor: D (.7-1.3) = 60’s**

**Failing: F (0) = 59 and below**

**A = work of excellent quality; clear understanding of class material coupled with original and creative insight**

**B = good quality; class material has been understood clearly**

**C = average quality; class material generally understood, gaps in understanding remain**

**D = below average quality; identifiable gaps in the understanding of class material**

**F = inadequate work; gaps in completion of work, poor understanding of class material**

**Further Grading Notes:**

***When the GPA falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class have been excellent or good and toward the negative end of the scale for those with average or poor attendance and participation.***

***If your work in class is unsatisfactory, you will be warned before the deadline for dropping the course with a grade of W. I will be happy to discuss your work at any time.***

**Grading Points:**

**In class presentation of your clown………………………………… 10 points**

**Solo Improvisation…………………………………………………. 15 points**

**Duo Improvisation…………………………………………………. 15 points**

**Written Commentary on Solo and Duo Improvisation …………. 10 points**

**Clown Scene ………………………………………………………. 25 points**

**Cumulative Active Class Participation ……………………………. 15 points**

**Final Exam: Written commentary on Clown Scene ……………… 10 points**

**TOTAL……………100 points**

**The Final Examination takes place on May 9th 8am – 10am**

**Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences.  Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards<https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>.  Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable.  See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university.  You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>.  This is important for the safety whole USC community.  Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person.  *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

## **Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing.  Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more.  Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html>provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.  If an officially  declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* [*http://emergency.usc.edu/*](http://emergency.usc.edu/)will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.