

## **Syllabus CTPR 464 Directing for Television**

MONDAYS 1PM- 4 PM PM RZC Studio D/E

Fridays 2-11 PM (Feb 16, March 23 & April 20)

Instructor: Laura James (laurajamesnow@gmail.com // 323-546-9122)

SA: Jordan Litt

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

This is a 15-week course in Directing the Comedy Sketch Show using the techniques of live multi camera television. Sketches are written by the writing class and acted by the acting class, same for the short comedic pre-shot interstitial films. The Sketch Comedy class will work with Trojan Vision students to create 3 live shows to air on Friday evenings in front of a live audience. Directors will be assigned sketches each week and will rehearse sketches with actors. Sketches will be shown at the end of class for review and critique. Directors will work with actors as well as collaborate with the writers.

Students will learn the role of the director through prep, sketch/script analysis, production meetings, rehearsals and run thrus. Students are responsible for finalizing the details for each sketch in the live show including set design, set placement in studio, graphics, roll-ins for film shorts, props, costumes, and make-up.

The directorial role as production team leader and visionary is emphasized. To quote Beth Miller McCarthy, director of 218 episodes of Saturday Night Live: "The director is a facilitator and there is an art to making a sketch work on live television. You need the balance of covering it properly for the comedy and also, there is an art to the timing of cutting a comedy show live. The best thing that a director can do in that environment is to make it a place to work out the comedy, add where you can, and make sure that the timing and the cues live are perfectly precise."

INTERSTITIALS - Directors will also create at least one interstitial for the show to be assigned by the instructor.

LIVE SHOW FINAL CUT - Students will be assigned a live show to create a final cut. Students will clean up the edit and turn in a final cut to instructor.

### **GRADING:**

#### **25% Interstitial Project**

**15 % Show Day** - Preparation, collaborating, leadership skills. (5% per show)

Set up & Wrap Stage - Work with Bruce to set up and break down the stage.

Bring your edit

Students must bring a copy of their final marked show script (it is recommended that you use pencil and bring an eraser but it is not mandatory). Bring 2 extra copies for A copy of the final marked shooting script is to be submitted to the instructor on show night.

#### **60% Rehearsal & Run Thru**

Your grade will come from your ability to collaborate, communicate and creative story-telling abilities. Demonstrating your leadership skills. This includes preparation, your communication skills with actors on the crew.

15% Preparation - Sketch breakdown, character analysis

25% Vision, collaboration, communication and problem solving skills. Rehearsal efficiency and clarity and ingenuity. Taking notes.

20% Blocking, working with actors, making adjustments to sketches.

## Syllabus CTPR 464 Directing for Television

Be early! Be ready to go when class begins.

**Attendance is mandatory for each class & show.**

SCHEDULE (DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE):

CLASS/SHOW	DATE	CLASS DESCRIPTION
Class 1	MON 1/8	Orientation/class overview/find the joke/mark script Improv scenes with actors
<i>NO CLASS</i>	<i>1/15</i>	<i>Martin Luther King</i>
Class 2	MON 1/22	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 1
Class 3	MON 1/29	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 1
Class 4	MON 2/5	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 1
Class 5	MON 2/12	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 1
* <i>PRE-LIGHT</i>	* <i>SAT 2/10</i>	<i>PRE-LIGHT (Zemeckis)</i>
<b>SHOW #1</b>	<b>FRI 2/16</b>	<b>Blocking Rehearsal, Run Thru, Show #1</b>
<i>NO CLASS</i>	<i>2/19</i>	<i>Presidents Day</i>
Class 6	MON 2/26	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 2
Class 7	MON 3/5	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 2
<i>NO CLASS</i>	<i>3/12</i>	<i>SPRING BREAK</i>
Class 8	MON 3/19	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 2
<b>SHOW #2</b>	<b>FRI 3/23</b>	<b>Blocking Rehearsal, Run Thru, Show #2</b>
Class 9	MON 3/26	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 3
Class 10	MON 4/2	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 3
Class 11	MON 4/9	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 3
Class 12	MON 4/16	Table Read/Rehearsal/RunThru Sketches for Show 3
<b>SHOW #3</b>	<b>FRI 4/20</b>	<b>Blocking Rehearsal, Run Thru, Show #3</b>
Class 13	MON 4/23	

\* Students requested to attend

Recommended Viewing: watch episodes of SNL with the sound off in order to analyze how the scenes are blocked and which cameras are have the shot.

Recommended Reading: Directing the Sitcom: Joel Zwick's Steps for Success  
<https://www.amazon.com/Directing-Sitcom-Zwicks-Steps-Success/dp/1476665567>

## Syllabus CTPR 464 Directing for Television

### Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

#### 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](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/> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

#### Disruptive Student Behavior:

Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLEASE NOTE:</b> <b>FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX</b></p>
--