

Syllabus CTPR 499 Directing for Television

Sec _____ – WINTER 2017

MONDAYS

1PM- 4 PM PM RZC Studio D/E

Fridays 4-10 PM on March 3, March 31 and April 21.

Instructor: Mary Lou Belli

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: This is a 15-week course in Directing the Comedy Sketch Show using the techniques of live television. Formats for the scenes are multi-camera filmed sketches as well as short comedic pre-shot films developed and rehearsed in conjunction with a Sketch comedy writing class and Acting Class over the semester. This team of students along with Trojan Vision students will create 3 live shows to air on Friday evenings in front of a live audience.

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.”

Each student will also participate as a crew member to become familiar with the concepts of blocking for multiple cameras, video latitude limitations, live camera switching, camera coordination, composition for television, studio camera pedestal and controls, videotape recording, sound mixing, managing a stage, and managing a control room. In addition, the director will interact with the write or writing team on said scene modeling the Writer producer and Director interaction on network television sketch shows by directing at least one sketch as classroom work prior to the final 3 projects. The instructor will provide a short, simple scene at the beginning of the semester so that each student can practice directing predetermined shots and staging before being assigned their position for the 4 live shows. In addition, the director will learn the role of the director at a production meeting, 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.

GRADING: 60% (15% for demonstration scene, 25% for individual scenes, 20% for rehearsal and sketch run-thrus) of your grade will come from your creativity and story-telling abilities for your directing. This includes your script preparation, your communication skills with actors and the crew. The final 3 sketch comedy shows are the equivalent of a FINAL EXAM. The rest of the student’s grade is based on student’s performance as a crew member and ability to support the director from each position on the stage and in the control room. **Attendance is mandatory each class.**

A copy of the final marked shooting script is to be submitted to the instructor at the conclusion of your scene.

TOOLS: On your directing day of your first project, bring 5 pencil-marked copies of the script (for the instructor, the associate director, the stage manager, and yourself). pencils to mark shots and erasers are also necessary. Bring two (one is a spare) mini DV tapes to record your scene and VHS tapes to make copies for your actors as their reward for participating.

SCHEDULE: (DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

SCHEDULE:

Class 1	Jan 9	Orientation/find the joke/mark script
Class 2	Jan 16	NO CLASS
Class 3	Jan 23	Practice sketches with non-class actors.
Class 4	Jan 30	sketches for Show 1
Class 5	Feb 6	sketches for Show 1
Class 6	Feb 13	sketches for Show 1
Class 7	Feb 20	NO CLASS
Class 8	Feb 27	sketches for Show 1
SHOW 1	March 3	
Class 9	March 5	sketches for Show 2
SPRING BREAK	March 11-18	
Class 10	March 19	sketches for Show 2
Class 11	March 26	sketches for Show 2
SHOW 2	March 31	
Class 12	April 2	sketches for Show 3
Class 13	April 9	sketches for Show 3
Class 14	April 18	sketches for Show 3
SHOW 3	April 21	
Class 15	April 25	TBA

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 that the letter is delivered to the instructor 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. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Missing a project, incompletes: **The only acceptable excuses for missing either of your projects or taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency.** Students must inform the instructor before the project date and present verifiable evidence in order for a make-up date to be arranged if possible. Students who wish to take incompletes must also present documentation of the problem to the instructor or student assistant before final grades are due.

Academic Integrity: The School of Cinematic Arts expects the highest standards of academic excellence and ethical performance from USC students.

Instructor availability: The instructor is available anytime at (323) 309-7384
maryloubelli2@gmail.com. SA

Extracurricular recommendations: It is recommended that each student tivo or videotape and analyze a comparison of multi-camera situation comedy such as “Two and a Half Men” and “Everybody Loves Raymond” with a single camera situation comedy such as “30 Rock” or “Modern Family.”

Required reading: BOSSY PANTS

ALL directors are urged to attend casting IF available.