**USC School**

**of Dramatic Arts THTR 490 Directed Research**

**Medical Clowning II: Advanced Medical Clowning**

**Units: 2**

**Instructor: Zach Steel**

**Office:** JEF 209

**Office Hours:** Available by appointment

**Contact Info:** zsteel@usc.edu, cell: 347-546-0298

**Prerequisite – Medical Clowning I: Intro to Medical Clowning**

**Course Description**

This course further explores the practice of bringing clowns into places of healing (hospitals, trauma sites, etc.) for the purpose of improving the physical and mental well-being of those in need. Through observation of Medical Clowns engaging with patients, and subsequently, practicum in the hospital, students will be able to utilize the skills they have acquired and learn through immersion. This course would be appropriate for artists who want to put their Medical Clown studies to practice.

**Learning Objectives**

* To study and assess the impact of clowns in the hospital.
* To acclimate to the new and unique performing environment of a hospital.
* To develop and apply clown material to the student’s practice.
* To assess one’s own impact when intervening in various healing settings.
* To complete a research project based on your findings.

**Course Notes**

The practice of clowning in hospitals has become an international institution with research proving its efficacy in various health care settings. It provides children and adults alike with a sense of authority and control in a hospital environment that, by its nature, disempowers the patient. Medical Clowns have been shown to increase communication between the medical staff, children, and their caregivers; and to decrease tension and anxiety often resulting from physically intrusive procedures. They empower the patient by giving them full control of the situation in an environment where they otherwise might feel powerless. Art improves our quality of life, and Medical Clowning seeks, through a unique application of the discipline of the clown, to impact the children and the facilities that need it the most.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

**A packet will be provided which includes:**

-Still the Best Medicine, Even in a War Zone: My Work as a Medical Clown by **Amnon Raviv**

-The Life Threatened Child and the Life Enhancing Clown: Towards a Model of Therapeutic Clowning by **Donna Koller and Camilla Gryski**

-Clowns for the Prevention of Pre-operative Anxiety in Children: a randomized controlled trial by **G. Golan, P. Tighe, N. Dobija, A. Perel, I. Keidan**

-Humor in Hospice Care: Who, Where, and How Much? by **Kathleen N. Adamle, Ruth Ludwick**

-Laughing Through This Pain: Medical Clowning During Examination of Sexually Abused Children: An Innovative Approach by **Dafna Tefner, Rachel Lev-Wiesel, Nessia Lang Franco & Shoshi Ofir** from “Journal of Child Sexual Abuse.”

-Medical Clowning: Even Adults Deserve a Dream by **O. Nuttman-Shwartz, R. Scheyer, H. Tzioni** from “Social Work in Health Care.”

-A Qualitative Phenomenographic Study of the Experience of Parents with Children in Clown Care Services by **Amil Kusain Tan, Jr.**

**Grading Policy**

A work of excellent quality

B work of good quality

C work of average quality

D work of below average quality

E work of inadequate quality

**Your grade is assessed according to**

Hospital Work – 50%

Monthly Working and Self-Assessment Sessions – 15%

Shift Journal – 10%

Final – 25%

**Attendance, Tardiness, Absences**

No absences are permitted except in case of illness or emergency.

No lateness permitted.

Violation of these requirements will result in grade deductions.

**Course Schedule Breakdown**

Observation/Practicum

Each student will have a weekly three hour session at one of three hospitals: CHLA, LAC-USC, or Norris Cancer Center. There will be three phases to this session, each phase lasting approximately five weeks:

Phase 1 – Observation: The students observe Caitlyn Conlin and Zach Steel practicing Medical Clowning in the hospital.

Phase 2 – Guided Practice: The students are paired with either Caitlyn or Zach and they will practice together.

Phase 3 – Independent Practicum: The students will be paired with each other and discover and develop their own practice.

Monthly Working and Self-Assessment Sessions

* We will meet monthly as a group to discuss our experience and work on the craft. We will address needs and weaknesses of our practice and develop ways to improve.
* Mid-semester, Professor Steel will have a one on one with the students to guide them with their research and discuss the work in the hospitals.

**Assignments**

Shift Report Journal - Students will turn in a journal with an entry for every individual hospital session.

Research Paper – Based on their experience as a Medical Clown and their readings combined, they will produce a three - five page research based paper due at the end of the semester.

**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](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](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](http://equity.usc.edu/) or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety>.  This is important for the safety of the 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 [http://sarc.usc.edu](http://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.