INTRODUCTION TO MULTI-CAMERA PRODUCTION

Units: 2
Spring 2019
Tuesdays: 1:00PM-4:40PM
Location: RZC Stage A

Professor: Robert Schiller
Office: SCA 406
Office Hours: Thursday 9AM-12PM
By Appointment
Teaching Assistant: Derek Bosko
Contact Info: dbosko@usc.edu 323-712-0401
COURSE SUMMARY

This is a 15 week course focusing on the “How To” of multi-camera directing and production, more specifically the Situation Comedy or “Sitcom”, although all skills learned are applicable to all multi-camera productions including daytime drama, game shows, talk shows and news. We will cover the process of producing/directing one episode of a sitcom from pre-production through the live taping of the episode. All aspects of production will be covered including the roles of the assistant director, script supervisor, camera coordinator and audience switcher. This is not a “technical course”. Although students will be asked and expected to operate cameras, work in the control booth, and be involved in other technical aspects of production, the emphasis in this course is on the director his collaboration with crew and actors, and what is expected of him/her from the producers, the writers, and the network. Each student will have a year-end project which will consist of putting on tape one scene from either an existing or original sitcom. The scene must be at least five pages long, but no more than seven, and have some element of multiple characters.

LEARNING GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Though this course is modeled after a typical week of a sitcom production, using sitcom scheduling, sitcom scripts, sets, and shooting techniques, the over-arching purpose of this course is to prepare directors for the process of telling a comedic story in multi-camera, and how it differs for single camera. There will be an emphasis on considerations in staging actors for multi-camera and actual shooting technique. Professional actors will be brought in to challenge the student directors in all of these situations.

Each student, in their role as director, learns to hone their communication and leadership skills in a collaborative way on set, leading a creative team consisting of actors, assistant directors, associate directors, script supervisors, cameramen, lighting directors, control booth personnel.

At the end of this course, each student should be able to watch a sitcom with a whole new appreciation of just how much effort and skill goes in to producing these twenty-four minutes of television.

Instructors Statement

The multi-camera production/format is alive and well in MOST aspects of TV programming without us even realizing it. Though the emphasis and course work will focus primarily on the Situation Comedy, news, sports, game shows, daytime dramas and more specifically scripted live action, are enjoying a resurgence due mainly in part to Netflix, Apple TV and Amazon entering the original scripted series marketplace. There continues to be a robust job market providing young adult content by studios such as Disney and Nickelodeon.

It is the goal of this course to teach student directors the skills required in this genre of production, adapting your story telling skills to multi-camera, and in this huge job market...
not only of the director, but the other positions directly responsible for turning the “page” to the “screen”.

**Class Philosophy**

Hands on learning by doing, in a collaborative professional atmosphere. Learn how it takes a team and not an auteur, to make a production successful. High level of enthusiasm and participation is required.
Grading Breakdown
Including the above detailed assignments, how will students be graded overall? Participation should be no more than 15%, unless justified for a higher amount. All must total 100%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marked Scripts</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camera Blocking</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shooting</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Rehearsal</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Camera Blocking</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Shooting</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marked Booth Line Cut Script</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project Edited</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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PARTICIPATION is the engine of Group Learning. It is a crucial element in your grade. It includes commitment to the class, involvement with other students’ projects, helping them in its realization, exercising collaboration, engagement with the material and contribution to class discussion.

Grading Scale
Course final grades will be determined using the following scale
A       95-100
A-      90-94
B+      87-89
B       83-86
B-      80-82
C+      77-79
C       73-76
C-      70-72
D+      67-69
D       63-66
D-      60-62
F       59 and below
School of Dramatic Arts Actors:
You are strongly advised to cast students from USC School of Dramatic Arts when possible and appropriate. Students who have done so have found them to be well-trained professionals and reliable collaborators.

PRODUCTION NUMBERS - Your SA will work to obtain production numbers for class members. Delaying the SA’s efforts will earn a student a grading penalty equivalent to a late assignment.

Production Division Attendance Policy
Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. Two unexcused absences will result in a student's grade being lowered by one full letter (IE: A becomes B). A third unexcused absence will result in a student's grade being lowered by one, additional full letter (IE: B becomes C). A student's grade will be lowered by one full letter for each additional unexcused absence. Two late class arrivals equate to one full absence.

In order for an absence to be excused, the student must have approval from the professor and provide documentation at the next attended class session.

If a student misses class due to an emergency, the student must contact the professor prior to class or contact the Production Office at 213-740-3317.

Late Arrival:
15 minutes late constitutes an official late arrival. In cases where petty tardiness - i.e. of less that 15 minutes becomes chronic, I will give one "warning", and then I will assign penalties. Your SA will keep track of late arrivals.

Cell phones, tablets, lap tops:
I do not permit the use of cell phones on my professional sets, except in emergencies or usage directly related to the production or permissible promotion of the product.
I hold that same standard in my classroom. Cell phone usage during class is disrespectful to me, your fellow classmates, and the professional standards you are all striving for. If you use any of your devices for note taking or taking video of scenes, please inform me ahead of time. Violation of this policy is subject to a discretionary 5 point grade deduction.

Deadlines:
Missing deadlines is generally regarded as unacceptable in the Industry, and so it will be in this class. If you know ahead of time that unavoidable circumstances will the timely delivery of your work you must notify me immediately, and the circumstances must be documented. Only genuine "emergencies" beyond your control will be accepted.
Unexcused missed due dates will result in reduction of 1/2 of the point value for each full class period past the original due date.

**Unforeseen Circumstances:**

If you have life problems or circumstances that might affect your work, please let me know in advance. I want to be understanding and helpful if I can. See me to make arrangements for deadline extensions.

**Grading Feedback:**

You may ask me for feedback about how you are doing at any time. If I notice that a student is at risk of falling below a B, I will reach out and bring this to the student’s attention.

Be aware, however, that the majority of grade value is earned after mid-semester. This can make it difficult for me to give precise warnings early on. I urge you to take responsibility for your work and your grade and stay on top of things.

**Safety:**

All students are expected to abide by USC School of Cinematic Arts Safety Guidelines. Violations of any of the safety guidelines may result in disciplinary action ranging from confiscation of footage to expulsion from the University.

**Students with Disabilities:**

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are 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 the Instructor as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. The office is in Student Union 301, and their phone number is (213)740-0776.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Intro to Multi Camera - The “A B C and X’s” Anatomy of a Sitcom schedule View: “Disjointed” episode. Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Block scene for week 2.</td>
<td>Start looking for student project scene to shoot.</td>
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<td>Week 2</td>
<td>“Monday/Tuesday” (practice scene) Production Mtg Table Read Rehearse – Staging for Multi camera</td>
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<td>Assign Student Director Groups</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>“Wednesday” Rehearse-staging for multi camera</td>
<td>Mark script for camera blocking for week 4</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>“Thursday” Part 1 Directors Group A and crew team Camera Block</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>“Thursday” Part 2 Directors Group B and crew team Camera Block</td>
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<td>Student Project Directors Group A submit scene for approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>“Friday” Part 1 Directors Group A and crew team shoot</td>
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<td>Student Project Directors Group B submit scene for approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>“Friday” Part 2 Directors Group B and crew team shoot</td>
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<td>Student Project Directors Group C submit scene for approval</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>STUDENT PROJECTS Directors Group A and crew team rehearse</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>STUDENT PROJECTS Directors Group B and crew team rehearse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>STUDENT PROJECTS Directors Group A and crew team Camera Block scene</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>STUDENT PROJECTS Directors Group B and crew team Camera Block scene</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>STUDENT PROJECTS Directors Group C and crew team Camera Block scene</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>STUDENT PROJECTS Directors Group A and crew team Shoot scene</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>STUDENT PROJECTS Directors Group B and crew team Shoot scene</td>
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**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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

**Support Systems:**

**Student Health Counseling Services** - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

**Student Health Leave Coordinator** – 213-821-4710
Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed. https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

**Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)** - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

**Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX** - (213) 740-5086 equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

**Bias Assessment Response and Support** - (213) 740-2421

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**Week 15**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STUDENT PROJECTS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Directors Group C and crew team Shoot scene</td>
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**FINAL**

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<tr>
<th><strong>Student Project Screenings</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Date: For the date and time of the final for this class, consult the USC Schedule of Classes at classes.usc.edu/.</td>
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studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710
studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Diversity and Inclusion
Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation or violence against person or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu. You can also report discrimination based on a protected class here https://equity.usc.edu/harassment-or-discrimination/

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.

PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX