Course Description:
Basic principles and techniques of acting through structured improvisation and Introduction to activating text.

Course Objective:
To unleash your unique, expressive artistic voice by developing your acting instrument.

Course Outcomes:
I. You will acquire skills needed to play within an ensemble
   i. Building an environment of trust where risks/ mistakes are embraced
   ii. Developing skills to work respectfully and collaboratively
   iii. Giving constructive input by witnessing the work of others

II. Revealing your unique artistic voice by:
   i. Accessing your own personal back story
   ii. Opening and deepening yourself awareness and point of view
   iii. Working off impulse
   iv. allowing the work to be uncensored
   v. Reawakening sense of “play” through the imagination

INSTRUCTOR: Kenneth Noel Mitchell
TITLE: Professor of Theatre Practice/Head of Music Theatre
OFFICE: DRC Building
OFFICE HRS: By appointment
CONTACT: knm@usc.edu
(727) 403-8316 (c)
vi. Identifying and Removing blocks to access and deepen your emotional availability and range
vii. You will be introduced to skills that will allow you to personalize the inherent humanity of the character

III. To become fully available to the other by:
   i. Developing your senses to expand your awareness of environment
   ii. Giving, receiving and needing the other
   iii. Increasing listening skills

IV. To live truthfully under Imaginary by committing to the reality of doing by:
   i. Identifying and pursuing action
   ii. Investing into physical action
   iii. Working specifically and playing moment to moment

V. You will begin to develop the skill to live privately in public by:
   i. Identifying and building the ENVIRONMENT thru status
   ii. Building a relationship
   iii. Object exercises

VI. Preparing to go on stage:
   i. Developing a warm up routine by:
   ii. Identifying the moment before
   iii. Developing your character’s:
   iv. Physical preparation
   v. Vocal preparation
   vi. Emotional preparation

Recommended Preparation: The Artist Way By Julia Cameron
Required Reading: A Book on acting that will be assigned at Midterm time.

ATTENDANCE:

Absences/Tardiness:
Learning in class depends on the layering of intellectual and emotional discovery resulting from the consistent active exploration of 100% of the BA 101 Ensemble. No absences or tardies are allowed. Cumulative active class participation points will be lost. Attendance is weighted at no more than 15% as per University Guidelines.

GRADING POLICY:

Grades are not dictated by the success of acting presentations, the instructor’s subjective opinion of talent, or artistic preference.

Grades are dictated by

- In-class active student analysis of text
- Constructive feedback of classmates’ acting presentations
- Willingness to experiment and apply the constructive feedback of instructor and students
- on one’s own scenes, presentations, and exercises
- Meeting all assignment deadlines: reading, writing, acting
- Memorization of lines
- Availability to fellow classmates to rehearse and outside class rehearsal with ensemble

Note: If a deadline is missed because of a classmate’s unavailability, the available partner/s will not be penalized if a discussion with me and all involved occurs before the deadline.

Grading Point Breakdown:

Professional behavior 15 points
Professional behavior in the theatre is defined as a form of etiquette in the Classroom/Rehearsal Hall/Studio that is linked primarily to respectful and courteous conduct. Being conscious of how you treat company members and teachers, and ensuring a positive workplace attitude can help you to improve your productivity and effectiveness in the workplace. This includes but not limited to: arriving to class on time, prepared, focused, receiving feedback, collaboration and a generosity of spirit.

Skill Acquisition & Overall Growth 10 points
Skill Acquisition - To succeed in this course you must make a personal connection to the material, taking the focus off yourself and putting it on the other and the ability to identify and pursue an objective actively and with variety.
Overall Growth – You will be expected to achieve a level of comprehension and
implementation of the skills required in this course and exhibit growth with the talents and abilities that are uniquely yours.

**Repetition & Rehearsal logs** 15 points
These logs are turned as a documentation of your process and your ability to reflect upon the work.

**MID-TERM (Dream Projects)** 10 points
This will evaluate on your creativity and your ability to fully commit to the exercise. there will be a written component.

**Application of Activity, Environment/Relationship/Moment Before** 15 Points
You will be graded on your ability to imaginary create and live truthfully in the circumstances while listening, responding and identifying behavior by putting the focus on the other.

**Acting work on “Open/Neutral Scenes”** 10 points
You will be evaluated on your ability to apply the skills learned in repetition to text work

**FINAL (Acting Philosophy)** 10 point
This will be a paper based on reading the book and demonstrating your comprehension by creating and demonstrating an exercise.

**Cumulative Active Class Participation** 15 points
All assignments must be executed and/or the completed when they are due, this includes all text memorized and props present necessary to perform your assignment. You will be evaluated by your attendance to SDA shows and your ability to discuss them in class. You will also be evaluated by your ability to commit to all exercises in class and especially the ones that are difficult for you. Finally, you active engagement in conversations around SDA productions.

**TOTAL …………………100 points**
Description of Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments

A – 95 to 100 points - All of the students work is exceptional. The student has consistently been able to demonstrate their ability to integrate the skills being acquired in all studio classes with their talent and the technique’s being taught in this course with a high degree of artistry. Each time the student works in class they exceed expectations.

A- 90 to 94 points - The work is usually exceptional. The student is usually able to demonstrate their ability to integrate the skills being acquired in all studio classes with their talent and the technique’s being taught the student demonstrates the ability to integrate the work with their talent with a high degree of artistry. The student usually exceeds all expectations.

B+ 87 to 89 points - The student work is very good on a consistent basis. The student has been able to demonstrate the ability to meet all the expectations with sufficient consistency. They are able to identify the skills being taught and all studio classes and the techniques being employed in the process in this class with little support. Student shows promise of great achievement over time.

B 83 to 86 - The student work is solidly within expectations. The student demonstrates the ability to utilize the skills being taught with regular support. The student is able to demonstrate their understanding of the critique if not always able to achieve it consistently.

B- 80 to 82 points - The student work is above average. The student requires regular support but their work remains within the required parameter. The student demonstrates the ability to use the skills being taught but with less confidence and frequency.

C+ 77 to 79 points- The student work has been above average on occasion but with less consistency average. The student is engaging the process technically but without the consistent results expected. The student requires regular and repeated support.

C 73-76 points- The student’s work is average. They are proceeding at a slower pace. They are demonstrating a limited understanding/engagement of the skills being taught. The student requires regular and repeated support. Other underlying factors such as discipline, focus, concentration and commitment may be undermining their progress. The student demonstrates a lack of consistency.

C- 70 to 72 points - The student work is below average and is not meeting the expectations or criteria of the class. The student is not working with rigor and is not engaging the skills being taught with any consistency. Regular and repeated support may not be effectively advancing the student’s progress. Other underlying factors such as discipline, focus, concentration and commitment may be undermining their progress.

D+ 67 to 69 points - The student work is poor. The student is not engaging in the process with any rigor or discipline. The work is far below the parameters of acceptable application. The student demonstrates little appetite the skills being taught. Other underlying factors such as discipline, focus, concentration and commitment may be undermining their progress.

D 63 to 66 points – Some of the work is barely acceptable. The student has shown little progress during the course in any visible manner. The most of the homework assigned has not been turned in in a timely manner. The student is not engaged with the work, his classmates and/or the craft of acting.
D- 60-62 – Most of the work is unacceptable. The student has shown no progress during the course in any visible manner. The majority of the homework assigned has not been turned in in a timely manner. The student is not engaged with the work, his classmates and/or the craft of acting.

F below 59 - A majority of the work is unacceptable.

TOUCHING:
It is understood that the teaching of theater often requires “hands-on” teaching by the instructor and student partners. The respectful use of touch is often necessary to determine proper breathing, postural alignment, and to make students aware of body habits that may be inhibiting efficient and effective physical and vocal production. It is instrumental at times in order to make a well-informed diagnosis and to act upon that determination accordingly. If, after reading and understanding the intention behind “hands-on” teaching, a student has concerns about it, he/she should speak with the instructor outside of class as soon as the concern arises so that the instructor may consider an alternative approach and solution.

• If you become uncomfortable with exercises, the material or the rehearsal process, please notify the instructor immediately.

Material:
When choosing material please let me know if there is an area of interest that speaks to you. Also, I encourage you to make me aware of any areas/subjects you are uncomfortable with in the initial phase of your training. Finally, please let me know if there are any physical challenges that we must take into account in order to make this process safe and healthy.

Affirmative Consent
Affirmative Consent is a knowing, voluntary, and mutual decision among all participants to engage in activities/behaviors called for by the text. Affirmative consent can be given by words or actions, as long as those words or actions create clear permission regarding willingness to engage in the activity required by the text. Silence or lack of resistance, in and of itself, does not demonstrate consent. The definition of consent does not vary based upon a participant’s sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Rules for consent in scenes involving intimacy, physical contact or violence in rehearsal or the classroom:

All physical contact needs to be discussed and agreed upon by all parties involved, including the professor of record in the class before the work is rehearsed or presented in class and before it is physicalized in any way.

STEPS:
• Identify any intimate or heightened physical action in a scene together with your partner before rehearsing.
• State any personal boundaries you may have regarding physical touch or action.
• It is ok to stop. Sometimes even the boundaries you set might feel uncomfortable once you are working. It is always ok to stop if boundaries are not being observed or you discover they are not the ones you need.
• After your rehearsal, check with your partner. Did anything arise that was uncomfortable? Were the boundaries set successful?
• After your improvisation or rehearsal conversation, set or choreograph all physical action. Be sure to check in each time that your previous agreement is still acceptable to both parties.
• Once these moments are set, they cannot be varied or changed unless a specific modification is agreed upon in advance by all parties including the professor of record.

***These guidelines are towards the goal of affirming that intimate action, though sexual or heightened in nature, is a “simulation” – like Stage combat – intended to convince an audience. It is not the ‘real thing.” Some students have found it helpful to institute a ‘safe word’ to empower participants to stop the action if something feels wrong to them.

Expectations in Engagement and Preparation of the Work

1) No assignments should be rehearsed Capella after we have done our text work. You must become accustomed to engaging the moment in partnership with the accompaniment where many musical clues are held.

2) Be prepared to briefly discuss what acting techniques were used during your outside rehearsal time and how this musical selection reveals your strengths as an actor and musician.

3) Once you enter the classroom, there is no idle chatter. The time before class begins must be spent: Engaging in vocal or physical warmup. Working on class assignment. Emotionally preparing for demands of class assignment.

4) Each student is expected to be present and supportive of all classmates as they work. No sleeping, no zoning out.

If you wish to engage in idle chatter please do so outside of the room until class begins. Bathroom breaks are before class and can only be excused in cases of emergency.

However, During the improvisational exercises there is no touching.
Other things to know:
If you come to class you must be capable of doing the work. If you are ill and come to class, you must be able to engage the work if called upon. This is an opportunity to engage the work in a different way and many lessons can be learned in these circumstances.

* All students are asked to do 1 one hour tutorial during the semester

*There may be additions and/or subtractions to the schedule. These adjustments will be prescriptive to the specific needs of the ensemble.

Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/ Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/26</td>
<td>Introduction Story telling</td>
<td>Rehearse Story 1 hour</td>
<td>Due 8/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/28</td>
<td>Story telling continued</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/ Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/2</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>Repeat 20 minutes a day 5 days a week Repetition Log assigned</td>
<td>Repetition Log due every Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>IMPROVISATION Repetition &amp; Rituals Focus on the Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/ Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/9</td>
<td>IMPROVISATION Repetition &amp; Rituals Focus on the Other</td>
<td>Repeat 20 minutes a day 5 days a week Repetition Log assigned</td>
<td>Repetition Log due every Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11</td>
<td>IMPROVISATION Repetition &amp; Rituals Focus on the Other</td>
<td>Repeat 20 minutes a day 5 days a week Repetition Log assigned</td>
<td>Repetition Log due every Wednesday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Topics/Daily Activities</th>
<th>Readings and Homework</th>
<th>Deliverable/ Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/16</td>
<td>IMPROVISATION Repetition &amp; Rituals Activity</td>
<td>Repeat 20 minutes a day 5 days a week Repetition Log assigned</td>
<td>Repetition Log due every Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/18</td>
<td>IMPROVISATION重复 &amp; RitualsActivity</td>
<td>Repeat 20 minutes a day 5 days a week Repetition Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition Log due every Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 9/23</td>
<td>IMPROVISATION重复 &amp; RitualsActivity</td>
<td>Repeat 20 minutes a day 5 days a week Repetition Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition Log due every Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/25</td>
<td>IMPROVISATION重复 &amp; RitualsActivity</td>
<td>Repeat 20 minutes a day 5 days a week Repetition Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Repetition Log due every Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dream Project assigned</td>
<td>Due 10/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rehearse as a group 5 hours &amp; Process paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 9/30</td>
<td>TEXT WORK Relationship &amp; Status</td>
<td>Dream work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>TEXT WORK Relationship &amp; Status</td>
<td>TEXT WORK Relationship &amp; Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 10/7</td>
<td>TEXT WORK Relationship &amp; Status</td>
<td>TEXT WORK Relationship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/9</td>
<td>TEXT WORK Relationship &amp; Status</td>
<td>TEXT WORK &amp; Status Relationship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 10/14</td>
<td>Midterm-Dream</td>
<td>Environment Handout</td>
<td>Due 10/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/16</td>
<td>Status work</td>
<td>Final Acting Philosophy paper and activity Assigned</td>
<td>Mid-term meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due 12/11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9 10/21</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #1</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td>Rehearsal Log due each time to present the scene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #1 Environment/Relationship</td>
<td>Moment Before Handout</td>
<td>Due 11/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/28</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #1 Environment/Relationship</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/30</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #1 Environment/Relationship</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Neutral Scene #2 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity</th>
<th>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/4</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #2 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity</td>
<td></td>
<td>11/18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/6</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #2 Environment/Relationship</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 12</th>
<th>Neutral Scene #2 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity</th>
<th>Beats &amp; Objective Handout</th>
<th>11/18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/11</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #2 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/13</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #2 Environment/Relationship</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>Neutral Scene #3 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity Beats &amp; Objectives</th>
<th>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/18</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #3 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity Beats &amp; Objectives</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/20</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #3 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity Beats &amp; Objectives</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 14</th>
<th>Neutral Scene #3 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity Beats &amp; Objectives</th>
<th>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/25</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #3 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity Beats &amp; Objectives</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 15</th>
<th>Neutral Scene #3 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity Beats &amp; Objectives</th>
<th>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/2</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #3 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity Beats &amp; Objectives</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/4</td>
<td>Neutral Scene #3 Environment/Relationship Moment Before/Activity Beats &amp; Objectives</td>
<td>Rehearse 20 minutes a day 4 days a week Rehearsal Log assigned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Should you choose to participate in any extra-curricular project, such as an Independent Student Production, the SDA administration and faculty will not make allowances or exceptions for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, home work that is required as preparation for class, or lack of participation in class resulting from your extra-curricular involvement.

**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, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

**Statement for 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 the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) 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. Website for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

**Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis**
In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university’s site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

**Support Systems:**
*Campus Support & Intervention (CSI) – (213) 740-0411*
Campus Support & Intervention is an office within Campus Wellbeing and Crisis Intervention. We are a team of professionals here to assist students, faculty, and staff in navigating complex issues. Whether you are here seeking support for yourself or someone else, we are available to help you problem solve, understand options, and connect with resources. https://uscsa.usc.edu

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

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

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

Sexual Assault Resource Center
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: https://titleix.usc.edu/

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and macroaggressions’ need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. https://titleix.usc.edu/

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.
Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu