Course Name: Introduction to Acting
Title: THTR #101
Section: #62605
Units: 4
Session: Fall 2019
Instructor: Robert Bailey
Email: rebailey@usc.edu
Phone: 310 795 3759 (cell)
Office Hours: Mon. and Wed. 10:00-11:00 a.m., or by appointment
Class Meets
  Time: 8-9:50 a.m.
  Days: Mondays and Wednesdays
  Location: MCC 109
Final Exam: Wednesday December 11, 8:00-10:00 a.m.

Course Description
Introduction to the craft of acting: the fundamentals for arriving at truthful, compelling performances.

Course Overview
Through a program consisting of individual and group acting exercises, structured improvisations, and assigned monologue and scene work, students will be exposed to the challenges presented by the extraordinary rigors of theatrical and cinematic storytelling. The class is designed to be experiential, as opposed to theoretical, in nature. Students will work with problem-solving techniques unique to the craft of the actor:

- textual analysis leading to active participation in imaginary circumstances
- elements of characterization
- physical, vocal and emotional preparation
- definition of a scene or play’s dramatic action through a clear and thorough understanding of intentions, objectives, obstacles and relationships to other characters
- communion with fellow actors
- development of an unbroken chain of thoughts, intentions and inner stimuli to action
- delivering the text with clarity, power and rhythm
- commitment to a full and fearless physical-vocal-emotional expression

Students should be prepared to discuss all assigned readings and class work in a timely manner. Questions, passionate responses and debate are encouraged. Monologue and scene work must be memorized and adequately rehearsed outside of class hours. Lack of attention or enthusiastic participation in these areas will seriously weaken your grade.
Required Texts
- *Acting: The First Six Lessons* by Richard Boleslavsky

Materials
- A notebook is required that has the ability to hold inserts and handouts that will be accumulated across the semester. This will be part of your Actor's Journal in which you will record your questions and insights derived from class work, outside rehearsals, assigned readings and independent explorations into character and the world of the play.
- You are responsible for any props, costumes or set pieces which will be used in your scenes as they progress toward the final presentation.
  (Note: no actual weapons can be used in scenes, and prop weapons only by prior approval. Anything resembling a real gun must be cleared by Duncan Mahoney and the Department of Public Safety.)

Course Outline

**Week 1**
  Assignment: Read *Acting: The First Six Lessons* chapters 1-2.

**Week 2**
- 9/2  Labor Day Holiday.
- 9/4  Discussion of reading. Concentration & improvisation exercises.
  Short scene assigned.

**Week 3**
- 9/9 & 9/11  Initial scene work. Breaking down the script.
  Assignment: Read *Acting: The First Six Lessons* chapter 3.

**Week 4**
- 9/16 & 9/18  Discussion of reading. Rehearsal technique.

**Week 5**
  Assignment: Read *Acting: The First Six Lessons* chapter 4.

**Week 6**
- 9/30 & 10/2  Discussion of reading. Incorporating character elements.

**Week 7**
- 10/7 & 10/9  Scene work. Epic and fairy tale characters. Michael Checkhov's Psychological Gesture.

**Week 8**
- 10/14 & 10/16  Scene presentations. Midterm Evaluations.
  New scene assignments. Character studies assigned.

**Week 9**
- 10/21 & 10/23  Film scenes and auditioning.
  Assignment: Read *Acting: The First Six Lessons* chapter 5.

**Week 10**
- 10/28 & 10/30  Discussion of reading.
  Scene work and character studies.
Week 11
11/4 & 11/6  Continued scene work and character studies.
Atmospheres. Incorporating stage properties.

Week 12
Assignment: Read *Acting: The First Six Lessons* chapter 6.

Week 13

Week 14
11/25  Scene work. Paper topic assigned.

11/27-12/1  Thanksgiving Holiday
NOTE:  Travel plans for the Thanksgiving Holiday should be made in a manner which guarantees your attendance in class on both 11/25 and 12/1.

Week 15
12/2 & 12/4  Scene run-throughs.

**Final Exam**
- Wednesday December 11 at 8:00 a.m.
- Paper Due.
- Final scene presentations.

**Grading**
100 total points possible

50 points  Active participation in, and full preparation for, all class sessions
15 points  First presentation
20 points  Second presentation
15 points  Paper

Grading is done on a curve using a 100-point scale.

**Recommended Reading**
- Michael Checkhov  *To the Actor*
- Harold Clurman  *The Fervent Years*
- Jerzy Grotowski  *Towards a Poor Theatre*
- Peter Brook  *The Empty Space*
- Konstantin Stanislavski  *An Actor Prepares*
  *Building a Character*
- Eva La Galliene  *Eleanora Duse: The Mystic in the Theatre*
Attendance and Time Requirements

1. This is a process-oriented class. Attendance is imperative. Class exercises and discussions are experiential in nature and “make-up work” is not possible. Scheduled scene rehearsals that are missed will not be rescheduled.

2. Late work will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor and then will be docked no less than 2 points per day past due. Written work that is accepted after the due date must be date-stamped in the DRC administrative office before being placed in the instructor’s mailbox. All written work must be submitted in hard copy.

3. To give yourself the most positive experience in 101, be punctual, prepared and responsible, as other students are depending on you.

4. There will be no unexcused absences. Three tardy episodes constitute one absence.

5. Check your email regularly. Scheduling changes and other timely information may be sent over the internet.

6. Use of cell phones and other electronic devices will only be allowed to contact a classmate appearing in your scene, or for research purposes approved by the instructor. NO OTHER USE of these devices will be allowed during class time.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR COMMITMENTS AND ISPS

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:

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: sarc.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 microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

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

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

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

***This syllabus serves as your contract for course 101, Fall Semester, 2019***