

Location: Zoom Online - <https://usc.zoom.us/j/4350659968>

Instructor: Camille Thornton-Alson

Zoom: <https://usc.zoom.us/j/4350659968>

Office Hours: Email me and we will schedule a time.

Contact Info: camille.thornton@usc.edu

Cell: 510-684-0805

I will reply to emails and calls within 48 hours.

Technical Difficulties:

If you are experiencing difficulties with Zoom or Blackboard please go to:

<https://kepteaching.usc.edu/get-help/>

Course Description:

Welcome to critical text analysis study for the actor. In this class we will focus on the questions, artistic choices, methodologies, and approaches of an actor/director/designer in the preparation of a production prior to rehearsal and how it influences the final performance and production. You will learn how to read a script, score a script and apply the analysis of the script to the development of a character and your work as an actor. We will read three plays and two musicals this quarter and we will approach each piece as if you are preparing for a performance. We will spend two weeks on each play and musical. At the beginning of the two week cycle you will be expected to come to class prepared and ready for discussion. We will then proceed to analyze and score the script focusing on different elements of text analysis and incorporating the aspects of production that are pulled from the circumstances of the script. Although this class will focus on the intellectual structure and breakdown of the play you will also be learning how to apply this information to the full development of the character. By the end of this class you will understand how to read a play and musical and apply script analysis to the development of your character as an actor.

This is a letter grade class.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course you will understand how to critically read a play and a musical in order to apply your analysis to the staging of the play and your performance as an actor.

Required Readings:

*You can purchase these books online at Amazon (I will put links below for which edition to purchase) you can also go to scribd (<https://www.scribd.com/>) a site that has many plays uploaded there for a monthly fee. It is like Netflix. It is important that you have a way of making notations on your script - whether that be a printed scene or a play that is up to your preference.

***Water by the Spoonful* by Quiara Alegria Hudes**

Please purchase the revised TCG version. The Amazon link is below. It is also on Scribd. https://www.amazon.com/Water-Spoonful-Revised-Quiara-Alegr%C3%ADa/dp/1559365579/ref=sr_1_1?crid=28KQNDG4CPULP&dchild=1&keywords=water+by+the+spoonful+by+quiara+alegria+hudes&qid=1596396834&srefix=Water+by+the+Spoonful%2Caps%2C194&sr=8-1

***In The Heights* Book by Quiara Alegria Hudes, Music and Lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda**

The Amazon link is below. It is also on Scribd. https://www.amazon.com/Heights-Complete-Broadway-Applause-Libretto/dp/1476874646/ref=sr_1_1?crid=6TVZVH5YU9Z0&dchild=1&keywords=in+the+heights+book&qid=1596397057&srefix=In+the+heights+%2Caps%2C232&sr=8-1

***Twelfth Night* by Shakespeare**

Please purchase the Folgers edition. The Amazon link is below. It is also on Scribd. https://www.amazon.com/Twelfth-Night-Folger-Shakespeare-Library/dp/0743482778/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=Twelfth+Night+Shakespeare&qid=1595616739&sr=8-1

***Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White* by Alice Childress**

Please purchase the Samuel French Edition if you can. There are limited copies of this play. I am including two Amazon links for you. https://www.amazon.com/Wedding-Band-Story-Black-White/dp/B0006CGADS/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3KTNC5AV8NZOF&dchild=1&keywords=alice+childress+wedding+band&qid=1595616812&srefix=Wedding+Band+by+Alice+C%2Caps%2C212&sr=8-1

https://www.amazon.com/Selected-Plays-Alice-Childress/dp/0810127512/ref=pd_sbs_14_1/133-9751320-5295049?_encoding=UTF8&pd_rd_i=0810127512&pd_rd_r=bfd2f5e2-7542-4682-a0d8-61caa77c8723&pd_rd_w=GpiSF&pd_rd_wg=AU3hx&pf_rd_p=bc074051-81d1-4874-a3fd-fd0c867ce3b4&pf_rd_r=TSKVM8V1349Q57WPZS3V&psc=1&refRID=TSKVM8V1349Q57WPZS3V

***Dear Evan Hansen* by Steven Lenevson, music and lyrics by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul**

Please purchase the TCG Edition. The Amazon link is below. It is also on Scribd.

https://www.amazon.com/Dear-Evan-Hansen-Steven-Levenson/dp/1559365609/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&hvadid=78340273036716&hvbm=bb&hvdev=c&hvqmt=p&keywords=dear+evan+hansen+play&qid=1595615815&sr=8-1&tag=mh0b-20

Assignments & Grading Breakdown:

Assignment 1: Read *Water by the Spoonful* (5 points)

Assignment 2: *Water by the Spoonful* Character Analysis Break Down and Presentation (5 points)

Assignment 3: Read *In the Heights*(5 points)

Assignment 4: *In the Heights* Character Analysis Break Down and Presentation (5 points)

Assignment 5: Read *Twelfth Night* (5 points)

Assignment 6: *Twelfth Night* Character Analysis Break Down and Presentation (5 points)

Assignment 7: Read *Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White* (5 points)

Assignment 8: *Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White: Character Analysis Break Down and Presentation* (5 points)

Assignment 9: Read *Dear Evan Hansen* (5 points)

Assignment 10: *Dear Evan Hansen* Character Analysis Break Down and Presentation (5 points)

FINAL: Friday November 20th 2-4pm

***A clear grading rubric will be provided before each assignment.**

***Midterm: Solo script analysis of a scene from *Water by the Spoonful* (25 points)**

***Final: A presentation / performed scene with a partner (25 points)**

In-class participation is a huge part of your grade. If you are not in class (on zoom) while we are discussing a play, points will be taken from the assignment relating to that particular play. It is important that you are showing up to class, completing assignments on time and participating in the group 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

Grading Timeline:

Grades on the mid-term and final will be given the following week they are due. I will give you a grading rubric for each assignment. If you follow the guideline then you will receive the full amount of points.

Additional Policies:

Late assignments will not be accepted. We have a limited time together and it's important that you are ready to discuss and participate in every class. If there are extenuating circumstances then you can email me directly and we will discuss other options in determining your grade.

Zoom Etiquette:

1. Arrive a few minutes early so that we can start class exactly at 2:00 pm.
2. Have all your materials ready and by you for class.
3. We will discuss a group break together when you can go to the bathroom.
4. Have water or something to drink but no eating.
5. No texting / private chats.
6. Depending on your internet service, please be on camera.
7. If you are having technical difficulties text me at 510-684-0805 to let me know.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown:

Week 1: The World of the Play / Vocabulary / What is Script Analysis?

- Intro / etiquette / contact list
- Play / Musical Structure
- World of the Play / Time of the play
- The Actor's Process / How to read & absorb a Play / Musical
- What is the actor's job/ director's job etc.
- How we think as an actor
- Explanation of script analysis technique and application to character development

Homework: Read *Water by the Spoonful*, bring to class initial thoughts, areas of research that popped out at you for the discussion of the play. Discussion groups within the class to meet outside of class and research a specific topic.

Week 2: *Water by the Spoonful* Discussion / Initial Breakdown

- Group presentation of *Water by the Spoonful*
- Open discussion and application to one scene in the play. How this play relates and how to actually look at the rhythm of a scene and how it applies to the whole of the play.
- Circumstances

Homework: Breakdown and prepare your character's scene with your scene partner. Looking at circumstances.

Week 3: *Water by the Spoonful* Character Analysis

- Discussion of the prepared scene analysis.
- How we connect what we discover in the text to staging and physical placement of our bodies in space.
- Looking at how circumstances affect our research of the play and how that translates to our work as actors.

Homework: Read *In the Heights*. Get together in groups and come to class with a research topic that is agreed upon within the group to share and discuss.

Week 4: *In the Heights* Discussion / Initial Breakdown

- Discussion and analysis of *In The Heights*
- Look at musical structure / book / music / lyrics
- Beats

Homework: Work on the circumstances and beats of one song and one scene with a partner to present in class.

Week 5: *In the Heights* Character Analysis

- Actor will discuss their prepared scene / song analysis breakdown
- What was learned about beats.

Homework: Read *Twelfth Night*. Assignment will be specific topics that are assigned to research and explore. Your specific scenes will be given to the partner in order to begin to apply the work - thinking like an actor.

Week 6: *Twelfth Night* Discussion / Initial Breakdown

- The world of Shakespeare
- Iambic pentameter

- Structure of Shakespeare and application of circumstance and beats
- Begin presentations
- Objective / Super- Objective

Homework: Continue to formally breakdown and prepare your character's scene in order to present it next week. Focus on circumstances, beats, objective and super-objective.

MID - TERM: Solo scene analysis from *Water by the Spoonful*, step by step process break down and application. Incorporating circumstances, beats, objectives and super-objectives.

Week 7: *Twelfth Night* Character Analysis

- Actor will discuss their prepared scene analysis breakdown
- What they discovered with iambic pentameter and the verse structure
- How they accessed the musicality of Shakespeare

Homework: Read *Wedding Band: A Love-Hate Story in Black and White*. Pick one scene that you connected to and prepare it for class. Meet in your groups and prepare themes that will be assigned in the class for you to present and how this connects to the play.

Week 8: *Wedding Band: A Love-Hate Story in Black and White* Discussion

- Discuss the themes of the play and the world of the play.
- Structure / Tone
- Action / Driving the scene forward.
- Connecting Circumstance, Beats, Objective/Super Objective, Action

Homework: Application of text analysis within the scenes with your partners. How we connect and identify as ourselves. Connecting Circumstance, Beats, Objective/Super Objective, Action

Week 9: *Wedding Band: A Love-Hate Story in Black and White* Character Analysis

- Performance / Presentation of *Wedding Band* scene.
- How we begin to connect tone and text analysis to performance.

Homework: Read *Dear Evan Hansen*. Break up in your groups and pick a scene that you emotionally connect with. Explore that scene together and what jumps out at you. Prepare this to present and one theme of the musical.

Week 10: *Dear Evan Hansen* Discussion

- Discuss the theme and the prepared scene
- Look at what you emotionally connected to and why
- How we channel emotion and thought through subtext
- Subtext

Homework: Application of text analysis within the scenes and one song with your partner. How we connect and identify as ourselves. Apply circumstance, beats, objective/super-objective, action, subtext.

Week 11: *Dear Evan Hansen* Character Analysis

- Performance / Presentation of *Dear Evan Hansen* scene.
- How we begin to connect subtext and process text analysis to performance.

Homework: Assigned partners that you will be preparing your final with. You pick a scene from one of the 3 plays and 2 musicals we have worked on. Prepare to answer why you picked this scene and what you will do to work on it for your final.

Week 13: Discussion of Final Scenes

- Discussion of final scenes
- Expectations / Prepared vs. performance
- Process of the actor
- Summation of the semester
- Questions

Homework: Prepare your final scene for notes. This should be performance ready.

Week 13: *Final Scene Practice & Notes*

- Actors will discuss / perform their prepared scene analysis breakdown.
- Notes given

Homework: Prepare and incorporate notes into your final presentation.

Week 14: FINAL Friday November 20th 2-4pm

Congratulations YOU DID IT!

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