

University of Southern California

Course Syllabus

THTR #305A

Course Name:	Directing
Title:	THTR #305A
Section:	#62858
Units:	4
Session:	Fall 2020
Instructor:	Robert Bailey
Email:	rebailey@usc.edu
Phone:	310 795 3759 (cell)
Office Hours:	Tues. and Thurs. 12:00 p.m. to 1 p.m., or by appointment
Class Meets	
Time:	2 p.m. - 3:50 p.m.
Days:	Tuesdays and Thursdays
Location:	Online
Final Exam:	Tuesday November 17, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Course Description

Introduction to directing: principles of effective leadership and collaboration in the theatrical (or cinematic) realization of a written text.

Course Overview and Learning Objectives

Experiencing the directorial process, from the initial encounter with a script, artistic response to its theme, and choice of collaborators, to the process of creating the world of the play and presenting it to the public. Special emphasis will be placed on the director's role in shaping an effective working method with actors, designers, and technicians. Reading, discussion, and in-class exercises, including two scene presentations, a Vision Presentation and a digital Director's Production Book, will be required in the successful completion of the course.

Required Texts

- *A Sense of Direction* by William Ball
- *Cloud Tectonics* by Jose Rivera
- *Sweat* by Lynn Nottage

Materials

- Keep a Director's Journal to hold images, work notes, research, reactions to class work and assigned readings, etc. Since we are online this semester, you may keep this as a file on your laptop if you prefer, but often jotting notes down by hand cements the learning more efficiently and facilitates a more personal connection to the experience.

Course Outline

Week 1

8/18 Introduction. Course Outline.
8/20 Discussion: the role of the director.
Assignment for Next Week: Read Cloud Tectonics and Sweat

Week 2

8/25 First Encounter with the Text: personal and analytical
8/27 Auditioning, Casting
Assignment: Read A Sense of Direction by William Ball, pages 3-43.

Week 3

9/1 Auditioning, Casting
9/3 First Read-through.
Assignment: Read Ball, pages 44 through 69.

Week 4

9/8 & 9/10 Initial Work with Actors: how to speak their language.
Assignment: Read Ball, pages 70-92.

Week 5

9/15 & 9/17 Rehearsal: Working the beats. Defining objectives.
Assignment: Read Ball, pages 93-124.

Week 6

9/22 & 9/24 Rehearsal: Finding the Physical Life of the Play. Actions, staging.
Begin Observed Rehearsals,
Assignment: Begin Search for Second Scene.

Week 7

9/29 & 10/1 Observed Rehearsals. Second scene approved by Instructor.
Paper #1 assigned.

Week 8

10/6 & 10/8 **Presentation of First Scenes.**

Week 9

10/13 & 10/15 World of the Play: Visualizing and Collaborating with Designers.
Assignment: Read Ball, pages 125 to end of text.

Week 10

10/20 & 10/22 VISION PRESENTATIONS

Week 11

10/27 & 10/29 VISION PRESENTATIONS

Week 12

11/3 & 11/5 Observed Rehearsals, Second Scenes.

Week 13

11/10 & 11/12 Observed Rehearsals, Second Scenes

Final Exam

- Tuesday November 17 at 2:00 p.m.
- Presentation of Second Scenes
- Director's Production Book Due

Grading

30 points	Class Work (including Observed Rehearsals)
15 points	First Scene
15 points	Vision Presentations
20 points	Second Scene
20 points	<u>Director's Production Book</u>

100 Total points possible

Observed rehearsals are in concert with grading of class work. Scenes and Vision Presentations are graded based on clear evidence of preparedness and intended objective in each presentation effort. Director's Production Books are graded on completeness and attention to detail in terms of research, imagery, scene by scene blocking plan and overall design concept.

Recommended Reading

- David Richard Jones *Great Directors at Work: Stanislavsky, Brecht, Kazan, Brook*
- Harold Clurman *On Directing*
 The Fervent Years
- Jerzy Grotowski *Towards a Poor Theatre*
- Peter Brook *The Empty Space*
- Konstantin Stanislavsky *An Actor Prepares*
 Building a Character
- Elia Kazan *A Life*
- Alan Schneider *Entrances*
- Lee Simonson *The Stage is Set*

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 observed 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.
3. To give yourself the most positive experience in 305A, be punctual, prepared and responsible, as other students are depending on you. Remember: you are the director.
4. There will be no unexcused absences. Three tardy episodes constitute one absence.
5. Acting in a classmate's scene is encouraged and will count as 1-point of extra credit toward your final grade. A maximum of 2-extra credit points are possible per semester.
6. If you have actors from outside our class enrollment, make sure they can be available for both your observed rehearsal and your presentation, are willing to rehearse with you outside of class time, and in general are DEPENDABLE. We will arrange to admit them into our Zoom session when needed.

7. Each student shall maintain a Director's Journal containing classroom notes, observations and comments upon viewing other students' in-class rehearsals and scene presentations. Rough or detailed ground plans of the set for your directed scene, and a copy of your scene with blocking notations, must be included. Be diligent about documenting your curiosities. Don't put off jotting down your thoughts! An idea may seem so vivid at the time it occurs to you but will easily vanish if you procrastinate in putting it to paper. Don't forget to write about what you observe in the work of others. Assessing the result of someone else's process is the surest way to clarify your own.
8. Check your email regularly for scheduling changes, assignments and other timely information.
9. Use of cell phones is not permitted during class time, but a break will usually be included after the first hour of class and you may feel free to check email or texts at that time.
10. It is strongly suggested that you keep your video turned on for the entire class. Use the "raise hand" function in Zoom if you would like to speak during group discussions. You are expected to be seated upright and dressed appropriately in front of your screen (as you would in a classroom setting); generally refrain from eating (exceptions allowed for health reasons); putting on makeup, playing with pets or engaging in other activities unrelated to our class work.

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/ssaa

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 305 A, Fall Semester, 2020*****