

THTR 520A ADVANCED ACTING

Units: 4

FALL 2020—M/W—3:00pm – 5:50pm

Location: DRC 120

Instructor: David Warshofsky (He/Him)

Office: DRC 120 or Zoom

Office Hours: Available by appointment. Call or email as above. **Mentorship is an essential element of the instructional technique in the MFA program; make it a point to make an appointment**

Contact Info: warshofs@usc.edu (323) 646-9525 (mobile)

Course Description

*“An actor’s tool is you, but this use of oneself is informed by all the things which inform one’s mind and body – your observations, your struggles, your nightmares, your prison, your patterns – yourself as a citizen of **your** times and **your** society. **Technique is a means to free the artist.**”*

--Joseph Chaiken

The goal of this course is to begin the intellectual, physical, emotional and ritual understanding of what personalization is and how it applies to the text of a play and eventually transitioning the information into intensive formal scene study focusing on contemporary American playwrights.

Learning Objectives

- To begin the practical understanding and application of the craft of acting. What acting is and what it isn't. How to break down a piece of text (i.e. “table work”) Objectives, Actions, Sub-text applied to the given circumstances of the play.
- Moving through personalization--making the connection between yourself, your story, the story of the play and the so-called “character” that you are attempting to portray.
- We will utilize active text analysis with particular focus on verbs (what you are doing) and objectives (what you want).

In this class we will explore the idea that the individual actor is infinitely more interesting and imaginative than any finite character that he, she, or they might play.

Recommended Preparation: Undergraduate Degree

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Highest speed internet available, most recent lap top available, external microphone and camera, uncluttered well-lit space to work in.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

The Empty Space by Peter Brook

Theatre of the Unimpressed by Jordan Tannahill

*Ordered for you and available at the USC Bookstore

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Monologues and Scene Work. Material to be decided as we get to know each other. The exploration of material (i.e. reading plays) is essential to your progress.

Grading Breakdown

- A work of excellent quality
- B work of good quality
- C work of average quality
- D work of below average quality

Your grade is assessed according to

Class Work – 50%

Midterm – 25%

Final – 25%

Additional Policies

Some of our classrooms are retrofitted with camera and microphones that will enable myself to teach remotely from the studio while the students are at home, or vice versa. This also enables an actor who is sick and needing to stay at home (during COVID or in the future) to never have to miss class. The following will be discussed on the first day of class:

- Do you have discussion norms for communications in your class?
- Do you expect a certain type of professional attire and behavior for students during synchronous sessions? If so, do you provide an explanation of the expectations?
- Are students allowed to log-in to the class using their phone?
- Who should students contact if they have technical issues during the class?
- Do you require students to mute their microphones when they are not speaking?
- Do you require students to enable their webcam, so they are visible in the course?
- Do you allow students to eat during the class?
- Can students use technology other than their computers during the sessions?
- Do you recommend a certain physical environment for the student to take part in the synchronous session? Consider noise levels, background objects and artwork, pets, family members.
- Do you specify how/if the chat box will be used during the session?
- Have you identified a process for students taking turns speaking?
- How can students indicate they have something to say?
- Do you have a plan for managing and addressing conflict in a synchronous environment?

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

WEEK	FIRST CLASS	SECOND CLASS
1	Formal Orientation	Exercises
2	Monologues	Monologues
3	Monologues	Monologues
4	Script Analysis	Script Analysis
5	Show/work scene 1	Show/work scene 1
6	Show/work scene 1	Show/work scene 1
7	Show/work scene 1	Show/work scene 1
8	Show/work scene 1	Show/work scene 1
9	Show/work scene 1	Run-thru of Scene 1
10	Show/work scene 2	Show/work scene 2
11	Show/work scene 2	Show/work scene 2
12	Show/work scene 2	Show/work scene 2
13	Show/work scene 2	Show/work scene 2
14	Format Culmination	Rehearse Culmination
15	Rehearse Culmination	Rehearse Culmination

EDI @SDA: Professional Development/Mandatory EDI Training

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

As part of our EDI initiatives and call to action, some workshops will be offered to faculty and staff and to students. Competencies that will be included: Anti-Racism (Faculty/Staff) and Equity Mindedness (Faculty/Staff), and then Theater Intimacy & Building Cultures of Consent (Students, Faculty/Staff). More details will follow. NOTE: All SDA classes will be cancelled to support involvement in this effort.

SDA PRODUCTIONS, ISPS, AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

SDA productions, ISPs and Extracurricular Activities* will not excuse you from any class work. There will be no exceptions made for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, homework or lack of class participation resulting from your involvement in any of the above. Your grade will reflect your work in this class, independent from work in any other class or activity.

*Activities that have been officially sanctioned by the larger university (such as marching band, song girls, or varsity sports) are exempt. You must submit official documentation to your professor regarding your participation in an event prior to your absence.

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 GFS 120 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) 814-4618 (Vidoe Phone), (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.

Health and Participation in Class

You are expected to complete your Trojan Check screener daily and, as your instructor, I may ask you to show your daily screening in class. Your health and safety, and the health and safety of your peers, are my top priorities. If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19, or if you discover that you have been in close contact with others who have symptoms or who have tested positive, you must follow the instructions on Trojan Check. My hope is that if you are feeling ill or if you have been exposed to someone with the virus, you will stay home to protect others. I will ensure that you can continue to participate in class remotely so that your education is not disrupted.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, USC requires that face coverings (masks) be worn indoors including in classrooms. Face coverings must cover your nose and mouth and be worn throughout the class session. A mask with a valve is not considered an adequate face covering and should not be used, as it can expel exhaled air, increasing the risk to others. Eating or drinking during class is prohibited because of the risk posed by removing your mask for these activities. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in your being asked to leave the classroom immediately. Requests for accommodations related to the face covering and eating/drinking policies should be directed to the Office for Student Accessibility Services (<https://osas.usc.edu/>).

SDA Student Support & Reporting Form:

To facilitate a supportive environment of accountability, SDA has created an internal system of reporting for students to address issues/concerns and to offer feedback or suggestions for improvement. This mechanism provides a pathway for reporting and offering feedback without fear of retaliation or judgment. Any submission filed through this form will be reviewed and processed accordingly through SDA Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

To file a report, please visit: <http://bit.ly/sdasupport>

Support Systems:

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

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) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, 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 Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

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.

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