

USC School of Dramatic Arts

201a Intermediate Acting

Units: 2 units

M/W 2pm - 3:50

Location: PED 208

Instructor: Laura Flanagan

Office: lgoldsch@usc.edu / 646-342-5314

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Info: lgoldsch@usc.edu - see above

Course Description: (From the Catalogue): Analysis and investigation of role interpretation and character development by working on two or more scenes from the same play. Introduction of techniques to unlock objectives based on the text.

Course Description

Acting is the art of Doing Something while other people are watching you. This, your second year acting class, is all about how to put what you are doing, (your action), into what you are saying, so that when you speak it DOES SOMETHING - generally to someone else. We are focusing on the works of William Shakespeare for this simple reason: he has some great words. The language he gives you is incredibly active, imaginative, generous and allows you to do all kinds of things.

Of course, there are other writers who have great words too, Suzanne Lori Parks for one. And asked recently what three things she would bring with her to a desert island she named these:

I would take my banjo, my guitar and a book. The Complete Works of William Shakespeare. One with pictures. The Riverside edition has pictures. I'd need a pencil to take notes.... I'll just write in the sand.

" (Interview January 2014, American Theatre Magazine).

In his brief essay on Shakespeare "How I learned to Stop Hating Shakespeare" James Baldwin talks about the moment when he began to love and appreciate Shakespeare's genius. How he suddenly saw that Shakespeare spoke a language that could really be his. That Shakespeare understood how hard it was to be a person, no matter who you are, or where and when you were born.

We will work on Shakespeare from a strictly anti-racist perspective. We will privilege no culture over another or assume whiteness as a center for the characters perspective. Shakespeare has been and continues to be the most produced playwright in America - probably in the world. He crosses cultures and languages and is reinterpreted and reinvented each time he is performed. You will do this too. Your Rosalind, or Viola or Hamlet or Macbeth will be uniquely yours and reflect your spiritual and imaginative connection with his language. Your identity and story will be a part of that connection. That is what we will find. Where you and Shakespeare meet. And where you learn and grow from one another.

We will begin work on The Bard with one of his sonnets. We will work on making the language active. We will continue with scene work from many of the different plays, and then we will finish off with a soliloquy from the character you worked on in your scene. As the course description states: you will spend the

semester really getting into the language and actions of one of Shakespeares indelible characters and making them your own. I'm so excited to get to know you and to start this journey with you.

Learning Objectives

- **Discover a love for rich language and make it your own.**
- Activate the language of the text in order to achieve your goal - as the character.
- Physicalize your actions with your partner.
- Work for and with your partner(s) real or imagined, in each moment of every scene.
- Build your through-line for the scene and the role with inspiration, curiosity and spontaneity.

Prerequisite(s): 252a,b

Course Notes

This course will take place live in person, with the option to pivot to zoom if necessary.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

This course requires a good internet connection, and appropriate operating systems for zoom.

Required Readings (IN ORDER OF HOW THEY APPEAR IN THE SYLLABUS)

- Baldwin, James: "Why I stopped Hating Shakespeare". audio version: <https://fermatstheater.org/2019/10/10/james-baldwins-why-i-stopped-hating-shakespeare/> text version: https://www.folger.edu/sites/default/files/Why%20I%20Stopped%20Hating%20Shakespeare_JamesBaldwin.pdf

- Shakespeare, William: *The Complete Works*. Whichever edition you get. Of course all the play are online too, but you're in college and you should have a real copy of the plays. Find the cheapest one you can - unless you like to spend money and have some to spare.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

- *Journal* - you will keep a journal of your classroom sessions. After each class you will take a moment to reflect on what you learned, or didn't, during the zoom. This can be hand written if you like (I encourage all time spent OFF SCREEN these days) but you must upload photos of it to your blackboard journal. You can also just type in your blackboard journal. Ideas for questions you might like to think of when you are doing your journal: what I found inspiring today - What lesson was reinforced today - What was I confused by today - what connection did I make to my own work or process today - what do I wish we'd done today instead of what we did. You need not answer all these questions, or any of these questions if you have your own. Use this as a guide. Your journal is an honest reflection on your experience. It's a chance for you to reflect deeply for yourself and build the connection with yourself that you need for your creative work.
- *Rehearsal Reports* - You must rehearse three times a week with your scene partner(s). This will require that you fill out a rehearsal report on blackboard for each rehearsal.

Each group will submit one rehearsal report for the week. If you fail to turn in your rehearsal reports you will not be able to show your work that week. The rehearsal report will contain: a. who rehearsed, b. what you worked on, c. for how long, d. what was the focus of the rehearsal, e. what challenges and/or achievements you had.

- *Active Analysis/ Script Book* - This will be due at Midterm and at the Final. The Midterm will contain your active analysis for your Etude. Etude is your improvised version of your scene(s). The final will contain the active analysis for your final performance. The Active Analysis will be taught in week three of class: We will learn to breakdown your script into useable, workable active terms that will help us chart ourselves as actor/ characters through the through line of the play. Write your active analysis in pencil as you will probably be continuously updating and changing it as we work through the play.

Grading Breakdown

Journal	25	25%
Rehearsal Reports	25	25%
Active Analysis	12.5	12.5%
Midterm Performance	12.5%	12.5%
Final	25	25%

Grading Scale (Example)

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

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will be submitted through blackboard and USC email.

Grading Timeline

Journals will be graded weekly.

Midterm and Final grades will be available four days after the test.

Additional Policies

Students are expected to arrive on time ready to work. Journals will be checked weekly to make sure that students are keeping up with their work. I will be available for office hours as much as possible for any individual concerns, challenges and needs that come during the course of the class.

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

USC policy prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

SCampus Section 11.12(B)

Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

(Please refer to the [Contact Hours Reference](#) guide.)

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates. *
Week 1 August 23rd/ 25th	M. Introduction to each other, games, welcome back to class. Introduction to heightened text , brief talk about Baldwin essay. Introduction to the sonnets. W: more games and begin work on the sonnets.	Baldwin, James: “Why I stopped hating Shakespeare”... - introduction to The Sonnet: Claude McKay “America”. and James Weldon Johnson “Sonnet”	Monday : Have read Baldwin, prepare for discussion. Wednesday: Learn whichever sonnet you want, “America” or “Sonnet” They will be posted on Blackboard. Learn them so we can work and play with them in class.
Week 2 August 30, September 1	Introduction to Shakespeare Sonnet	LEARN YOUR SONNET -	Sonnet 29 or Sonnet 147 - pick one and learn it.
Week 3 September 6, September 8	Labor Day Acting the sonnet	Performing our sonnets and learning R&J	Romeo & Juliet - “If I profane..” First rehearsal report due...
Week 4 September 13, 15th	DEI day (see below) Finish Sonnets		Second Rehearsal Report Due
Week 5 9/20-9/22	Scenes Assigned : k on Clarifying Event, Given Circumstances:	Learn Your Scene and Rehearse	Third Rehearsal Report Due

Week 6 9/27 - 9/29	work on work on Clarifying Event/ Given Circumstances.	Read	Fourth Rehearsal Report is due
Week 7 10/4 - 10/6	Work on language	"	Fifth Rehearsal Report is Due Due.
Week 8 10/11 - 10/13	Work on language	"	Sixth Rehearsal Report Due
Week 9 10/18- 10/20	Work on Physical Actions - perform scenes		Seventh rehearsal report due:
Week 10 10/25-10/ 27	Work on Physical Actions	"	Eighth Rehearsal Report Due And Active Analysis of Scenes Due!
Week 11 11/1 - 11/3	Soliloquys- Assigned		Eighth Rehearsal Report - as well as paraphrase of soliloquy
Week 12 11/ 8- 11/10	Work on Soliloquys		Ninth Rehearsal Report Due
Week 13 11/15 - 11/17	Work on Soliloquys		M: Rehearsal Report Due
Week 14 11/29 12/1	Finish up Soliloquys and Scenes		Due: Final Tenth Rehearsal Report/. Active analysis of Script revised.
FINAL	FRiDAY DECEMBER 10th 2-4pm		Final Performance of Scenes and Soliloquies. Hurrah.

***JOURNAL ENTRIES ARE DUE AT THE END OF EVERY WEEK. I WILL READ THEM OVER THE WEEKEND.**

EDI @SDA: Professional Development/Mandatory EDI Training
Wednesday, September 15, 2021 - week 4

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 Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for OSAS 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: <https://bit.ly/SDAstudentreporting>

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 Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776
<https://osas.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.