

**SDA #152 Introduction to Scene Study**  
**Spring 2022 Mon. and Wed. 1:00p.m.- 2:50p.m.**  
**Location:** MCC 107  
**Units:** 2

**Instructor:** Stephanie Shroyer  
**Office:** MCC 204  
**Office Hours:** Tues and Thurs. 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. MCC  
or by appointment please. Students are encouraged  
to use this as an opportunity to speak privately with  
the instructor about individual in-class progress  
**Contact Info:** shroyer@usc.edu

**Course Description:**

Application and consolidation of the skills, knowledge and techniques acquired in the study of fundamentals of acting encountered in THTR 101. Course emphasis is on the co-nurturance of the actors imagination, intellect, connection to story and the critical, analytical, interpretive skills vital to craft. Through exercises, improvisation and scene work, the fundamentals of the actors craft are applied to develop character, relationship, place, story according to the playwrights intent. The use of internal and external musculature (internal being the musculature of thought, external being that of the body) and the use of space and objects as valuable expressive components of the actor’s craft are of prime consideration.

**Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of studies in 152:

1. The student will have compiled a personalized journal that contains processes and procedures (taught through lecture, classroom exercises and explorations for the actor to prepare a role from a play categorized as Contemporary). This compilation will include:
  - Research of the playwright, character and world of play.
  - Given circumstances: who, why, where, when and how
  - Record of character development (psycho-physical transformation from self to character).
  - A clear articulation of levels of character objective rooted in Stanislavski based methodology.
2. The student will have researched, rehearsed and presented in class, multiple sharing’s of monologues, devised work and excerpts from one of the texts selected for scene study in this course.
3. Each student will have completed a Final presentation of their excerpt and will evidence subtext of the characters human condition thru “doing and being done to” and a truthful life lived under imaginary circumstances.

4. Through scene work, the student will have structured an appropriate movement pattern for character that is revealing of the playwright's intent of story.

### **Learning Aspirations**

1. To examine and explore the following three components as they apply to storytelling:
  - i. The needs of the human organism.
  - ii. The claims of the activity of the moment.
  - iii. The demands of the environment.
2. To explore our capacity to "listen to our bodies" for impulse and to respond in the moment appropriate for the "World of Play" as identified thru research including, but not limited to, playwright's intent, historical, sociological and cultural elements. Using Contemporary texts as material, concentration is strongly focused in the arena of modifying personal impulse to that of the character living under the plays given circumstances.
3. Deepen strength in sensitivity to demands for heightened conflict in any dramatic situation and to structure an appropriate movement pattern revealing that conflict. To hone skill in arranging movement patterns so they incite change in the other sharing the stage. Explore use of an exacting movement patterning as an effective storytelling tool for communicating subtext to the audience.
4. To develop professional work habits that will serve the actor in meeting the rigors of the professional world.

**Prerequisite(s):** THTR 101

**Co-Requisite (s):** NA

**Concurrent Enrollment:** NA

**Suggested Preparation:** NA

### **Course Notes, Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

- Required Text: *Steal Like An Artist* by Austin Kleon (available online as a pdf and on Amazon),
- Instructor may supply handouts and excerpts from suitable texts/sources as needed throughout the semester.
- Notebook/Journal suitable for daily notations of curiosities and progress and collecting class notes/handouts.
- The Syllabus, weekly schedule and assignments are posted on Blackboard. It is recommended you find a way to include your syllabus in your notebook/journal for immediate reference during class. Necessary day to day updates and communications will be done via USC email.
- Character studies and scenes require attire and props to support transformation, movement pattern choices and to define the physical world as specified by the text.

There will be no miming of the physical elements of the work. The *reality of doing principle* is paramount in Introduction to Scene Study 152.

### Assessments & Assignments

- **CLASSWORK:** Daily participation in preparation, discussions and exercises as listed on the syllabus. Preparation may include various out of class observation assignments throughout semester as necessary for class work. Evaluation is based on the student's regular participation, completeness of preparation and concentration during exercises. (Assessment: Summative)
- **MONOLOGUE:** Present at our second class meeting a contemporary monologue to assess baseline patterns of tension. (Assessment: Formative) **Due Wed. Jan 12th.**
- **JOURNAL:** Keep a journal. Content includes but is not limited to; class notes and other acquired pertinent information as well as your thoughts and responses to explorations (your own and your peers) during our 152 course process and progression. This journal will be useful in written assignments #1 and #2. (Assessment: Summative) **Due Wed. Apr 27<sup>th</sup>.**
- **MIDTERM ONE PERFORMANCE:** Share Devised Open Scenes. (Assessment: Summative) **Due Mon. Feb 7<sup>th</sup> and Wed Feb 9<sup>th</sup>.**
- **MIDTERM ONE WRITTEN:** Submission of Written Scenario. Submission of Character Biography. (Assessment: Summative) **Due Mon. Feb 7<sup>th</sup> and Wed Feb 9<sup>th</sup>.**
- **MIDTERM TWO PERFORMANCE:** Assigned Text Environment Set-up and Character Private Moment. **Due Mon. Mar 7<sup>th</sup> and Wed Mar 9<sup>th</sup>.**
- **FINAL EXAM PERFORMANCE:** Share Assigned Text fully Movement Patterned and Subtextual. **Due Wed. May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2pm to 4pm**
- **FINAL EXAM WRITTEN:** Submission of Character Biography, Levels of Objectives and World of Play Research (Assessment: Summative) **Due Wed. May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2pm to 4pm**

## Grading Criteria and Assignments

100 possible points. All points are awarded and based on prompt and effective completion of the stated requirements.

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Classwork	25	25%
Journals	10	10%
Midterm One: Performance	10	10%
Midterm One: Written	10	10%
Midterm Two: Performance	5	5%
Final Exam: Performance	20	20%
FinalExam: Written	20	20%

## Assignment Submission Policy and Grading Timeline

- Assignments due as described above.
- All paper-work submissions should be turned in to me electronically through Blackboard, your Google File Folder set up for Spring ‘22 or USC email.
- Once submitted, please look for email confirmation from me that I can access your submissions. If there is a problem with the digital submission, I will contact you and we will trouble-shoot to complete successful transfer of your materials.
- Instructor and peer feedback for in class exercises and scene work is regular practice in our class sessions.
- Students can receive written feedback for all performance assignments immediately if the student wishes to capture electronically my handwritten notes.

## Additional Policies

Notes from the Instructor

- The principles introduced in 152 Intro to Scene Study are processes that take time to absorb and understand.
- Rehearse.
- Do not become impatient.
- Rehearse.
- Remain positive and curious about the work.
- Rehearse.
- Remember the results are not instantaneous.
- Rehearse.
- Your commitment to exploring these principles and processes are of much greater importance than definitive result.
- Resist judgment and expectation of any specific outcome.
- Rehearse.
- Explore

- Rehearse.
- Play
- Rehearse.
- Be fearlessly inventive within the parameters given.
- Remember.
- Each student works and learns in a unique manner.

### Attendance and Time Requirements

- Students are expected to be in class and ready to work by 1:00 p.m. sharp.
- Attendance is *mandatory*.
- Three episodes of tardiness equal 1 absence.
- Late work will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor and then may be reflected in the grade by docking no less than 2 points per day.
- Check your USC email regularly for scheduling changes and other timely information.

### Classroom Rules

- Except for water, no food or drinks are allowed in class at any time.
- All students must help with the set up and strike of every class
- Students should clear all extraneous belongings, (backpacks, jackets, skateboards, laptops, cell phones, etc.) out of the work area at the start of class
- Students should be in proper rehearsal clothes (whatever they may be) promptly at the start of class.
- Bring your journal to class every day. We'll have lots of notes to jot down!
- The space where you rehearse outside of class should be open and yield possibility to build your environs/world of play. We'll work together to develop the workspace your individual environs can provide.
- Cell phones are to be turned off and put away for the duration of class.
- Electronic capture of any portion of class is strictly prohibited without prior written approval of the instructor. When granted the files are to be used only for the purpose of educating that specific student, and may not be distributed or shared for any purpose whatsoever.

### Course Schedule

(see below)

WEEK	ACTIVITY
1	“What I Know and What I Don’t Know Yet About the Actors Process”
2-5	Open Scenes. Devising the Scenario. Given Circumstances. Character Biography. The Foundation of Perceptable Action for the Actor “Doing and Being Done To”.
6 & 7	Begin Scripted Scene Study. Developing the physical world of storytelling. Reading of Scene Study Texts. Tablework. Think: “What do I need to know to tell this story?” Casting of Texts.
8 & 9	Building the space. Environment Set-up. Movement Patterning. Space and Objects as Catalytic to Action. Literal Doing in a Scene. The scene study textual given circumstances and influence of “reality of doing” is emphasized. Midterm Share of Your Character’s Private Moment in World of Play.
10	Introduction to William Ball’s “The Golden Key”...objective, obstacle, action.
11 - 14	Scene Study “lab” days: Putting it all together.
15	Scene share with notes to incorporate for final...Semester wrap-up

### A Weekly Breakdown

Week 1	1/10	Introduction. Course outline.
	1/12	Baseline Monologues
Week 2	1/17	Martin Luther King Day. University holiday.
	1/19	Ensemble Warm-up. Open Scene Partners Assigned. Given Circumstances Chosen.
Week 3	1/24	Devising the Scenario. Who, What, Where, When, Why and How
	1/26	Devising the Scenario cont. Character Biography: Factual and Impressionistic.
Week 4	1/31	First Share Open Scenes. Instructor and Peer Feedback. Intro Liz Lerman’s Critical Response Feedback.
	2/2	Open Scene Rework Lab
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>2/7 &amp; 9</b>	<b>Midterm One: Performance and Midterm One: Written</b>
Week 6	2/14	Presidents Day. University Holiday.
	2/16	Begin Scripted Scene Study. Developing the physical world of storytelling. Reading of 152 Scene Study Texts.
Week 7	2/21	Tablework. Think: “What do I need to know to tell this story?”
	2/23	Tablework cont. Casting of texts.
Week 8	2/28 & 3/2	Building the space. Environment Set-up. Movement Patterning. Space and Objects as Catalytic to Action. Literal Doing in a Scene. The scene study textual given circumstances and

**Week 9 3/7 & 3/9**

influence of “reality of doing” is emphasized.

**Midterm Two: Performance.** Your Character’s Private Moment in Environment Set-up. Based on Given Circumstances from World of Play.

**\*\* Spring Break March 13<sup>th</sup> –20<sup>th</sup> \*\***

Week 10 3/21 & 3/23

“The Golden Key”. Objective, Obstacle, Action

Week 11 3/28 & 3/30

Scene Study Lab Days

Week 12 4/4 & 4/6

Scene Study Lab Days

Week 13 4/11 & 13

Scene Study Lab Days

Week 14 4/18 & 20

Scene Study Lab Days

Week 15 4/25

Scene share followed by Instructor notes to incorporate for Final Semester Wrap-up. Troubleshooting session for rehearsal questions.

4/27

Semester Wrap-up. Troubleshooting session for rehearsal questions.

**Final Date & Time:** Wed., May 4<sup>th</sup> 2:00 until 4:00p.m.

**Final Exam:** Both Performance & Written

\*\*\* Process and progression subject to change according to the needs and progress of the group \*\*\*

Welcome to THTR 152 Introduction to Scene Study. I am excited to get to know each of you through our collaborative and creative exploration this semester!

**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.

\*\*The Statements and Disclosures portion of this document are subject to SDA updates. Addendums will be posted on the Blackboard posting of this syllabus/contract\*\*

**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](http://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 Accessibility Requirements**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with *The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)*. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in STU 301 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) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) [ability@usc.edu](mailto: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](https://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](https://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](https://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](https://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](https://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](https://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](http://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](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

*\*\*\*This syllabus serves as your contract for course 152, Spring Semester 2022\*\*\**