**Course Description**
Examination of basic directorial principles: pre-production analysis, casting, rehearsal procedures; relationship of the director to actor; integration of technical aspects of production. Course focus will emphasize developing strength and confidence in the areas of communication and collaboration.

**Course Objectives**
At the completion of this course the student will have:
- Researched, cast, rehearsed and completed in class presentations, excerpts from two theatrical texts.
- Gained practical experience in the role of director through classroom exercises and in the presentation of scene-work (from published plays).
- Assembled a notebook of process and procedures employed by stage directors.
- Compiled and presented two books that document and support the director’s artistic choices and processes used in the actualizing and presentation of scene-work.

**Learning Aspirations**
- To acquire a basic understanding of the skills and procedures required of a stage director to mount a theatrical production.
- To encourage the cultivation of the leadership skills necessary in the creation of an ensemble brought together for the purpose of play production.
- To embrace the role of the director as a collaborative individual, able to articulate and shape vision while embracing the creativity of the design team and actors.
- To gain practical experience in the role of director through classroom exercises and in the presentation of scene-work directed by the student.

**Prerequisite(s):** N/A
**Co-Requisite(s):** N/A
**Concurrent Enrollment:** N/A
**Recommended Preparation:** THTR 101, THTR 125, THTR 130 or 131
Course Notes, Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Textbooks: (all are available at the USC Bookstore or online)
- *A Sense of Direction*, by William Ball (req.)
- *Ludlow Fair and Home Free* by Lanford Wilson (req.)
- *The Person I Once Was* by Cindy Lou Johnson (req.)
- *Steal Like An Artist* by Austin Kleon (req.)
- A text of your choice for your vision play. (req.)
- *Notes on Directing: 130 Lessons in Leadership from the Director's Chair* by Frank Hauser (rec.)

Materials:
- A notebook (to serve as your Directors Book) is required. It needs to have the ability to hold inserts and handouts that will be accumulated across the semester. This will be handed in at your midterm and final showings of scenes.
- Students are responsible for providing necessary props, costumes, and set pieces for scene work. Lack of preparation in this area will seriously weaken your grade.
- The syllabus is posted on Blackboard. Necessary day to day updates and communications will be done via USC email.

Assignments and Classwork

A. Project One
   a. In Class Observed Rehearsals of First Scene. Due: February 21st, 23rd, 28th, and March 2nd. Assessment: Formative only. Observed rehearsals average 20-25 min. where the student director and their actors are working in class so that the encounter can be viewed by instructor and peers.
      i. Short feedback/question session follows.
      ii. All costumes, props, set pieces are required as described in the text.
   b. Midterm. Presentation of First Scene. Due: March 7th & 9th Assessment: Summative (20 points) based on attention to formative feedback from the observed rehearsal.
   c. Director’s Book #1 Due: March 7th & 9th Assessment: Summative (10 points)
      In addition to all class notes, observation responses to class exercises, your Directors Book includes (for both midterm and final projects) the following components:
      i. Class Notes (Include Peer Notes from observed rehearsals)
      ii. Vision Cornerstones
      iii. Director’s journaling of your rehearsals and process.
      iv. Reference and research pertinent to the play.
      v. Ground plan/environment sketches.
      vi. Your character descriptions and prop lists.
      vii. Director’s rehearsal script with margin notes and beat breakdown.
      viii. A 2-3-page typed summary discussion of your directing experience and development of a process.
      ix. For your summary discussion…what surprised you? Was anything exactly
what you expected? What did you find “easy”? What provided the greatest challenge? Be sure to also include ideas/projections as to how you would fine-tune the process next time. Make use of references from *A Sense of Direction, Notes on Directing, Steal Like An Artist* and pertinent classroom discussions documented in your notebook.

B. Project Two

a. Vision Presentations for Second Scene. Due: March 28th, 30th Assessment: Formative only. Following the Cornerstones of Success from William Ball’s *A Sense of Direction*, research, compile a Director’s Vision Presentation to be presented in class that articulates your concept/approach/vision for a production of a play of your choosing.
   i. Use of Visuals, Power Points, Audio Files is encouraged.
   ii. Length of presentation is 5 min. in length. Five-minute feedback/discussion session follows.
   iii. Peer Observation Notes begin and carry on for the remainder of the semester’s work. (These are turned in at the Final, May 9th)

b. Environment Set-up Lab for vision play Due: April 4th, 6th
   i. Assessment: Formative Only. Group work, peer feedback and instructor interaction/feedback modalities.

c. Observed Rehearsals of Second Scene Due: April 11th, 13th, 18th, 20th. Assessment: Formative only. Observed rehearsals average 20-25 min. where the student director and their actors are working in class so that the encounter can be viewed by instructor and peers.
   i. Emphasize usage of space and vision elements.
   ii. Short feedback/question session follows.
   iii. All costumes, props, set pieces are required.

d. Presentations of Second Scenes/Director’s Book #2 Due: April 27th, May 9th. Assessment: Summative (25 pts)

e. **Director’s Book #2** Due: April 27th, May 9th. Assessment: Summative (10 pts) Include the following components:
   i. Class Notes (Include notes from peer’s vision presentations, observed rehearsals, final shares)
   ii. Vision Cornerstones
   iii. Director’s journaling of your rehearsals and process.
   iv. Reference materials and research pertinent to your Vision play/playwright.
   v. Ground plan/environment sketches.
   vi. Prop lists.
   vii. Character descriptions, levels of objectives and relative obstacles (Universal, Super and Scene)
   viii. Director’s rehearsal script with margin notes (beat objectives, actions and director beat markings)
ix. A two-to-three page typed summary discussion of your directing experience and development of a process.

x. For your summary discussion…what surprised you? Was anything exactly what you expected? What did you find “easy”? What provided the greatest challenge? Be sure to also include ideas/projections as to how you would fine-tune the process next time. Make use of references from A Sense of Direction, Notes on Directing, Steal Like An Artist and pertinent classroom discussions documented in your notebook.

C. Peer Notes
Observe and assess your colleague’s work. Write your reflections of the exercises including aspects of Vision, Environmental and Presentation
Due: May 9th. Assessment: Summative (5 points)

D. Classwork
Students will be assessed upon their active participation in class including contributions to class discussions, exercises and active listening throughout the semester.
Summative (30 points)

Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments

Grading is done on a curve using a 100-point scale. Observed rehearsals are graded in concert with grading of classwork. Scenes are graded based on clear evidence of preparedness (all props, costumes, set evidenced) and fulfillment of your directors’ vision, as articulated in your Director’s Book journal.

I look to see that what is on the page has found its way onto the stage!

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
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<td>20%</td>
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<td>Directors Book #1</td>
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Assignment Submission Policy and Grading Timeline

- Assignments due as described above.
- All paper-work submissions must be compiled into portfolio form and turned in to me electronically through Blackboard, your Google Folder set up for Spring ’22 or USC email. Note that I will have “spot observed” your Director’s Book during class time throughout the semester.
• 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.
• Formalized grading of performance and written work can be expected within 3 class sessions from the due date.

**Additional Policies**

**Attendance:**
• 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.
• There are no excused absences. Three tardy episodes constitute one absence.

**Time Requirements:**
• Rehearsals outside of scheduled class time are required for a successful outcome in 305a.
  Note…Scenes need often be cast with students outside of this section’s enrollment. You may not act in your own directing scene.
• Logistical prowess in terms of time management for self and others is required.
• Students are responsible for providing necessary props, costumes, and set pieces for scene work. Lack of preparation in this area will seriously weaken your grade.
• Each student will maintain a **Director’s Book** containing; classroom notes, observations, comments upon viewing other students in class rehearsals (peer notes) and scene presentations and documentation of your directing process as described above in “Assignments”. This may be checked and referenced during observed rehearsals and is turned in to me in two increments: Directors Book for first play at midterm and for second/vision play at final periods. *See “Hint” below*
• Peer Observation Notes from in class exercises, observed rehearsals and presentations.

**Classroom Rules:**
• 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.
• 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.
• 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**.
• Acting in a classmates 305a scene is encouraged and will count as 1-point of extra credit toward your final grade. If this occurs in another section of 305A, please bring documentation of participation. A maximum of 2-extra credit points is possible per semester.
• Scheduling rehearsal space should be done according to the SDA scheduling protocol.
• Check your USC email regularly. Scheduling changes and other timely information will be sent via email.
• Cell phones are to be turned off 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.

Hint about the Written Work of a Director (Your Class Notebook/Directors Book/Peer Observation Notes)
• Be diligent about documenting your curiosities.
• Don’t put off jotting down thoughts!! An idea may seem so vivid at the time it occurs to you, but you’ll find sitting down to write 24 hours (or 8 weeks…yikes!) after you had an idea or thought is a sure way to lose it.
• Don’t know what to write about in your entries? Write about what you observe in the work of others.
• How effective is the work in final sharing? Is what they set forth to accomplish evidenced? Why or why not?
• Watching and then analyzing the result of other processes is a sure way to clarify your own.

Note on Staging/Out of Class Rehearsals
• No actual weapons can be used in scenes, and if you intend to use a prop weapon, please discuss this with me.
• Since our directing class is occurring while we must still be “COVID Conscious” please take all COVID precautions listed in the Trojan Health App when you gather to rehearse. We all want you to be safe and healthy so we can remain in person!

Process and Progression

Week 1  1/10  Introduction. Course outline.
        1/12  Discussion: the role of the director. Assignment: Read Ludlow Fair & Home Free and The Person I Once Was by Jan. 19th.

Week 2  1/17  Martin Luther King Day. University holiday.

Week 3  1/24  Auditioning. Casting. Have read: Sense of Direction, pages 44 through 69.
        1/26  Casting cont.

Week 4  1/31  Creation of the ensemble. How do I talk to the actors? How do I encourage them to talk to each other? Have read: Sense of Direction, pages 70 through 92.

Week 5 2/7 & 9 Continue work on objectives. Composition and Picturization. Directorial shaping of the scene. Stages in rehearsal progression.

** Note: Begin search for second (vision play) project. **

Week 6 2/14 Presidents Day. University Holiday.
2/16 Physicalizing of Action in “Blocking”. Secondary activity and physical action that supports story and character objectives.

Week 7 2/21 Observed Rehearsals. Search for second project (Vision play).
2/23 Observed Rehearsals (*Ludlow Fair & Home Free & The Person I Once Was*). Vision play chosen.

Week 8 2/28 & 3/2 Observed rehearsals. Script for Vision play green-lighted by instructor.

Week 9 3/7 & 3/9 Midterm share. Presentation of *Ludlow Fair & Home Free* and *The Person I Once Was* scenes. Director’s Book #1 Due.

** Spring Break March 13th – 20th **


Week 11 3/28 & 3/30 Vision Presentations
Week 12 4/4 & 4/6 Presentation of Vision play environment set-up and use of playing areas. Group feedback/discussion.

Week 13 4/11 & 13 Observed Rehearsals. Attention to environment/place is imperative.
Week 14 4/18 & 20 Observed Rehearsals continued. Attention to environment/place is imperative.

Week 15 4/25 Semester Wrap-up. Class discussion of notes from first presentation of second scenes. Troubleshooting session for rehearsal questions.
4/27 Begin final presentation of second scenes, Wed. April 24th and cont. Mon., May 9th 11:00a.m.- 1:00 p.m. (Director’s Paper Packet #2 due at time of students’ scene presentation).

** Final Exam: Mon., May 9th 11:00 until 1:00 p.m. Director’s Book #2 due at final presentation of vision scene. **

*** Reading assignments should be completed by the day listed. ***

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

** 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. 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.

**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.simplicity.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.
***This syllabus serves as your contract for course 305A, Spring Semester 2022***