

USC School of Dramatic Arts

THTR 506 63224D Advanced Creating Characters
Spring 2022 Thursday 4 – 6:20 pm
Location: GFS 213 **Section** 63224D

Office Hours: Available: Mon & Wed 2:30 - 4 pm; Tuesday Noon – 3 pm; please note that office hours are by appointment only; contact me via email or phone, at least 24 hours in advance. For appointments outside these hours, I am available by videoconference on SKYPE or Facetime.

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ITHelp: USC Information Technology Services
<http://itservices.usc.edu>; School of Dramatic Arts – Mr. Prakash Shirke, Contact Info: shirke@usc.edu; 213.740.1288. MCC

Course Description

Catalogue description: *THTR 506* An advanced writing workshop that focuses on continuing development of the crafting of character, centering on depth, breadth, dimensionality, and authenticity.

In most good stories, it is the character's personality that creates the action of the story. If you start with a real personality, a real character, then something is bound to happen.

--Flannery O'Connor, *Writing Short Stories*

Course Overview

Advanced Creating Characters is a writing workshop for graduate student writers who already have done the foundational work of character development and are looking to delve deeper into the human psyche, with an emphasis on character complexity and authenticity. Original characters, not stereotypes, with distinct voices, quirks, and traits are the goal. The course is also an opportunity for writers to engage in an exploration of sensitivity, empathy, diversity/inclusivity versus cultural appropriation. MFA writers will be challenged to be proactive in the class and develop and apply a set of diagnostic tools that they can use to fix ailing characters on their own in future scriptwriting. The course work will include not only character creation and scene writing, but also the critical analysis of the work of other contemporary writers, including memoirists who write about writing. In taking a look at the latter, we can determine if it is possible to adapt parts of their process for writing fictional plays. Advanced Creating Characters also looks at how to harness the dark side of human nature—inner demons, desires, lies, secrets, and fatal flaws—to craft dramatic stories. Characters will be viewed as a key component of every dramatic work—serving not only as story generators, but also as creators of the world of the piece and the source of movement in the work. Particular emphasis will be placed on establishing and maintaining empathy, especially when working on difficult and/or dangerous characters, as well as using metaphor to deepen characters and subtext. Note: This class can support writing done in other MFA courses.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- apply various strategies for character creation;
- establish for each character a unique voice;
- use multidimensional characters as a point of origin for stories;
- establish the “lore” of the play and how this expands the lead character;
- provide constructive feedback on character development and scenes;
- devise a diagnostic tool and a process for reworking/strengthening characters.

And Beyond...

We’re also adopting key elements of USC’s 21st-century vision as our own by paying attention to Sustainability, Connection, Transformation.

What does this mean?

SUSTAINABILITY - This class lives in the world of the Green New Deal. No printing. All work, including the Final Project, will be turned in electronically. Handouts and course materials will be paperless, available online via Blackboard.

CONNECTION means that we will make contact in several ways—with each other, with the creative community, with the world at large. We’ll connect with each other to form a support network so that everyone feels secure taking artistic risks; plus we’ll connect via text message and online to keep up to the minute on what’s going on in class; you may even want to connect in smaller groups or creative clusters via Zoom. We’ll also stay attuned to what’s going on in American theatre—[particularly how theatre adjusts/is adjusting to the pandemic and post-pandemic world](#)--and we’ll look at what’s going on locally and globally and explore how we can use art for growth and healing. Let’s take a look at the stories that have gone untold and the people who have gone unrecognized and determine what we can do to change that.

TRANSFORMATION means that we will be looking at theatre writing as a way to effect transformation in our lives, and in the lives of others; we’ll look at creating theatre from a place of empathy, from a place of heart-driven concern for humanity; we’ll look at culture and trends and attempt to define and redefine playwriting for the 21st century.

Prerequisite(s): None

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

UNPUBLISHED PLAYS (to be supplied as PDFs by instructor; determined after discussion)

On your own, take some time to read these plays and guides for a richer insight into what is theatre and how many ways there are to develop characters:

AUBERGINE. Julia Cho.

WATER BY THE SPOONFUL. Quiara Alegria Hudes.

ANIMALS OUT OF PAPER or DESCRIBE THE NIGHT. Rajiv Joseph.

(continued)

FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS, PARTS 1,2,3. Suzan-Lori Parks.

INDECENT. Paula Vogel.

MR. BURNS – A POST-ELECTRIC PLAY. Anne Washburn.

PLAYWRITING BRIEF AND BRILLIANT. Julie Jensen.

THE EMPTY SPACE. Peter Brook.

Published texts available via the USC Bookstore or online at Amazon. They may also be found via the USC library. Unpublished plays and various articles, essays supplied as PDFs.

Highly recommended for psychology of characters:

THE SOUL’S CODE. James Hillman.

The School of Dramatic Arts’ Dramatic Writing Program guidelines call for each student in playwriting courses to read at least seven plays as part of the course and to investigate them critically. You are encouraged, in particular, to read contemporary work. Plays will be suggested in class. The more you read, the more you will become aware of the diverse styles, voices, and structural forms open to you as a writer.

Special Note

All students enrolled in MFADW are required to attend program events. This includes all of the New Works Festival events (NWF I, II, and III), all Western Edge Playwrights’ Salon events, and the student orientation held in late August. While some of these dates are not yet solidified, please put the times/dates in your calendar as soon as you can. Because we are monitoring professional development in every course that you take, and in the MFADW overall, your participation in these program events will have a direct impact on your annual review.

Please make any and all travel plans for after the New Works Festival III.

Description of Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments

Grading criteria: The quality of work for all components (see list under “Grading Breakdown”) is determined by the thoroughness of the effort, the continuing process, and the imagination displayed.

Grading Scale for SDA: **A** indicates work of excellent quality; **B** of good quality; **C** of acceptable quality; **D** of below average quality; and **F** indicates inadequate work.

Excellent: A (4) = 100-94; A- (3.7) = 93-90

Good: B+ (3.3) = 89-86; B (3) = 85-84; B- (2.7) = 83-80

Acceptable: C+ (2.3) = 79-76; C (2) = 75-74; C- (1.7) = 73-70

Poor: D+ (1.3) = 69 – 66; D = 65-64 (1); D = 63 - 60 (0.7) = 60s; F (0) = 59 and below

Note: A minimum passing grade for graduate students is C.

- “Excellent” indicates that the student couples clear understanding of the class material with original and creative insight, as demonstrated by their work; “Good” means that the student demonstrates a clear understanding of the material and has done the work well; “Acceptable” indicates that the student demonstrates a general understanding of the material but with some gaps; “Poor” indicates that there are identifiable gaps in the student’s understanding of the class material; “Failure” is the result of the student not having completed his or her assignments coupled with poor understanding of the material.

- When the average falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class have been good, and will be weighted toward the negative end of the scale for those with poor attendance and participation.

Grading Breakdown

Your grade will be based on multiple components: the creation of a character inspiration/research presentation; the development of character banks/character recipes/monologues; critical analysis (which includes reading and discussion of assigned texts as well as other participants' work); the ongoing documentary theatre project; in-class exercises; creating a personal diagnostic tool; ongoing writing and revision; completion of a Final Project, which is a portfolio of selected work for the semester.

Please bear in mind that you earn your grade based on the timely completion of your work, plus the quality of your work. Late assignments are marked down due to missed deadline. Assignments are accepted only within one week of due date. After that, they are considered a missed assignment, which counts as zero. (Note: A late assignment is marked down one grade notch, approximately 5 points; i.e., an assignment that would have earned an A receives an A- for missing the deadline; an assignment that would have earned a B+ receives a B for missing the deadline, etc.)

Components of the overall grade are weighted as follows:

Character Inspiration/Research Presentation	15 percent
Character Bank/Character Recipes/Monologues/etc	5 percent
Critical Analysis (reading and discussion)	5 percent
Voices for SZLA Interactive Project	15 percent
Individual Character Diagnostic Tool & Process	10 percent
Participation (In-Class, Exercises, etc.)	10 percent
Ongoing writing and revision	25 percent
Final Project Portfolio	15 percent
TOTAL	100 percent

The Character Inspiration/Research Presentation is a creative project in which each writer presents the various sources that provide the background for the characters of a play and for the world of the play. In addition to being a research component of writing—this project is also a way to get in touch with your unconscious motivators. These presentations may include visual art, musical inspirations, charts, graphics, articles/news stories/essays, photographs, podcasts, archival documents—any kind of source material. If desired, the presentations may be done in a specific format, such as Powerpoint, Prezi, Keynote, Tumblr, etc. Be prepared to discuss your resources and inspirations for your characters/story both in a creative/metaphoric language, as well as pragmatically. Note that this presentation is a “vision board” and is useful whenever beginning a creative work; it may include items that inspire you in general, or items that relate particularly to the characters you have in mind right now (even if you don’t know what to do with them), or items that are even more specific and directly relate to a play you want to write. This a tool with which you can tap into your imagination; you can use it as an active, multimedia form of brainstorming, as a way to start to explore ideas, as a way to begin to frame your thoughts, as a way to visualize characters, and, in this class in particular, as a way to promote discussion with

other artists to enhance your vision. The “board” part of this vision board presentation is virtual—we’ll project/share your inspirations on a screen.

Character Banks, Character Recipes, and Monologues are early explorations of character traits and the unique voices of characters. They may also serve as a virtual journal or resource bank of characters to work on in the future; or as a way to brainstorm with yourself; or as a map to the ongoing development of specific characters.

Critical Analysis is vital to every writer because it provides a process for assessing artistic work. In the analysis of already published/produced plays, you gain experience in taking a deeper look at character, language, and structure—which can then be applied to evaluating your own work, to assist you in revision. In the analysis of the work of other writers in the workshop, you gain experience in providing useful guidance to text that is still in-progress and that may be at a more ephemeral stage of development. Both these skills are important in your ongoing life as a writer.

The SZLA Voices project is a special component that offers an opportunity to work with a different kind of source material in different media for the purpose of creating empathy for specific people around a specific topic. [For spring 2022 we will be working on the interactive component for SACRIFICE ZONES: LOS ANGELES.](#) In other years, we have tapped into the vast multimedia archives of the Shoah Foundation, via their iWitness program, and use testimonies to develop characters for fictional work, which may be a short play, a monologue, or a project proposal. Please feel free to check out Shoah.

Note for those of you interested in pursuing a Shoah project as additional work now or in future years: Shoah Foundation researchers will be happy to demonstrate how to use the archives and will also provide guidance on how to conduct interviews for a potential documentary piece based on testimonies. One method is to watch several testimonies and select one person’s testimony in particular. From the selected testimony, develop a character for a fictional play (or documentary-style piece) using the person’s testimony; components of this project might include a monologue and/or a short play. For the monologue, the following questions could be asked: Is the writer getting in touch with the character—and in what way? How is the writer using the testimony to develop the world for a play? For the short play, the following questions could be asked: How has the testimony influenced the creation of the play—story? character voice? theme? metaphor? How has the testimony expanded the writer’s vision? Class critique of the Testimonies project could explore these questions and more. (Note: Your approach to the Testimonies project is optional. We’ll discuss in class.)

What is the diagnostic tool?

Each of you will devise some sort of strategy or process-oriented method for checking your characters for authenticity, voice, and integrity. These will be individualized to your needs/desires as a writer (and perhaps, also, individualized to the requirements of the play you’re working on).

What does participation entail?

Participation includes: presentations; in-class exercises; ongoing work on the documentary project; discussion of assigned reading; and, most important, constructive, guided feedback provided for the other writers’ work. The participation grade is determined as follows: For each class session, you get a check mark for showing up (which constitutes a B); you get a check mark

with a plus sign (+) if you participate diligently (which constitutes an A); you get a check mark with a negative sign (-) if your participation is less than adequate (which constitutes a C). Please respect your community of writers and be on time. Chronic lateness will constitute a lowering of the participation grade. [\[\[Note for Spring 2022: We are aware that covid protocols and/or testing may require you to quarantine. Please COMMUNICATE and let me know when these issues arise.\]\]](#)

Your Final Project is a creative portfolio of material you select that illustrates your understanding of multidimensional characters plus your ability to develop and use such characters. The project will be graded on artistic merit, comprehension of character principles, and progress, i.e., your growth from early exploratory work to later drafts. Re: The Final Project – These will vary; some of you may use this class to develop characters for a play you’re working on in another class; some of you may use this class to create an entirely new play, whether full-length or one-act or ultra-short; some of you may have an alternate idea. We’ll take time to discuss this in the workshop and you can pitch your ideas to me. Anything goes—as long as it’s clear to me that you are working diligently and the work you’re doing is meaningful.

HINT: Keep a Creative Journal! This is an archive of your explorations for writing; it may include jottings off the top of your head, stuff from your Inspiration Board, research, ideas, resources for current and future writing, and exercises and raw material from class. NOTE: It’s no longer necessary to keep an actual journal, on paper. Due to the proliferation of smart phone and tablet apps for storing notes, etc., the Creative Journal may now be electronic. But do keep one. It will make your writing so much easier!

Note: The SDA GUIDELINES on GRADING state that:

- *There shall be no unexcused absences.*
- *No late assignments, projects, exams, papers, or exercises shall be accepted unless advance extensions have been arranged between the student and the teacher or unless exceptional circumstances occur. Under such exceptional circumstances, no late penalties will accrue.*

Additional Policies

Participation is essential and figures into your grade. This course is modeled along the lines of a professional, artistic workshop; thus, as a member of such a workshop, your participation is necessary not only for the development of your own work, but for the development of your colleagues’ work as well. Theatre is a highly collaborative, community-oriented medium and play development is a key part of the life of a playwright. Indeed, in this class, one of our projects depends upon collaboration. Please honor your obligation to your colleagues’ work and contribute to the discussion. Absences must be for reasons of illness or emergency and must be accompanied by a written explanation; in your absence, please prepare the assigned work that is due and turn it in immediately upon return to the workshop.

1. You are entering into a collaborative relationship with fellow writers and, thus, it is your responsibility to be available to your workshop colleagues for feedback, analysis, and support.
2. All workshop members must be treated with respect.

3. You are required to attend the workshop and to be on time. Tardiness is defined as being 15 minutes late or more. Excessive tardiness will affect your ongoing writing and participation grade. [[Note for Spring 2021: Yes, we're aware that internet connectivity may create problems. Just communicate if you are having difficulties—via text, email, or as soon as you have access to some communication technology.]]
4. Though SDA's policy states that there are no unexcused absences, please note that I will excuse absences for certain specific reasons, such as a valid professional development opportunity, provided you make arrangements with me in advance. For other absences to be excused, the absences must be for reasons of illness or emergency, and you must notify me in writing (preferably in advance). For the most part, if you are doing your work diligently and if you communicate with me, I will excuse a legitimate absence. [[Note for Spring 2021: Internet connectivity issues can occur; if you have difficulty connecting, let me know as soon as possible.]]
5. All assignments, written and/or otherwise, must be prepared on time and turned in (or presented) on the deadline date. Late assignments will be marked down due to the missed deadline. Assignments not turned in within a week of deadline count as missed assignments (zero credit).
6. IF YOU MISS CLASS: It is your responsibility—and SOLELY YOUR RESPONSIBILITY—to make up work you have missed and to obtain information about missed class discussions or missed assignments from your classmates or Blackboard, **not from me**. I will not be repeating lectures or class discussion; you will need to make arrangements to do independent research on whatever topics you have missed to keep up with the workshop. You will also need to keep in contact with your classmates to obtain notes and/or information re: what you missed. Again: Do not request notes or information from me. Course materials can be found on the Blackboard site for this course. For your syllabus, handouts, etc., go to Blackboard.
7. Please check your e-mail regularly to see if there are any changes in class meeting place, etc. On rare occasions, it becomes necessary to schedule a new location for class meeting. If I am unable to provide you with this information in the preceding class, I will send you the information via e-mail and/or text message.
8. We're going green in this classroom, so you will be providing all workshop members with copies of your work virtually, thus eliminating the need for paper. Instructions on how to do this will be provided. For collaborations, you may work on Google documents that may be team-edited via Google Drive.
9. If you desire an appointment with me, you are required to contact me via e-mail or text message at least 24 hours in advance, otherwise there is no guarantee I will receive your message with sufficient time to make arrangements to meet with you. Please note that I have included multiple ways to contact me on the front page of this syllabus.

Zoom Etiquette

If it becomes necessary to Zoom: "Netiquette," or "internet etiquette," is important for collaborative work. Please respect the following guidelines:

- Whenever possible, please use your computer to log-in to the class rather than your phone. This will help us with the quality of visuals and audio, plus it will present fewer problems when sharing screens.
- If you have technical issues during class, please contact: USC Information Technology Services <http://itservices.usc.edu>; School of Dramatic Arts – Mr. Prakash Shirke. Contact Info: shirke@usc.edu; 213.740.1288.

- Your camera must be on at all times, unless you are requested to hide video.
- Please attempt to log-in from an environment that does not have distracting background noise, such as pets, family members, machinery, music. If you find yourself in a situation with distracting noise, please use ear buds or headphones.
- When not speaking (for example, during a reading of a scene, when you are not playing a role), please mute your microphone. During discussions feel free to leave your mic on.
- Remember that you are in class, therefore behavior appropriate to class should be followed. Please do not walk around, leave the room, read, play games, etc. during class.
- You may use your devices for research that enhances the discussion during class, but please stay attuned to what is going on while engaged in research.
- Try to take turns speaking. Remember that Zoom creates problems when voices overlap.
- The chat box will be available to you to use during class, however please don't abuse it. For example, remember that everyone can see what you type in the chat. Therefore your comments should not contain private messages to another class member—which can be read in the saved chat. Also, try to use chat to enhance the discussion, rather than interrupt it.
- Remember: The class session is being recorded. (This includes the chat.)
- Be respectful of others at all times.
- Remember: We're all in this together. Now more than ever.

Sharing of Course Materials Outside of the Learning Environment

USC has a policy that 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

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
Weeks 1 – 3 Jan 13 to Jan 27 Note: Week 1 is online.	Preparation & Gathering Introduction: Where Are We and Where Are We Going? Assessment, Diagnosis, and Challenge. Consider: Surprising yourself; writing the best play you <i>can't</i> write; writing beyond your comfort zone; uncovering the people whose stories haven't been told.	Discussion: Throughout the course of this workshop we will look at the various elements that go into creating characters including: Laying the Groundwork. Complex Characters and Deep Characterization. Heroes/Myths from the Millennia—Ancient to Contemporary. True Life Characters—Advantages and Major Disadvantages of Characters from Real Life. The Psychology of Characters—Profiles/Temperaments/Archetypes,	Week 1: Begin to collect your resources, e.g., research, burning ideas, poetic impulses, images, emotional foundation, monologues, character banks, music/soundtrack. Read the materials on Blackboard; read plays provided as PDFs. Week 2: Present Inspiration Boards/Vision Boards, character banks & profiles.

	<p>Consider: What is a character-driven script?</p>	<p>plus Depth Psychology (see James Hillman). Character Flaws, Secrets, Quirks, Contradictions, Desires, Demons, Inconsistencies. Introduction to the Character's Voice.</p> <p>Introduction to Tools: The Inspiration Board; Character Banks; Creative Journal.</p> <p>CHECK IN on SZLA project.</p> <p><i>TBD: The "assessment-challenge" plays, i.e., who should read what? Please participate in the suggestions for each other.</i></p>	<p>Week 2: Turn in items for interactive media portion of SZLA project.</p> <p>Week 2 and ongoing: Continued work on documentary project.</p> <p>Week 3: For future work: Expand your character bank. For the character bank, derive and develop at least one from myth, one based on testimony research, one based on a current event or historical figure, and one totally from your imagination. For current work: What characters from your plays in other courses need development?</p> <p>Week 3 and ongoing: Write an exploratory monologue for selected characters. (Hint: Pay attention to sound and rhythm of our character's voice. Your characters may start to generate story and scene ideas as they talk. Let them!)</p> <p>Note: We will be doing many things at once. We will be exploring and developing characters, analyzing already existing characters, working on the documentary project, and writing/preparing the Final Project. Some people will be working on different types of material—and I will be offering different kinds of guidance to different people depending on what phase their work is in. Sometimes you will not be able to present your work—but don't wait! Keep working on your</p>
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			<p>characters, on your writing, on your documentary components, etc., even if in class we are working on something else.</p> <p>Sometimes you will be the only one working in a particular mode. No worries. Be prepared to be flexible. Remember that there is no one way of writing a play, no one way of getting there. Please stay on top of things and continue to develop your work in your way—but on time and diligently.</p>
<p>Weeks 4 - 12</p> <p>Feb 3 to Apr 7</p>	<p>The Process: From Exploration & Experimentation to Mission & Transformation</p> <p>Active Characterization: Characters as Story Generators.</p> <p>Character Voice—Including Rhythm, Diction, Slang.</p> <p>Sensory Work and Metaphor—The Character as Creator of the World of the Play.</p> <p>The Physical Mission Versus the Personal/Psychic Mission; The Flip from Want to Need.</p> <p>Insight & Evaluation: What Did You Intend—and Where Are You Now? (For good or for bad.)</p> <p>Introduction to The Personal Diagnostic Tool.</p>	<p>Ongoing Discussion</p> <p>Checklist:</p> <p>Empathy.</p> <p>Metaphor.</p> <p>Rituals.</p> <p>Self and Shadow Self—The Inner Character, Inner Child, Inner Demon, Inner Life.</p> <p>Exploration of the Character’s Often-Invisible Motivators.</p> <p>Dream Time - Waking Dreams, Day Dreams, Dreamspace, Nightmares.</p> <p>Transformation.</p> <p>The Dark Side, Too—Antagonists and Anti-Heroes.</p> <p>The Fun Stuff: Subtext, Contradictions, Lies, Misdirects, Miscommunication, and the Unreliable.</p> <p>Working Beyond the One Dimensional for Supporting Players: Sidekicks, Mentors, Catalysts, Clowns.</p> <p>The Worst-Case Scenario—Pushing Your Character to the Edge.</p> <p>Anticipating an Ending.</p> <p>Character Epiphanies and Revelations.</p>	<p>Weeks 4 - 6: Check in with documentary project.</p> <p>Weeks 4 – 5. Write the BFF interviews. “Interview” the people around your character and write up the interview sessions. Write exploratory/ experimental scenes based on characters from character banks.</p> <p>Week 5: Read the “assessment-challenge” plays.</p> <p>Weeks 5-12: Write and workshop new exploratory scenes. (Note: It may be the first scene of a play, a scene from the middle, or the last scene of the play. It’s not necessary that you write in order at this point. You may also write a scene that is purely exploration and ultimately doesn’t make it into the play. That’s fine. This is all part of the process.)</p> <p>Note: Alternate assignment. If I asked for a particular type of scene or exploration</p>

			<p>or another type of writing, please produce.</p> <p><i>Hint: Look at your writing exercises and monologues for possible raw material for your work on characters for Final Project portfolio and for other plays you are writing.</i></p>
Weeks 13 - 15 Apr 14 To Apr 28	Works in Progress	Discussion Consider: What changes everything? What is missing? What does the character need for the play to go deeper? How do you motivate yourself to do YOUR work?	<p>Week 13: Present your own personal diagnostic tool.</p> <p>Week 13: Present some element of the documentary project.</p> <p>Weeks 13 – 15: Assess the raw material you’ve created, along with the pages you’ve generated. Assess risk-taking and construct a challenge. Look to your sources of inspiration. Present revised pages from your work (writer’s choice).</p> <p>TURN IN: Your Final Project portfolio. Due May 5, 2022.</p>
FINAL Thursday May 5	FINAL EXAM 4:30 – 6:30 pm	Artistic Review: Group Feedback & Critique of Scripts. Plus: Last Look Q&As. Where to go next.	<p>Date: For confirmation of the date and time of the final for this class, consult the USC <i>Schedule of Classes</i> at www.usc.edu/soc.</p>

REMINDER: Use Blackboard as a resource. Class materials, information, handouts, additional essays, source materials, etc., are posted on the class site on Blackboard.

We all have two heads and two memories. A head of clay, which will turn to dust; and another, forever invulnerable to the gnawings of time and of passion. One memory that death kills, a compass that expires with the journey, and another memory, the collective memory, which will live as long as the human adventure in the world lives. –Eduardo Galeano, *Memory of Fire: Faces and Masks*

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 (Video 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.