CTPR:533 Directing Techniques

Section: 18632D

Units: 2

Spring 2022 — Monday — 7:00 - 10:30pm

Location: RZC STG D

Instructor: James Savoca
Office Hours: By appointment only
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Course Description

A second semester of Intermediate Directing, the core of the course will focus on the "workshop concept" of learning, via three vital directing techniques: Visual Aesthetic, Coverage Philosophy and Blocking Concept, with an overview of the concerns, functions and responsibilities of the Director — all with an emphasis on movement.

In addition, each student will direct 3 exercises(a sequence of scenes), the 1st exercise to act as a review of where the student's directing skills are currently. The last two will function to execute the directing techniques which will be taught and workshopped in class.

Each project will be screened in class with Instructor highlighting what works and doesn't, incorporating the entire class; adding suggestions for improvements.

Learning Objectives

To develop specific skills of filmmaking - from the POV of the Director; the emphasis being on blocking and movement.

•*Visual Aesthetic*: to understand how best to create the look of the film. This is a process in where the director collaborates with the cinematographer and production designer. The student will learn how to determine what are the right visual choices for the film, such as lens choice, moving or not moving the camera. If moving, how and why? Lighting? Warm or cold? Most importantly, is the feel that of Observing or Intimate?

•*Blocking Concept*: to understand that blocking comes before camera, and at the heart of a great scene is creative blocking. Students will learn ways to create compelling blocking techniques first hand on the stage as we'll get the scenes "up on their feet."

•*Coverage Philosophy*: to understand that prior to executing the actual shooting of the scene, a philosophy must first be created. The student will learn the choices of coverage and how they work in the different genres, in addition; how to craft a strong opening and closing shot. Scenes will be created on the stage where all students will participate in how best to cover the scene.

•E*3 Workshops:* the core of the class; each student will get their scenes up on its feet with actors; working out blocking and a coverage philosophy.

Course Notes

All mobile devices, laptops and tablets are not permitted for reasons to be discussed on the first day.

Students will receive a letter grade at the end of the class as an evaluation of their overall work in the course, in accordance with the policies and practices of

USC and the School of Cinematic Arts. (Please see the **"Grading"** section in the Syllabus for further details.)

Description and Assessment of Assignments

There are three assignments:

E1 - *The Overview:* An edited <u>2 character scene</u> to demonstrate the student's ability on performance, blocking and camera. TRT: 3 minutes. Material/genre is student's choice.

E2 - *Genre Project:* A sequence of scenes with a TRT of 5 minutes. Material is student's choice. Options for genre's are: Sci-Fi, Horror, Thriller, Romance, Musical and Comedy.

E3 - *Final Project:* A sequence of scenes with a TRT of 8 minutes. Material/genre is student's choice. All scenes/scripts are to be uploaded to our Drive(see due dates under Course Schedule). Each E3 scene/script must include a "one liner" and "director's intentions."

*All projects are fiction. All projects will be filmed within the accepted SCA "zone" and adhere to all SCA safety guidelines.

Covid-19 Production Protocols

An updated Fall 2022 Covid-19 Production Protocols will be handed out the first day of class and discussed. A brief summary: all actors and crew must be vaccinated(booster included) and tested 72 hours prior to production, with negative results. Masks are to be worn at all times, except of course when shooting — as the actor can take off their mask.

Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Class Participation	10	10
The Overview Project	10	10
Genre Project	25	25
E3 workshop on stage	25	25
Final Project	30	30
TOTAL	**100**	**100**

Grading Scale

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
All projects are to be uploaded to the class' SCA Google Drive.
See specific due dates on Course Schedule.

Grading Timeline
Feedback will be given for projects in class during week 4, in weeks 7-8 and weeks 14-15.

Additional Policies
Scheduled topics, assignments and due dates are subject to change.

No projects will be accepted later than the final class date. All late projects will receive a grade deduction for each class day they are late.

Non-attendance policy:
Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. When assignments are late or not completed the grade may be lowered up to one full grade. Two absences will result in a student's grade being lowered by one full letter (IE: A becomes B). Each subsequent absence will result in a student's grade being lowered by one, additional full letter (IE: B becomes C).
Two late class arrivals equate to one full absence.
In order for an absence to be waived, the student must have approval from the professor.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Deliverables
Class 1 8/22	Introductions Course overview Discuss Covid protocols; Safety & HSF Protocol(no signings on Friday!); shooting zone; stages(**no**); look at our Drive/go over script rules; Create Workshop Groups(5) *Visual Aesthetic & Overview*	*E1 due SEPT 12*

Class 2 8/29	*Blocking Concept Workshop/hands on* *Students encourage to bring in scenes to block/work on(E2)*	
Class 3 9/5	****NO CLASS****	Labor Day
Class 4 9/12	Screen E1's(all groups) Sign ups for next week workshop.	*E2 due SEPT 26(all)*
Class 5 9/19	*Coverage Philosophy Workshop/ hands on* *Crafting great opening & closing shots* *Students encourage to bring in scenes to block/work on for P2.*	
Class 6 9/26	*Screen E2*	*Group A/half Group B*
Class 7 10/3	*Screen E2*	*Group C/half Group B*
Class 8 10/10	E3 Workshop - Group A	*Group A script/scene due: OCT 3*
Class 9 10/17	E3 Workshop - Group B	*Group B script/scene due: OCT 10*
Class 10 10/24	E3 Workshop - Group C	*Group C script/scene due: OCT 17*
Class 11 10/31	E3 Workshop - Group D	*Group D script/scene due: OCT 24*
Class12 11/7	E3 Workshop - Group E	*Group E script/scene due: OCT 31*
Class 13 11/14	Screen E3	Group A
Class 14 11/21	Screen E3	Group B
Class 15 11/28	Screen E3	Group C

Safety: All students are expected to abide by USC School of Cinematic Arts Safety Guidelines. Violations of any of the safety guidelines may result in disciplinary action ranging from confiscation of footage to expulsion from the University.

CAMERA, G&E EQUIPMENT AND CINEMATOGRAPHER POLICY FOR CTPR 533 – Directing Techniques

Students may shoot with their own cameras and edit with their own software. If SCA camera equipment is needed, see below:

RESERVATION PROCEDURE: Students must contact the SCA Camera Dept. to confirm a camera's availability and verify that the student cinematographer has taken the required classes.

Reservation Priority Ranking:
1st Priority: CTPR 581 – Thesis Project
2nd Priority: CTPR 552 – Advanced Directing
3rd Priority: CTPR: 533 – Directing Techniques
4th Priority: CTPR 532 – Intermediate Directing
5th Priority: CTPR 565 – Making Media for Social Change

Priority & Bumping: A higher priority class can bump a lower priority class up to 7 days before a shoot (Example: 2nd priority Advanced Directing can bump 3rd priority Directing Techniques).
NOTE: A 581 can bump any reservation up to 7 days before a shoot.

CTPR 552, 533, & 532 Classes:

1. Students enrolled in 552, 533 and 532 have access to Sony EX3 cameras (if available) or Canon XC15 cameras. These are the standard, officially supported cameras for these classes.

2. If a student in 552, 533 or 532 wants to use the Sony F3 camera (with or without USC lenses) or the Black Magic Ursa Mini-Pro (with or without USC lenses), the cinematographer must be currently enrolled in SCA, have completed CTPR 424 or 537 and have completed a training session with Jeremy Royce at the Camera Genius Bar.

3. If a student in 552, 533 or 532 wants to use a USC Red Dragon (with or without USC lenses), the cinematographer must be currently enrolled in SCA and have completed CTPR 557 Advanced Cinematography. Accessories must be rented from vendors on the Fast Track Insurance List https://scacommunity.usc.edu/resources/student_resources/insurance.cfm and paid for by the student enrolled in the class. USC insurance never covers unapproved vendors or student owned equipment.

4. The F-65 camera is only available to thesis projects.

5. Directing class students are the only person listed on the production number and are responsible for covering the deductible if equipment is lost or damaged. The deductible is $2,500 per item per occurrence (Example: if a single event damages a camera and a lens, the deductible payment due is $5,000). This applies to equipment from USC and rented from USC approved vendors. USC insurance never covers unapproved vendors. Student owned equipment is not covered by the USC insurance policy.

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, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

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.

Student Health Leave Coordinator – 213-821-4710
Located in the USC Support and Advocacy office, the Health Leave Coordinator processes requests for health leaves of absence and advocates for students taking such leaves when needed.
https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-absence/

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 and 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. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following *protected characteristics*: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. The university also prohibits sexual assault, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, malicious dissuasion, retaliation, and violation of interim measures.

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 micro aggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

Campus Support & 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) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Office of the Ombuds - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)
ombuds.usc.edu
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE IN THE SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX