

**Instructor:** Laura Flanagan  
**Office:** JEF 200a  
**Office Hours:** By appointment  
**Contact Info:** [lgoldsch@usc.edu](mailto:lgoldsch@usc.edu)  
Will return emails within 48 hours

### **Course Description**

This course will be your first dive into the deep and wonderful world of Voice for the Actor. Together we will discover, uncover, develop and liberate your “Voice”. We will play with de-structuring your breathing apparatus to promote and encourage your awareness, flexibility, freedom and focus. We will use the framework of Fitzmaurice Voicework (c) to guide us and help us explore. We will do exercises for releasing tension, and other games for discovering new awareness. We will play with text in games and performance. We will learn to listen to ourselves and others. We will bring our whole self to class in order to learn to bring our whole self to the text.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Experience heightened internal awareness and release
- Breathe with increased freedom
- Speak on support
- Discover a more honest connection with words/thoughts/images
- Create and execute your own warm-up
- Cultivate an experiential and theoretical understanding of breath, voice and resonance

### **Philosophy**

There is no such thing as a perfect voice. Every actor has their own strengths and weaknesses and these make us interesting and compelling performers. Actors that have great voices are actors whose voices are indistinguishable from the specificity, depth, commitment, and truth of their performance. We don't want to hear your voice, we want to hear, believe, and understand what you are saying. Therefore vocal techniques have nothing to do with creating a specific sound but with giving you access to a larger range of sounds, a healthier way of supporting that sound, and more access to your deepest breath to give that sound the meaning you intend.

Finally, if something is unclear, or you feel uncomfortable, or your needs are not being met, please reach out to me as I would love the opportunity to resolve this issue. You are your own advocate for your education, personal wellbeing, and creative process. Be brave in reaching out concerning matters that pertain to this class and to your wellbeing in general. In doing so, it is my hope that we all gain invaluable practice of being proactive in things that matter – learning, health, wellbeing and collaboration.

### **Course Notes**

This course will take place in person. Required and non-required reading, text, video links and supplemental materials will be on Blackboard.

An absence is excused for only these reasons: 1. a positive Covid 2. A documented fever. Anything else is NOT excused. Tardiness is un-exceptable and you will be marked absent for the warm-up if you are late. If you miss more than two warm-ups you will be marked as having one unexcused absence. After two unexcused absences your grade will go down.

## Description and Assessment of Assignments

**Participation:** Includes your presence in class, your willingness to take risks and respect for others. It also includes you being prepared to work in the proper attire, with the proper materials. (See “Additional Policies” and “Required Materials” below)

**Voice Journal:** You will write at least one page of reflection per week in a journal accessible on Blackboard. Your journal should focus on the work, the readings, your questions, challenges, and successes throughout the semester. While one page a week is the requirement, I encourage you to write notes after each class and throughout the week whenever observations, connections and or discoveries occur. Note: Please write in the content box of the journal provided. If you prefer to keep a written journal, there is a place to attach an image.

**Midterm:** Will be your warm-up and a sharing of a text TBD.

**Final:** TBD

## Grading Breakdown

**Journal: 25%**  
**Participation: 25%**  
**Midterm: 25%**  
**Final: 25%**

## 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 written assignments shall be handed in before class on the date specified via Blackboard. 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.

## Grading Timeline

Written assignments to be graded within one week.

## Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

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

*SCampus Section 11.12(B)*

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

## Course evaluation

Course evaluation occurs at the end of the semester university-wide. It is an important review of students' experience in the class. You should expect to receive an email update once the system has launched to provide your feedback on this course. In addition, you are always welcome to connect with me as the instructor to offer any feedback on the course.

## Additional Policies

**Proper Attire:** The work is physical. You are expected to dress in loose comfortable clothing. No tight-fitting jeans or belts. Be prepared to work barefoot or in socks.

**Absences:** You will learn from *doing* the work, observing others, discussing what we do, see and read. Any unexcused absence may result in your grade being lowered one full grade. Excused absences (see above) must be discussed with me via email or during office hours BEFORE class time.

**Lateness:** You are not allowed to be late. You will be marked absent. (See above)

## Required Materials

- Yoga mat (You may purchase this at most yoga studios or the above online retailers.)
- Notebook (for written notes and observations)
- Writing utensils
- Highlighters or multicolored pens (useful mid-semester)

## Process and Progression

Process and Progression will change according to the needs and progress of the group; therefore, the syllabus (other than the weekly journal) is very subject to change. Assignments and deadlines will be clearly articulated in class. Please reach out with any questions regarding assignments or deadlines.

	Day	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	M	1/9	Introduction: What is Voicework? Syllabus, community agreements, Communicating together	

	W	1/11	Day of Listening HW: Day without Media, social or otherwise. No Technology. Write about it.	Week 1 Journal
2	M	1/16	No Class - MLK day.	
	W	1/18	Mind body awareness/ Listening Part 2: <b>Text: Pick a Haiku!!</b>	Haiku Week 2 Journal
3	M	1/23	Introduction to your nervous system: Destructuring into the body/mind to free ourselves from habitual patterns and or introduce new pathways of breathing, introducing vibration as part of our sensory experience,	
	W	1/25	Anatomy of Breathing and Voice	- Week 3 Journal
4	M	1/30	Introduction to Vibration - Destructuring as a means of introducing Vibration into the body, allowing it to travel and move.  <b>Text: Write a Haiku!!</b>	
	W	2/1		Week 4 Journal CF Reading
5	M	2/6	Introduction to your Impulse - Destructuring as a means of liberating Impulse so we can disarm our patterns of hold, grip and strain which inhibit our free expression.  <b>Text: Mindful by Mary Oliver</b>	
	W	2/8		Week 5 Journal
6	M	2/13	Introduction to your Spine - the seat of your intention, the connective tissue of the energy centers of your body, connecting, groin, heart, head and more!	
	W	2/15		Week 6 Journal
7	M	2/20	No class - Presidents Day	

	W	2/22	MIDTERM	Midterm: Self-guided warm-up, self evaluation, performance workshop Week 7 Journal
8	M	2/27	Introduction to your Energy - releasing held energy in the body that can activate and travel into your breath.  <b>Text: A song in the front yard by Gwendolyn Brooks</b>	
	W	3/1		Read "Structured Breathing " by CF Week 8 journal
9	M	3/6	More work on Energy: The Chakra system <b>Text: Heart to Heart by Rita Dove</b>	
	W	3/8		Journal week 9
	M		SPRING BREAK!!!	
	W		SPRING BREAK!!!	
10	M	3/20	Introduction to your Breath! - your life force, the muscles that move it, the subtle tissue that promotes it, the freedom to allow it to flow all the way through you and all the way out. <b>Text: Percy Shelley - Ode to the West Wind</b>	
	W	3/22		Journal week 10
11	M	3/27	Introduction to your Intention - harnessing the impulse and energy traveling through the spine and letting it land, harnessing your desire, your need to communicate, to impact, to reach out, to touch psycho-physically.	
	W	3/29		Journal Week 11
12	M	4/3	Introduction to your Meaning - Connecting up the breath, the intention, the psycho-physicality of your desire to sound.	
	W	4/5		Journal Week 12: Read CF - "Breathing is Meaning"
13	M	4/10	Introduction to Re-Structuring: <b>Text: "On Listening to Your Teacher Take Attendance" Aimee N.</b>	

	W	4/12		Journal week 13
14	M	4/17	Review and Catch-up	
	W	4/19		- Week 14 Journal
15	M	4/24	Review and Catch-up	
	W	4/26		Journal week 15
FI N AL	M	Monday May 8th	FINAL EXAM 11-1	Final Performance, self-evaluation

### 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](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 Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 814-4618 (Vidoe Phone), (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.

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### **Equity, Diversity & Inclusion + Intimacy in Theater Consent Culture Statement:**

Through our pluralistic approach of diverse pedagogies, methodologies, ideologies, and modalities of artistic expression, we invite(engage) and challenge students to expand their breadth and depth of knowledge, complexity, and range of the human experience. Even though we nurture, guide, and challenge our students to embrace the unknown or unfamiliar and step outside of their comfort zones through storytelling/art, we aim to practice effective strategies and offer tools to students mindful of their physical, psychological, social, and emotional wellbeing. In alignment with professional and industry standards, we will integrate core principles and techniques of Intimacy in Theater and Building Cultures of Affirmative Consent. This will provide agency, offer resources and support to the teachers, students, directors, and staff to establish healthy boundaries of consent when working on material that is physically, intimately, or emotionally charged content in both the classroom and production.

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### **Health in Class**

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, USC recommends that face coverings (masks) be worn indoors including in classrooms.

### **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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://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](https://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](https://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](https://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](https://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](https://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

## **Finally**

*I am excited to work with each one of you this year. Teaching the universal right of expressing yourself is a singular joy of mine. I welcome all questions, comments, complaints... whatever will help you in this process of discovering your voice.*