

Course Description and Overview

This course will examine the use of fight and violence in a theatrical context for the stage and for the camera.

Learning Objectives

Topics that will be covered include:

1. Safety: How to create the illusion of violence without causing harm to self, an acting partner, the audience, or scenery to create a safe working environment in the classroom and in a professional setting.
2. The need for violence: Discussion of the artist's responsibility to reflect violence safely and accurately so that the actor can deeply explore violence in the service of a given character and text.
3. Basic unarmed stage combat: Punches, blocks, kicks, falls, rolls, slaps, found objects as weapons. These are all tools that the professional actor will encounter throughout the course of their career.
4. Sword Play: An introduction to single sword skills including proper footwork, defenses, attacks, disarms, and pris de fer techniques.
5. Fights and Action for the Camera – Basic camera and editing techniques for shooting action.

Principles covered:

1. Making your partner look good
2. Eye contact
3. Action-Reaction-Completion (ARC) Principle
4. Receiver in control
5. Reversal of energy
6. Lines of attack
7. Diffusing energy
8. Physical Lines of Dialogue & Story Building
9. Stacking & Other Techniques for the Camera

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software

The following items are suggested when working on action videos (there will be a limited amount of hardware items that can be shared):

1. Filmic Pro App (Available for Apple & Android)
2. Portable hard drive
3. Portable charger & charging cable

4. Smartphone camera rig (provided)
5. Tripod mount (provided)
6. Tripod (provided)

You will also be editing on iMovie or other editing platform of your choice (Movavi, DaVinci Resolve, Lightworks, Final Cut, Adobe Premiere, etc.)

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Suggested Reading

Reference handouts containing overviews and additional information will be given to students throughout the semester.

Description of Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments

Assignments:

1. Quizzes
2. Presentation of fight scene 1 (Unarmed)
3. Presentation of fight scene 2 (Unarmed)
4. Video Project
5. Final Project

Grading Scale

A = Work of excellent quality

B = Work of good quality

C = Work of fair quality

D = Work of poor quality

F = Fail

Grading Guidelines

20 Points	Participation
10 Points	Quizzes
15 Points	Scene 1 Presentation
20 Points	Scene 2 Presentation
10 Points	Video Project 1
25 Points	Final Project
100	TOTAL POINTS

* Each scene will be scored as follows:

50% - Execution of choreography

30% - Execution of storytelling

20% - Safety Management

** The short action video project will be scored as follows:

20% - Use of required camera techniques

30% - Execution of choreography adapted for the camera

20% - Use of editing techniques including SFX

30% - Safety Management

Assessment of “Participation”

15% of the final grade is earned through class participation. This will be defined as:

- Show up on time – students who are more than 10 minutes late are considered tardy. Three unexcused tardy arrivals will result in a deduction of 5 points from the final grade unless special arrangements have been made with the professor. Consistent tardiness within the 10-minute grace period will result in a discussion with the student and a restructuring of the grace period.
- Openness to new methods of working and eagerness to attempt them.
- Energized support of all classmates’ work.
- Constructive feedback and observation of one’s work and classmates’ work.
- Meeting of all deadlines.
- Memorization of assigned material for scene presentations.

Attendance, Tardiness and Absences

Tardiness or unexcused absences are not excused without proper notification. Communication with the instructor is essential in case of emergency or illness.

IF you do not pass Trojan Check you must inform the instructor via email or text PRIOR to the start of class. Notifications of tardiness or absence after the class start time will not be accepted.

The structure of this class is cumulative. Missed classes mean you fall behind and your partner falls behind if you miss on a day scheduled for scene work.

Communication & Blackboard

Communication and information for this class will be relayed via email using your USC email addresses (if you have a non-USC address as your primary email address please make sure your USC email is bouncing over to your primary address).

Assignments and additional instructional material will be available on Blackboard. As each module is released or additional content is added you will be notified via Blackboard (which uses your USC email address to deliver messages).

SLACK will also be used to deliver quick messages that require immediate attention or to relay information that affects you in the moment.

Clothing & Gear

- Wear clothing that allows for free and unrestricted movement (preferably black) such as sweat/athletic pants and tights. Shorts are permitted.
- Wear appropriate footwear (no open-toe shoes, sandals, etc). Working in socks or barefoot is not permitted.
- Gloves are recommended for swordplay sessions. More information will be given in class regarding the types of work and athletic gloves appropriate for swordplay.
- A small towel is recommended to dry off.
- Jewelry (rings, watches, earrings, necklaces) should be removed prior to the start of each class session to avoid injury or damage.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Week 1

Mon Jan 9: Class Intro & Overview / The Warm-Up / Physical Lines of Dialogue
Hand Strike Techniques 1 (The Roundhouse Punch)

Wed Jan 11: Hand Strike Techniques 1 (The Roundhouse Punch) - Review
Arm & Hand Blocking Techniques 1 (Static Defenses)

Objectives: Distance/Measure, Eye Contact, Breath, Cueing, In Slow/Out Fast, Casting Energy, Clap Knaps, Physical Lines of Dialogue, Reality Speed vs Theatrical Speed

Week 2

Mon Jan 16: **NO CLASS – SCHOOL HOLIDAY**

Wed Jan 18: Hand Strike Techniques 1 (Variations)
Strikes & Evasions

Objectives: Making Your Partner Look Good, Action-Reaction-Completion (ARC), Aggressor/Victim vs Sender/Receiver, Slow is Smooth & Smooth is Fast, Clap Knaps, Vocal Cues, Cueing & Timing, Illusion of Violence, Hiding the Knap

Week 3

Mon Jan 23: Fighting & Movement – The Compass Rose (ARC Movement)
Evasions
Review of Hand Strike Techniques 1
Review of Arm & Hand Blocking Techniques 1

Wed Jan 25: Choreography & Story Building
Fight Values & Intent

Objectives: Specificity of Movement, Acting the Fight, Controlled Chaos, Pace & Rhythm, Spatial Awareness

Week 4

Mon Jan 30: Hand Strikes 2 (Non-Contact Slap Techniques)
Full Body Contact 1 (Shoves/Pushes, Grappling, Headlocks & Disengages)

Wed Feb 1: Full Body Contact 1 (Shoves/Pushes, Grappling, Headlocks & Disengages) - Review
Choreography & Story Building

Objectives: Shared Knaps, Dispersing Energy, Placing Energy, Sharing Energy & Weight, Receiver in Control, Personal Safety & Boundaries

Week 5

Mon Feb 6: Hand Strikes 3 (Stomach Punches & Back Strikes)

Wed Feb 8: Hand Strikes 3
Full Body Contact 2 (Bear Hugs, Hair Pulls, Hair Drags)

Objectives: Reversal of Energy, Presenting the Target, Receiver in Control, Vocal Cues, Touch Cues, Visual Cues

Week 6

Mon Feb 13: Hitting the Floor 1 (Knee Drops, Sit Falls, Forward Falls, Aikido Rolls)
Leg Sweeps, Throws, Takedowns

Wed Feb 15: Hitting the Floor 1
Full Body Contact 3 (Shoulder Rams, Hip Throws)

Objectives: Body Control, Controlled Chaos, Receiver in Control

Week 7

Mon Feb 20: **NO CLASS – SCHOOL HOLIDAY**

Wed Feb 22: Foot Strikes 1 (Knee strike to the stomach)
Arm & Hand Blocks 2 (Chop Blocks)

Objectives: Off-Line Targeting, In-Line Targeting, Body Knaps

Week 8 ***

Mon Feb 27: TBD

Wed Mar 1: TBD

Week 9

Mon Mar 6: Fighting for the Camera – Take 1 (Smart Phones, Basic Camera Techniques)
Fighting for the Camera – Take 2 (Shooting the Action)

Wed Mar 8: Fighting for the Camera – Take 3 (Editing the Action)
Fighting for the Camera – Take 4 (Action for the Camera)

Objectives: Stacking, 180 Degree Rule, Storytelling w/the camera

Week 10

March 13 & 15: **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES**

Week 11

Mon Mar 20: Putting the Fight Together (Choreography)

Wed Mar 22: Putting the Fight Together (Choreography)

Objectives: Learning Fight Choreography

Week 12 ***

Mon Mar 27: Putting the Fight Together (Choreography)

Wed Mar 29: Putting the Fight Together (Choreography)

Objectives: Prise de fers (Binds, Enveloppements, Croisés), Expulsions, Beat Parries, Avoidances

Week 13

Mon Apr 3: Multi-Player Fights & Mass Fights

Wed Apr 5: Multi-Player Fights & Mass Fights

Objectives: Choreography & Phrasing

Week 14

Mon Apr 10: Found Weapons

Wed Apr 12: Architecture & Environment

Objectives: Creative Story Telling

Week 15

Mon Apr 17: Applying the Techniques (Scene work)

Wed Apr 19: Applying the Techniques (Scene work)

Objectives: Timing and Rhythm, Prop Safety, Story Building, Floating the Action

Week 16

Mon Apr 24: Applying the Techniques (Scene work)

Wed Apr 26: Applying the Techniques (Scene work)

Objectives: Review & Closure

Final Examination Date:

Monday May 8, 2023 (8:00AM – 10:00AM)

Final Scene Presentation

Short Action Film (Final Video Project) Screenings

SDA PRODUCTIONS

SDA productions are courses and therefore do not supersede any other courses in which you are enrolled. When in an SDA production, students must not register for evening classes that conflict with regularly scheduled rehearsals. In short, being involved in an SDA production is a curricular assignment and must be treated as any other curricular assignment.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR COMMITMENTS AND ISPS

Should you choose to participate in any extra-curricular project, such as an Independent Student Production, the SDA administration and faculty will not make allowances or exceptions for absences in class, missed or delayed assignments, homework that is required as preparation for class, or lack of participation in class resulting from your extra-curricular involvement.

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 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 STU 301 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) 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:

Campus Support & Intervention (CSI) – (213) 740-0411

Campus Support & Intervention is an office within Campus Wellbeing and Crisis Intervention. We are a team of professionals here to assist students, faculty, and staff in navigating complex issues. Whether you are here seeking support for yourself or someone else, we are available to help you problem solve, understand options, and connect with resources. <https://uscsa.usc.edu>

Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: sarc.usc.edu

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. equity.usc.edu

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. dsp.usc.edu

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. diversity.usc.edu

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. dps.usc.edu