

SCHOOL OF CINEMATIC ARTS
CTPR 409 - Practicum in Television Production: Comedy Live section



SYLLABUS

Visit: <https://trojanvision.usc.edu>

Semester: Spring 2024

Location: Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts, Studios A, B, C, D & E

Instructors: Harrison Merkt, merkt@usc.edu

Course Coordinator: Harrison Merkt, merkt@usc.edu

Office Hours: Monday-Friday by appointment

Meeting Times: Class: Monday's 1:30-4PM,

Show Times: Friday 2/17/22, 3/31/22 & 4/21/22 3PM-10PM

SA: Ryan Kolderup - kolderup@usc.edu

UNITS: 2 Units

This class is open to all students from any school or department in the university.

Students enrolling in CTPR 409 do not require any television production experience.

All of the skills needed to successfully complete this course are taught in class.

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

This course introduces students to the basic concepts of multi-camera television live sketch comedy production. In class, students produce three hour-long live shows that are live-streamed on Facebook and Youtube.

HOW DO STUDENTS REGISTER FOR THIS SPECIFIC CLASS SECTION?

Enrollment is easy. On the WebReg, students sign up for a 2-Unit section of CTPR-409 on MONDAYS 1:30-4 PM.

WHAT IS COMEDY LIVE?

Comedy Live is an original, live, student-produced show, just like every Trojan Vision show. Comedy live offers students a unique production experience with its scale, both of the production and the company. Students in this class work in conjunction with

three other classes to produce three one-hour-long sketch comedy shows with live studio audiences.

Talents from different programs and schools are blended together to create the Comedy Live experience. Actors for the show come from a class run by The School of Dramatic Arts, directors and writers come from different tracks at the School of Cinematic Arts, and special musical guests work with the show from Thornton School of Music. The producers, technical directors, camera operators, and other studio operators for the show come from this class at Trojan Vision, where we learn how to bring together all these different talents to make the show happen.

Comedy Live is written and rehearsed for weeks before the final product is put in front of an audience. The Comedy Live 409 class works together to produce three separate hour-long special events.

WHAT WILL STUDENTS DO IN CLASS?

Under the leadership of the instructor and an experienced student assistant, students learn how sketch comedies are written, directed, and produced and given assignments to produce and crew three hour-long live sketch comedy shows. Students learn to operate the studio, control room, audio booth, and master control equipment. They also learn and practice multicam crew positions, including camera operator, sound technician, director, technical director, graphics technician, teleprompter operator, floor manager, playback, and master control. As the semester proceeds, students take on crew positions in rotation for show run-throughs, rehearsals, and live broadcasts. Students may also volunteer to help produce sketches shot out of class.

As assignments outside of class, students will be expected to work on their producing assignments for the show. As producers, students will work with the other comedy live classes to make sure the show's production needs are met. Students will take on tasks, with the help of the show's student EP's, such as balancing the show's budget, anticipating and securing the needs of the cast and crew for the show, and procuring props for the sketches.

ARE THERE ANY PREREQUISITES?

No. This class is open to all students from any school or department in the university. It's assumed that students enrolling in CTPR 409 have no television production experience. All of the skills needed to successfully complete the course are taught in class.

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (1/8): Student orientation, syllabus review. Introduce Comedy Live and comedy scene basics. Show breakdown.

WEEK 2 (1/15): NO SESSION. Observation of Martin Luther King's Birthday.

WEEK 3 (1/22): Instruction on show segments, scripting, directing, producing. Facility tour with an introduction of equipment and crew positions. Episode 1 producing assignments.

(add/drop ends Friday, 1/26)

WEEK 4 (1/29) Above continued. Crew exercises in rotation. Episode 1 producing assignment progress report.

WEEK 5: (2/5) Crew exercises in rotation. Episode 1 producing assignment progress report. Episode 1 Crew position assignment.

WEEK 6: (2/12) Episode 1 Rehearsal and Producing assignment completion.

SHOW 1: (2/16) Rehearsal and live broadcast of Episode 1.

WEEK 7: (2/19) NO CLASS. (PRESIDENTS DAY)

WEEK 8: (2/26) Episode 1 post-mortem and instruction. Show improvements and practice. Midterm Report assignments. Episode 2 Producing assignments.

WEEK 9 (3/4) Crew exercises in rotation. Episode 2 producing assignment progress report. Episode 2 crew assignments. Peer consultation for crew and producing assignments

NO CLASS 3/11 - 3/17 (spring Recess)

WEEK 10: (3/18) Crew exercises in rotation. Episode 3 producing assignment progress report. Episode 3 Crew position assignment.

WEEK 11: (3/25) Episode 2 producing assignment completion. Rehearsal for episode 2.

SHOW 2: (3/29) Rehearsal and live broadcast of Episode 2.

WEEK 12: (4/1) Episode 2 post-mortem and instruction. Show improvements and practice. Episode 3 Producing assignments.

WEEK 13: (4/8) Crew exercises in rotation. Episode 3 producing assignment progress report. Episode 3 Crew position assignment.

WEEK 14: (4/15) Completion of episode 3 producing assignments. Rehearsal of Episode 3.

SHOW 3: (4/19) Rehearsal and live broadcast of Episode 3.

WEEK 15: (4/22) Episode 3 post-mortem and instruction.

ASSIGNMENTS

Instructors give assignments related to instructions given in class or to specific show productions. Students work in teams on at least one out-of-studio package (writing, shooting, editing) that is produced outside of class time.

Final Evaluation Assignment - Due May 2nd 2022

GRADES

Grades are based on the timely submission of production assignments and the execution of crew assignments. Instructors also evaluate students' preparation for class, engagement in discussions, professional behavior, and team collaboration. There is a written Midterm Report and a Final Evaluation (2 double-spaced pages each).

GRADING CRITERIA

Participation and collaboration 20%

Show assignments 30%

Crew assignments 30%

Final Evaluation 10%

Out of Studio Assignment 10%

Extra credit will be made available for students looking to participate more.

ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class/show. This class is performance-based, and attendance is extremely important. Two unexcused absences will result in a grade being lowered by one full letter (example: A becomes B). A third unexcused absence will result in a grade being lowered by one additional full letter grade (B becomes C). Grades will be lowered by one full letter for each additional absence. Two unexcused late class arrivals equal one full absence. Students must report an absence to the instructor and SA before class begins.

CELL PHONE & SAFETY POLICY

Cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other personal devices may be used in class only if needed for course and show-related work. Sandals and open-toe shoes are not permitted in the studios. Students should dress appropriately for crew jobs in the facility.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – when a student presents someone else’s ideas as their own, either verbatim or recast in their own words – it is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please review 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, nonconsensual 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

uscadvocate.symplcity.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 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.

USC 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 USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with students to explore options or paths to manage their concern.

PLEASE NOTE:

FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY INSTRUCTIONAL SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX.

THIS SYLLABUS DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT RESTRICTIONS OR REQUIREMENTS THAT MAY BE IN PLACE DUE TO THE CORONA VIRUS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FALL SEMESTER 2021. CHANGES WILL BE MADE TO INCLUDE THESE AS REQUIRED WHEN THE SEMESTER STARTS