

**THTR 307 Comedy in LA**

**Section 62667R**

**Units: 2**

**Spring 2024**

**Mondays & Wednesdays + additional trip dates**

**2:00pm-3:50pm**

**Location: GFS 229**

**Instructor: Camirin Farmer**

**Office:** virtual, as needed

**Office Hours:** by appointment, please email to schedule

**Contact Info:** [cjfarmer@usc.edu](mailto:cjfarmer@usc.edu)

### **Course Description**

In this performance, and discussion based course, we will examine, and discover our comedic tastes & styles, while specifically looking at Los Angeles based live comedy. We will be examining the history, and application of the prominent comedy forms in Los Angeles: Stand Up, Improv, and Clown. We will focus on both recorded & live performance throughout the semester. The latter half of the semester will be focused on the experimentation of these art forms, “bit building,” and final comedic presentation & critique.

### **Learning Objectives**

In class, we will aim to:

- Create and refine the definition of comedy
- Evaluate the History of Comedy & Venues in Los Angeles
- Identify the various comedy forms in Los Angeles
- Recognize the elements of each specific form
- Understand the Interaction/Relationship between Performer and Audience

### **Prerequisite(s): NON**

#### **Course Notes**

This class is a participation and performance based class — attendance to all performances with the class, and commitment to performances is crucial for your success in this class. You should put all shows in your calendar, and arrange transportation well in advance. Instructor will advise on ticket purchasing/attainment. Your participation in class includes providing feedback to fellow students/performers, and is therefore paramount to the success of each member of the class.

Pre-planned absences may be discussed, however absences, tardies, and early departures will affect your final grade. Extra shows attended can go towards grade, if the student also completes a 2 page paper describing the show, their observations, and takeaways. Specific instructions on presentations will be given by the instructor with appropriate lead time.

You will keep a Show Notebook throughout the semester. This will be your personal notebook in which you will record observations, reviews, and ideas, and will be reviewed periodically to confirm participation. It will be needed in class as well as during shows. Specific notebook assignments will be announced in class.

COVID Protocol: If you are absent for an extended period of time because you are quarantining or another serious illness, we will assure a way to best support your educational experience.

## Supplementary Materials

Will be provided by the instructor and the class as discovered

## Description and Assessment of Assignments

- Class notebook will be checked twice – after spring recess and at the final.
- Class participation and discussion of materials are integral to the performance aspects of the class, and include the **required** field trips.
- Presentations will include history, and culture of given topic. They must not exceed 10 minutes; visual aids are encouraged.

## Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Class Participation – Attendance, focus, willingness	20	20%
Discussion of Materials	15	15%
Comedy/Show Notebook	10	10%
Art Form & Venue Presentations	20	20%
Final Critique	20	20%
Final Paper	15	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	100%

## Grading Scale (Example)

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

Varies.

### Additional Policies

When in class, you must be focused, and mentally, physically and emotionally present. Cell phones and other electronic devices often impede this. Devices should be put away completely unless you are called upon to use it (e.g. watching videos for reference). You should never have devices out during any performance -- no exceptions. Unauthorized device attention may affect your participation points.

Food or drink is not allowed in SDA classrooms, water excepted. Please help restore classroom to neutral at the end of each class, if applicable.

### Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Please note: due to the fluid and creative nature of this course, weekly structure may change to accommodate the needs of individuals and the group. You will be informed of any changes as much as possible.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
<b>Week 1</b> 1/8 + 1/11	Welcome, Show Notebook, Syllabus Review, Expectations, Getting on Feet	N/A	N/A
<b>Week 2</b> 1/15 No Class + 1/18	"Comedy You Love" - Camirin Choices	Bring a piece of "comedy" that you admire	
<b>Week 3</b> 1/22 +1/25	"Comedy You Love" - Student Choices	Bring a piece of "comedy" you admire	Prepare for class.
<b>Week 4</b> 1/29 + 2/1	"Comedy You Love" - Student Choices cont., Impressions & Attempts	Bring a piece of "comedy" you admire	<b><i>Prepare presentations on assigned art forms</i></b>
<b>Week 5</b> 2/5 + 2/2/8	Break Down LA Comedy - Art Form	<b><i>Prepare presentations on assigned art forms</i></b>	<b><i>Prepare presentations on assigned venue</i></b>
<b>Week 6</b> 2/12 + 2/15	Break Down LA Comedy - Venues	<b><i>Prepare presentations on assigned venue</i></b>	
<b>Week 7</b> 2/19 No Class + 2/22	Field Trip & Discussion	Show Notebook	SHOW TBA
<b>Week 8</b> 2/26 + 2/29	Field Trip & Discussion	Show Notebook	SHOW TBA

<b>Week 9</b> 3/4 + 3/7	Field Trip & Discussion	Show Notebook	SHOW TBA
<b>Week 10</b> 3/18 + 3/21	BIT DEVELOPMENT - Stand Up & Guest	Show Notebook	
<b>Week 11</b> 3/25 + 3/28	BIT DEVELOPMENT - Stand Up	Show Notebook	
<b>Week 12</b> 4/1 + 4/4	BIT DEVELOPMENT - Improv & Guest	Show Notebook	
<b>Week 13</b> 4/8 + 4/11	BIT DEVELOPMENT - Improv	Show Notebook	
<b>Week 14</b> 4/15 + 4/18	BIT DEVELOPMENT - Clown & Guest	Show Notebook	
<b>Week 15</b> 4/22 + 4/25	BIT DEVELOPMENT - Clown	Show Notebook	
<b>FINAL</b> 5/6	<b>Critique and Final Paper</b>		

## USE OF AI

Since creating, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated tools is prohibited in this course, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university's mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the USC Student Handbook. All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the student handbook or the Office of Academic Integrity's website, and university policies on Research and Scholarship Misconduct.

## 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, home work that is required as preparation for class, or lack of participation in class resulting from your extra-curricular involvement.

## Statement on Support Systems

### 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.

### 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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### 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://uscса.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](http://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](http://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](http://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: <https://titleix.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](http://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. <https://titleix.usc.edu/>

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

*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](http://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](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu)