USC School of Dramatic Arts

THTR 424: Creator as Entrepreneur
Units: 2
When: Spring Semester, 2024
Wednesdays, 3 PM - 4:50 PM & 5:30 PM - 7:20 PM
Where: Course Location - DMC 151 & THH 114
Course Instructor: Tomm Polos
Office: Alumni Park or Virtual
Office Hours: Arranged by Appointment
Contact: polos@usc.edu (Please allow response time of 48 hours)

IT Help and Contact Info: phone - 213-740-5555 or email - consult@usc.edu
Hours of Service: 24 hours per day, 7 days per week

Course Description

THTR 424 explores all the tools required to be a contemporary content creator. This course, available and encouraged for all disciplines, allows students to investigate producing and monetizing their talent. The material covered benefits business minded creatives and anyone interested in media platforms where art and entrepreneurship intersect.

Learning Objectives

THTR 424 supports modern storytellers by emphasizing the importance of authenticity, content management, production strategies and more. By the completion of the course, students will have a better understanding of how to be successful in the short-form content space by analyzing the work of other creators, building out their own visions, and recognizing the pros and cons of the current media landscape.

Entrepreneurial Objective

Dedicated students will leave with a thorough plan and defined path toward channel monetization for their desired project on their preferred platform.

There are no Prerequisite(s) or Co-Requisite(s) for this course. There is no enforced Concurrent Enrollment or heavily advised Recommended Preparation. It is open to all disciplines.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

It is helpful, but not required, to be proficient with smartphone and streaming technology. This includes YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, etc.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

In an attempt to have a paperless class, readings will be available online and will be emailed via link to students by the professor.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

This course has weekly assignments and multiple creative projects that will be evaluated throughout the semester. These involve reading, writing, speaking, and creating short-form videos. Assignments and Assignment Submission policies are listed below.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Possible Points Earned	Percentage of Grade
First in the Comments	15	15%
Weekly Journal Entries & Reading Responses	15	15%
Participation	15	15%
Midterm Project: The Pitch	20	20%
Create for Good Project	15	15%
Final Exam: The Pilot	20	20%
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

Grading, Grading Timeline, Assignment Submission Policy
Students are responsible for submitting work on time and in the requested format. Assignments are only to be submitted as specified. **First in the Comments** discussions take place at the beginning of each class. **Journal Entries** are to be submitted weekly via email in an ongoing Google Document. Please use Times New Roman and size 12 or 14 point font. Journal Entry format will be presented on the first day of class. Journal Entries and Reading Responses will be evaluated within weeks of receipt. Both **First in the Comments** and **Journal Entries**, if acceptable, will receive a **Complete** grade. Unacceptable and/or incorrectly formatted entries will receive an **Incomplete** for the week. Every **Incomplete** grade will take away from the overall **First in the Comments** and **Journal Entries** section grade(s). Large Scale Projects (i.e. Midterm Pitches and Create for Good Projects) have their own presentation format and evaluation. Students may request to discuss how they are evaluated at any point during the semester by reaching out and scheduling a conversation during Office Hours.

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. (SeeSection 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 input on the course.

Additional Policies
Participation is worth 15 percentage points of the student's grade and will be considered on the scale of Average, Good or Excellent. 1 to 5 is Average, 6 to 10 is Good, 11 to 15 is Excellent. Being prompt for discussion is of the utmost importance. Contact the professor with as much notice as possible if you cannot be prompt or present.

Cell Phone Usage is not permitted in class unless permission is given by the instructor. There is no audio and/or visual recording of the course or instruction without prior permission granted. Please communicate if you wish to record or document any aspect surrounding this course.

Computer Usage is allowed for note taking. There will be times when computers are not allowed to be open or used in class out of respect for certain lectures, lessons, or presentations.

Positive Attitudes only.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Week	Subject Matter	Assignments / Readings	Deliverable Due Dates
Week 1	Course Introduction and Expectations	Journal Entry Week 1	Week 2
Week 2	Creators: A Brief, Weird History	Journal Entry Week 2	Week 3
Week 3	Industry Standards	Journal Entry Week 3	Week 4
Week 4	Authenticity and Specialization	J.E. Week 4 / Prep for MT	Week 5/ Midterm: Week 8
Week 5	Content Calendar	J.E. Week 5 / Prep for MT	Week 6/ Midterm: Week 8
Week 6	Growing With Your Audience	J.E. Week 6 / Prep for MT	Week 7/ Midterm: Week 8
Week 7	Producing With Brands	J.E. Week 7 / Prep for MT	Week 8/ Midterm: Next Week
Week 8	Midterm: Pitches	J.E. Week 8 / Prep for MT	Week 9/ Midterm: Next Week
Week 9	Midterm Part II	Enjoy Spring Break	Week 10
Week 10	Industry Visit	J.E. Week 10 / Prep for CFG	Week 11
Week 11	Monetization	J.E. Week 11 / Prep for CFG	Week 12/ CFG: Week 13
Week 12	Management and Taxes for Creatives	J.E. Week 12 / Prep for CFG	Week 13/ CFG: Week 13
Week 13	Create for Good Project	J.E. Week 13	Week 14
Week 14	The Interview	J.E. Week 14 / Prep for Final	Week 15
Week 15	PR and Networking	Prep for FInal	Final Exam Date
Final	Final Exam: Launch	Final Date: Wed., 3 PM Class Wed., 5:30 PM Class	Fri., May 3rd, 2:00-4:00 PM Wed., May 1st, 5:30- 7:20 PM

The weekly subject matters are subject to slight variation but all of the above will be covered.

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, talking to Tomm Polos) 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. 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 Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for OSAS and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 814-4618 (Video Phone), (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.

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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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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

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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.

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 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.

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 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
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) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

This was a lot. You did it.