USC School of Dramatic Arts

THTR 427: Audition Technique for Film, Television, and New Media (Section 001-63127)
Units:2.0
Spring 2024/Wednesdays/4-5:50pm
Location: SHR -room 105

Instructor: Adam Chambers
Office Hours: Per request/Reach out and we'll discuss
Contact Info: adamcham@usc.edu

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to develop the auditioning skills needed to successfully build a career as an actor and compete at a professional level in a variety of theatrical and media venues; develop interviewing and cold reading skills; collect and prepare suitable audition materials; integrate acting skills into fully realized audition pieces; detect personal habits and fears that might inhibit effective auditioning; and increase confidence and implement professional decorum and discipline in a collaborative environment. It is a performance class so you will be doing that often in the class so attendance and excellent performnaces are expected.

Learning Objectives

- Get a deep dive into the process of auditioning for on camera and other media projects. Learn how to book a job.
- Understand every aspect of auditioning. Get a an overview of the process and the actor's place in it.
- We will look into the casting director's perspective and not only understand how auditions are facilitated, but how casting directors are the essential conduit between actor and production.
- The actor will learn the process of breaking down audition sides practically for an audition situation to suit the individual actor's ability.
- Actors will get a full assessment of their physical presence, energy and how the carries themselves; the body is essential to powerful auditioning.
- Actors will learn how to play multi-character scenes in audtions and discuss eye-line and various other factors that could potentially affect these type of auditions.
- Actors will understand the use of props, wardrobe, environment, etc. in auditioning on-camera and how to make smart decisions regarding them.
- Actors will get a complete understanding of comedic (multi vs. single cam) and dramatic (procedural, serials, etc.) content and the inherent differences and nuances to consider when auditioning for either genre. Along with other genres as well. (ex: horror, web series, kids shows)
- Actors will understand what are the practical elements of strong self-taping and what the actor can control in creating auditions that stand out.
- Actors will also touch upon the business of auditioning and how to maintain good standing with casting, directors, producers, networks, etc. through strong auditions, work ethic, and connections.
- Actors will learn more about the business side of the acting and what tools they need to help get auditions and what individual work they will need to do. (ex:Pictures, Resume, Reels, Websites)

- Actors will also be given the opportynity to ask questions to other people in the business as I will be bringing in guests to speak from time to time so they may get some other perspectives and some may get the chance to perform for some of them.
- Actors will be lead in emotional avaailbality work to really explore the range they are capable of getting to.
- Actors will really explore their types and find their through line and what they have to bring to each role they will play.
- Actors will work on even creating some of their own work so they can see how that helps them get the auditions they want.

A Note From Adam: As a working actor and director I want to help make the process of auditioning fun and less stressful and allow actors to see all the things that we do to complicate the process. A relaxed and confident actor is a the best kind of actor so I will be showing you ways to demystify the process. With all of this said, I am trying to recreate the real industry for you. So some of the classes will need to be adjusted based off of guests schedules and sometimes the material will be sprung on you at the last second to give you a real practice of what its like to balance life and work. Some of the classes may in the syllabus may need to be adjusted based off of schedule issues. Students should understand that the grading for this course is inherently subjective. I can (and will) specify my expectations for each assignment, and can discuss the grades I believe you have earned, but I cannot provide a scientific, objective justification for each grade. I welcome conversations about grades, and will always frame those conversations around my perception of your work and ability where is currently stands.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Since several assignments will include self-taping, students will need internet access as well as access to a working digital camera. Mobile phones or tablets are desirable for easy mobility and access. Basic editing software(ie iMovie, Movie Maker, etc.), access to basic sound and lighting equipment may also be useful, but *not* required.

Description and Assessment of Assignments
You will be auditioning. Particpation is key. I want this to be treated like the real industry so there will times when you get the audition material at the last secomd or the night before its due. That's all part of the training process. How you show and who shows up is going to be a big part of this grade. It's a self disciplne so it falls on your shoulders.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Performnaces	40	40
Attendance	15	15
Partcipation	15	15
Professional Behavior	15	15
Final	15	15
TOTAL	100	100

Performances- How each performance is performed. Etc, memorization, choices, commitment. Is improvement happening. You will be given a scale of 1-10 on each performance you do in class. These will be based off of believebality, prep, accurancy,

entertainment, truthfulness, timing, and overall connection. This is up to the instructor to decide the score based off of their professional experience. You will be allowed to turn in self tapes to make up for lower scores based off the feedback.

Attendance- Tardy attendance if less than 15 minutes will result in half point deduction from the attendance grade for the day. A tardy arrival of more than 15 minutes will result in no points for attendance recorded for the day.

Partcipation- Enagged in class, asking questions, trying each an every activity fully.

Professional Behavior- How each student speaks with one another and the instructor, how they dress for the roles, how they take direction. Coomunication.

Final- The final performance.

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

Assignments will be discussed in detail at the end of each class period. Assignments will be either emailed, uploaded, or presented in class per Adam's instruction.

Late Submission Policy

Assignments are expected to be completed by the due date & time. Grades on late assignments will be deducted. If an assisnment is late it is deducted 15% for that assignment. Every week after that its late the assignment is deducted another 15% per week its late. Some classes will have particular workshops/activities that are done only in class. It is your responsibility to commincate with the instructior or other students to see what the missed assignments were or will be and to coordinate with the instructor how or when you plan to make up the missed work.

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.

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 with me as the instructor to offer any feedback on the course. I will often give you feedback after perofrmnaces in the class directly but that is not a guaranteed direct reflection of your grade.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown
A note from Adam: Questions are the best way to learm something. So please don't be afraid to ask anytime you have one. I will leav room in the course for this so please prepared that questions may move some things around and could extend classes into the following weeks. We also have to leeva room for the possibility of not getting to everyone in one class and it extending into the beginning of another class.

I want to make sure that we leave room for relevant and new ideas and information to play a part in the teaching of this class.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
Week 1 1/10/24	-Intro to class - What to expect -How to make acting long term	This is a lecture day with opportunitiy for questions.	
Week 2 1/17/24	-Tricks for the audition. How to to get one? How to prpe and what are we looking for.	- I will be giving some material in the class to look at aand work on but it wuill be done in class.	
Week 3 1/24/24	-Type cast -Through Line -Who are you?	-Enneagram test	You will be given the link to the free test that week. You must bring in the given info you find the day of class for an inperson discussion
Week 4 1/31/24	-Headshots -Reels -1 min monologues	We will be talking about the impotance of these items and taking a look at what people currently have and how to improve or add to what they got.	One memorized 1 min monologue. With a possible back up one. Also, any current headshots, reels, they do have.
Week 5 2/7/24	-Commercial audition	In person mock commercial audition	Material will be set a day before class.
Week 6 2/14/24	-Different kinds of auditions. (Crime drama, sitcom, kid show, single cam,)	In person mock auditions with different genres.	Memorized pieces are due day of class and in person.
Week 7 2/21/24	-Different kinds of auditions. (Crime drama, sitcom, kid show, single cam,)	In person mock auditions with different genres.	Memorized pieces are due day of class and in person.
Week 8 2/28/24	-Self Tape Challenge (Horror)	We will be given material to self tape and we will review in the class.	Completed self tapes sent before the class starts.
Week 9 3/6/24	-Review in Viewpoints and an emotional exercise	Students will be given a lesson in choices and using the viewpoints method but also a lesson in how to tap into emotional availablitiy.	
Week 10 3/20/24 **Week 11** 3/27/24	-Writing for another person -performing the original material the next week	Each student will be writing for another student an audition that would fit their type.	Writing will be done in class with the scene partenrs. -the material will be excepected in person on week 11

Week 12 4/3/24	-Guest Speaker	We will be having an industry professional come into class for a Q&A	-Guest Speaker
Week 13 4/10/24	-Zoom audition.	We will be running a zoom audition very similar to the industry now and each student will be required to be in their own spaces.	Link and material will be sent before and memeorized will be required to do the audition.
Week 14 4/17/24	-Chemistry reads	We will be pairing you up with people to see hwo you have the best chemistry with.	Different amterial will be sent the week before so you can come in prepared.
Week 15 4/24/24	-Performing from the show Code Pink (1/2 the class)	Pick a roil from the show and make the monologue fit your through line. Get feedback and notes fo the final	Memorized pieces are due day of class and in person.
Week 16 Final 5/1/24 4:30pm-6:30pm	-Performing from the show Code Pink. (Carry Over From the week before. The other ½ of class)	Pick a roil from the show and make the monologue fit your through line. Get feedback and notes for the final.	Memorized pieces are due day of class and in person.

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. 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 (Vidoe 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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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/).

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.