USC School
of Dramatic Arts

THTR 427 Auditioning for the Camera (63128)
Units: 2
Spring 2024- M- 4-5.50

Location: DRC 105 (through Feb) and on zoom

Instructor: Katherine Burton
Office: Jefferson 211
Office Hours: by appointment
Contact Info: burtonk@usc.edu

IT Help: USC IT
Hours of Service: 24/7
Contact Info: consult at usc.edu

Course Description

This course is "Auditioning for the Camera" which will include scenes and scripts from film and television from the vast array of the entertainment industry: studio and independent features and network and cable television. We will cater our work to each students individual needs, choosing material that both strengthens and stretches them.   We will work on how to prepare scenes for an audition. We will discuss over preparing and under preparing, what to do in a cold audition and how to dress and present yourself. This work should complement and enhance your previous acting classes and help you move to an understanding about the nuanced shifts that actors need to make when they are auditioning for the camera. Your professor is a working actor who will be giving you examples of what she is teaching you in real time. We will begin with scenes from film scripts, Ladybird, BlacKkKlansman or If Beale Street Could Talk then will move onto other film and television scripts (including Homeland, Succession, Oppenheimer, Psycho, Veep, Scandal, Abbot Elementary) and culminate the semester with 3 audition pieces which will be filmed for your use. We will possibly bring in an alumni panel and other folks from the entertainment industry to speak with you.

Learning Objectives
To prepare you to successfully audition for film and television projects.

Prerequisite(s): THTR 101 and THTR 252b possibly.

Recommended preparation: Watch the films and TV shows that you enjoy. They can be very inspiring.

Course Notes:

The course will be taught in a hybrid format. When taught virtually the class will be accessed on Zoom through Blackboard. The instructor will provide all details for doing so. The class will be taught in person in January in DRC 105 then zoom classes will begin on 2/5/24 and continue until Spring vacation. Classes will then be both on zoom and in person (at a later determined location) for the rest of the semester. The students will always know the schedule in advance. Communications with the instructor will be through USC email. The course will be graded using either letter grades or credit/no credit according to the students wishes.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software required:
See above for the access to the class by zoom. Please purchase a 32 GB/64 GB Digital SD card with a speed of 94/95. Approx 35$.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
Scripts will initially be provided electronically. You will be able to provide your own pieces should you choose to do so.

Optional Reading and Supplementary Materials:
Auditioning on Camera: Joseph Hacker (Routledge)

Description and Assessment of Assignments:

Students will be expected to read script #1 on their own. Scenes will then be assigned or chosen. These may be presented as audition pieces over three sessions; first read cold, then memorized and then filmed BUT this process may be accelerated to mimic the industry experience. We will discuss the difference between auditioning for theater and film/television. We will be using some of the language used in your other acting classes:, making an active choice, overcoming an obstacle, following an objective. You can be working on your own outside of class but are welcome to work with partners if that is helpful. We will introduce other film scripts and television scripts and scripts of your own choice. We will culminate the semester with 3+ filmed scenes for your use. You will be assessed by how well you prepare for class and how you have fully realized your characters in preparation for your audition. I expect

everyone to be off book for the first time we present our first audition from Script # 1 as you will have had ample time to prepare. For the rest of the semester, I ask you to be off book the second time you present any scene and ALWAYS when your auditions are being filmed.

Grading Breakdown

First scene: 30%

Second and third scenes: 70%

TV/Film final: 10%

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 Rubrics
As mentioned above, you will be assessed on how well you develop and prepare the character that you are auditioning for. I will expect you to be off book the first time you present the scenes from Script #1. For the rest of the semester I expect you to be off book the second time you present any scene and ALWAYS when they are being filmed.

Assignment Submission Policy
I will let you know at least a week before your assignment is due.

Grading Timeline
I will give constant feedback and final grades.

Course Specific Policies
I expect all students to be on time and in class. I will allow use of computers when we are reading the full scripts but will expect you to print out your

chosen scenes. I will allow cell phone use for emergencies only. I will only accept emailed excuses for both illness or an emergency. After three excused absences your absences will be reflected in your grade. I expect and hope to get to every student in every class. We will have to work quickly which will mimic the industry timeline for auditions.

Attendance:
You are always expected to attend class.

Classroom Norms:
I always encourage active and supportive and constructive discussion and feedback. I ask that you be attentive while your fellow actors are working.

Zoom Etiquette:
I expect cameras to be turned at the beginning and end of class and whenever we are in a group discussion. Cameras can be turned off when individual students are working. If there is an issue with this please feel free to contact your instructor.

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.

Creating a policy for the use of AI Generators in your course:

Sample Option A–not permitted
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.

Option B–permitted on specific assignments
In this course, I encourage you to use artificial intelligence (AI)-powered programs to help you with assignments that indicate the permitted use of AI. You should also be aware that AI text generation tools may present incorrect information, biased responses, and incomplete analyses; thus they are not yet prepared to produce text that meets the standards of this course. To adhere to our university values, you must cite any AI-generated material (e.g., text, images, etc.) included or referenced in your work and provide the prompts used to generate the content. Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Please review the instructions in each assignment for more details on how and when to use AI Generators for your submissions.

Option C–encouraged use
I expect you to use AI (e.g., ChatGPT and image generation tools) in this class. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill, and I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to provide guidance with these tools during office hours or after class. Keep in mind the following:
- AI tools are permitted to help you brainstorm topics or revise work you have already written.
- If you provide minimum-effort prompts, you will get low-quality results. You will need to refine your prompts to get good outcomes. This will take work.
- Proceed with caution when using AI tools and do not assume the information provided is accurate or trustworthy If it gives you a number or fact, assume it is incorrect unless you either know the correct answer or can verify its accuracy with another source. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool. It works best for topics you understand.
- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please include a paragraph at the end of any assignment that uses AI explaining how (and why) you used AI and indicate/specify the prompts you used to obtain the results what prompts you used to get the results. Failure to do so is a violation of academic integrity policies.
- Be thoughtful about when AI is useful. Consider its appropriateness for each assignment or circumstance. The use of AI tools requires attribution. You are expected to clearly attribute any material generated by the tool used.]

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recording Policies:
USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. 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. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Course Evaluations:

Course evaluation occurs at the end of the semester university-wide. It is an important review of students' experience in the class. The process and intent of the end-of-semester evaluation should be provided. In addition, a <u>mid-semester evaluation</u> is recommended practice for early course correction.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown.

Week 1: 1/18/24 Meet and greet. In person

Week 2: 1/15/24 MLK day. No class.

Week 3: 1/22/24 Class cancelled. HW: Prepare and learn first scene after reading script. Makeup OHs start in Feb.

Week 4: 1/29/24. Script #1 scenes filmed in class off book. HW: rehearse scene. In person

Week 5: 2/5/24 Script #1 callback. HW: Rehearse scene. Start to look for next scenes. On zoom with Kate.

Week 6: 2/12/24 Begin Script #2. Possible SUB. HW: Rehearse and get off book. OHs on zoom with Kate. In person with SUB.

Week 7: 2/19/24. President's Day. No class.

Week 8: 2/26/24. Script #2 filmed in class. Possible SUB OR Alumni panel. HW: TBD but keep rehearsing. OHs on zoom with Kate. In person with SUB or on zoom with Alumni panel.

Week 9: 3/4/24. Possible industry visitor OR possible SUB. HW: TBD. OHs on zoom with Kate. In person with SUB or on zoom with industry visitor.

Spring Break

Week 10: 3/18/24 Script #2 Callback off book. HW: look for next scene. In person or on zoom with Kate.

Week 11: 3/25/24 Possible industry visitor Or Script #3 Begin HW: rehearse scene and get off book. In person or on zoom with Kate.

Week 12: 4/1/24 Script # 3 film off book. HW: rehearse scene. In person or on zoom with Kate.

Week 13: 4/8/24 Script # 3 callback recorded or filmed. HW. Rehearse scene. In person or on zoom with Kate

Week 14: 4/15/24 prepare for final. OHs with Kate. In person or on zoom with Kate.

Week 15: 4/22/24 prepare for final. OHs with Kate. In person or on zoom with Kate.

Final: TBD

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

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Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:
The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, 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. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity 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.

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

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

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - *988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call*
The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)](#) - *(213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call*
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX (EEO-TIX)](#) - *(213) 740-5086*
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*
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS)](#) - *(213) 740-0776*
OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - *(213) 740-0411*
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - *(213) 740-2101*
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*
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*
Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - *(213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)*
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - *(323) 442-2850 or* otfp@med.usc.edu
Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.