



USC School  
of Dramatic Arts

**Course;** Advanced Movement  
**Course #:** 515d  
**Units:** 2  
**Session:** Spring 2024  
**Instructor:** Stephanie Shroyer  
**Email:** shroyer@usc.edu  
**Office Phone:** My cell phone (provided during class)  
**Office Hours:** Available by appointment. Students are encouraged to use this as an opportunity to speak privately with the instructor about individual in-class progress.  
**Class Meets:** Time: 12 until 1:50 p.m.  
Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays  
Location: MCC 109  
**Final Exam:** TBD According to the MFA Culmination Schedule

### **Course Description:**

In Advanced Movement 515d we continue the investigation of the use of internal and external musculature (internal being the musculature of thought, external being that of the body) from 515c. We deepen an understanding of physical space to fulfill character and the worlds they inhabit. The student engages in research to build the grammar of movement, power of body language, kinesthetic response and application of these principles to character and storytelling as it applies to different time and place texts. The course emphasis lies heavily in the territory of composition and picturization tools, communication within world of play boundaries, visual and spatial subtext, and engaging the character's manipulation of space and objects.

### **Learning Objectives**

Upon completion of the 515d movement studies:

1. The student will have acquired a movement vocabulary suitable for the construction of an embodied physical characterization from different time and place texts.
2. The student will have undertaken at least two different time and place transformative characterization efforts where they are able to differentiate and build structural and behavioral traits of character from their own.
3. The student will have researched, acquired objects and/or constructed the physical components of the environment for the texts that are the source of their characterization, and performed excerpts in these environments.
4. With the addition of the research methodologies as prompt, a characterization/period project will have been realized. Students will have included period/different time/different place and genre/style influences in the development of structural and behavioral traits of character and use of space/objects affecting story.

## Learning Aspirations

1. Continue to cultivate a pervasive “questioning” state of mind predicated on a commitment to taking responsibility for oneself.
2. Continue to develop a process through which one can break inhibiting, habitual movement patterns to allow unencumbered choice, conscious control, and spontaneity in movement according to the needs of a given character and text.
3. Continue to recognize the importance of and exhibit competency in determining the necessary behavioral, environmental, and spatial choices as they relate to:
  - a. The “reality of doing” principle for the needs of the source material.
  - b. Making of “meaning” through movement (story and relationship connotations).
  - c. The active pursuit of character objective within a text.
  - d. Integration of the mechanics of movement into performance.
4. To regularize the above cited aspirations as a committed lifelong process!

## Course Notes, Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

### Course Notes:

- The syllabus, weekly agenda and assignments are posted on Blackboard. Necessary day to day updates and communications will be provided via USC email.

These are my source texts: (available online if interested in more info)

- Space in Performance, by Gay McCauley
- Laban For All, by Jean Newlove and John Dalby
- The Expressive Body, by David Alberts
- The Empty Space, by Peter Brook
- The Shifting Point, by Peter Brook

### Supplementary Materials:

- Instructor may supply handouts and excerpts from suitable texts as needed.
- Notebook/Journal suitable for sketches, daily notations of curiosities, progress and thoughts. The documenting of process, progression and iconic studies across the semester may benefit future contemplation.

## Description of Assignments

- **CLASSWORK** Warmups utilizing prompts rooted in movement vocabulary principles that illuminate the physics of acting and comprise the actor’s grammar of movement will be used at times. Outside-of-class preparation for classwork (research, rehearsal, assembling of costume and props etc.) is required.
- **JOURNAL** It’s suggested students keep a movement journal. In addition to 515d class notes and other acquired pertinent information to your movement study the journal may include associations, similarities and/or contradictions between your areas of study. Put it all in! Consider this journal a document you are writing/compiling from the you of today to the you of tomorrow. One day it may be the documentation of your personal trajectory to craft!

- **PROJECT ONE: MOVEMENT PATTERNING WITH *HOME FREE*.** Utilizing last semesters toolbox, complete a Mirror Process for Joanna and Lawrence (iconic image, structurals, behaviorals and goody bags assembled by week two)
- **PROJECT TWO: TIME AND PLACE.** In this project we add research to the movement toolbox. In addition to processes we’ve developed to date, we explore the impact of research on choices the actor makes. Introduction of “modifying impulse” tool.

**Phase One:** Research presentations and applications of historical, sociological, and cultural influences necessary for the chosen text.

**Phase Two:** Mirror Process and Movement Patterning

- **PROJECT THREE: CULMINATION EVENT.** Utilize the 515 toolbox in accordance with Laura’s, Natsuko’s and Louis’s work. Put it all together!

**Grading Criteria and Assessment**

100 possible points. All points are awarded based on prompt and effective completion of the stated requirements.

Class work is adjudicated according to the standards and expectations set forth by the MFA in Acting core faculty. Participation, preparation, and willingness to explore concepts with openness individually and as part of the ensemble.

Projects are adjudicated based on completeness of physical choices and ability of student to develop lasting recognizable physicality as observed by the instructor on a continuum basis.

Levels of achievement are defined as follows:

Excellent: evidence of clear understanding of class concepts coupled with original and creative insight and confident preparation

Good: an understanding of class concepts is evidenced with competence

Satisfactory: a general understanding of class concepts but definable gaps are in evidence

Poor: definable gaps in class concepts and lack of preparation are in evidence.

Unsatisfactory: absence of preparation, work not completed on time and no communication with professor and student partners.

<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	<u>PCT</u>
Classwork	40	40%
Project One	25	25%
Project Two	25	25%
Project Three	10	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 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. (See Section 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 feedback on the course.

## Additional Policies

### Attendance and Time Requirements

- Students are expected to be in class, dressed, and ready to work by 12:00 p.m.
- Attendance is mandatory.
- 515d course work will require rehearsal outside of scheduled class time. Please schedule space according to the guidelines put forward by SDA's Academic Services Office.
- The syllabus is posted on Blackboard. Check your USC email regularly. Scheduling changes and other timely information will be sent via email.

### MFA Acting Program Attendance Policy:

- This is ensemble-based work; therefore, it is a requirement for the entirety of the ensemble to be present for every class. **Absences** will directly affect your grade and standing in the program. A **lateness** will be counted as an **absence**. A **lateness** is anything after a 5-minute grace period at the official start time of class. \* Anything further will result in an expulsion from the class. \*
- *All lateness's and absences need to be documented by the student at fault via email. The student must email the professor of the class they are missing, David Warshofsky and Natsuko Ohama. Further, the professor must report these events to David Warshofsky and Natsuko Ohama. These occurrences must be catalogued.*

### MFA Acting Program Grading Policy: *grading must be reflected as follows -*

- THREE (3) absences will result in a demotion of your grade. The totality of 3 absences results in a **full letter grade** demotion.
- If you miss a total of FIVE (5) classes, you fail the class.
- Any failed class will result in academic probation.

### Health and Participation in Class

- Online attendance, observation, or participation is not available for this class. All classes are held in person, on the ground, in MCC 109. Classes are not to be recorded.
- While being mindful of the importance of being in class, our hope is that if you are feeling ill, you will use your best judgement as to whether you need to be absent.
- In the event of an absence, students can access lecture notes (should there be any) and/or schedule office hours with the instructor. However, the reconstruction of missed sessions in totality is not possible.
- 515d is a highly participatory, experiential, activity-based class. It requires extensive group exercises, large and small group discussion, outside rehearsal and peer observation/feedback of in-class presentations. If a student's health presents a frequent interruption in the engagement of classwork, then the student should contact the instructor to determine the best way forward.
- We will follow University health protocols as adjusted throughout the semester.

### Classroom Rules

- Students must dress in attire that is flexible and allows them to move freely. To maximize safety and learning potential, it is of utmost importance to be able to observe physical technique and form during movement and voice. Sweats, yoga pants, gym shorts etc. are appropriate. No Jeans. No belts. Bare feet are preferred for movement vocabulary. A towel is recommended.
- Bottled water is welcome and recommended in the studio. However, food, coffee, tea, soda and other beverages are not allowed.
- Character studies and scenes require attire and props to support movement choices and to define the physical world as specified by the text (see "Goody Bag" addendum to syllabus). There will be no miming of the physical elements of the work. The *reality of doing principle* is paramount in 515d Adv Movement.
- Cell phones are to be turned off and put away for the duration of class, including during breaks.
- Electronic capture of any portion of class is strictly prohibited without prior written approval of the instructor.

### Course Schedule

**Week one through five:** Continue Movement Patterning with *Home Free*. Movement Vocabulary centering the physics of acting clarified by the grammar of movement. What are the composite physical constants that affect understanding of story? Focus on meaning made through gesture, the body in space and in relation to others.

**Weeks six and seven:** Begin different time different place exploration. Research as a movement tool. What does the ensemble need to know to tell this story? To live truthfully under different time and place circumstances?

**Weeks eight and nine:** Mirror Process for different time and place characters. Iconic Images selected and “Goody Bags” assembled. Ensemble creation of the Do Re Mi.

**Weeks ten through thirteen:** Centering on the actor’s “movement patterning”. What are “world of play” circumstances that influence the actor’s “reality of doing” dedicated to storytelling as specified by a text? What do I need around me to tell this story and how do I use such to optimal effect?

**Weeks fourteen through culmination week:** In tandem with work from Laura’s and/or Natsuko/Louis’ classes, we’ll center on the “dynamic sequencing” of impulse dedicated to story. A practical application of the influences of light, sound, shape, environment, objects, architecture, topography, kinesthetic response, and spatial relationship as catalytic tools to effectively illuminate text. Incorporating 515 tools into other rehearsal halls.

## Process and Progression

### Weekly Breakdown

Week 1	1/9 1/11	Introduction and Course Outline. Build <i>Home Free</i> Do Re Mi in MCC 109. Activity: “Walk and Talk” reading of text. For next week: Character Iconic Image and Goody Bag, solidify your scene’s literal doing and assemble all props necessary for reality of doing.
Week 2	1/16 & 17	Movement Patterning: Literal Doing. Scene Pairs ready to work on feet with their scenes identified literal doing. For next week: Review levels of objectives and then rehearse to deepen literal doing movement pattern.
Week 3	1/23 & 25	Movement Patterning: Primary and Secondary Action. Finding Movement that reveals subtext. For next week: Rehearse <i>Home Free</i> .
Week 4	1/30 2/1	Movement Patterning: First Share of <i>Home Free</i> scenes evidencing all 515 tools used to date. Scene Share Re-work. For next week: Rehearse for <i>Home Free</i> final share.
Week 5	2/6 2/8	<i>Home Free</i> culmination share. <b>Begin Project 2: Different Time and Place Project.</b> How is research a movement tool? Tablework as “movement of the mind” physical preparation. Project Parameters Given. Text, Casting, Research Areas Identified and Assigned. For next week: Read Text. Research your Assigned Area.
Week 6	2/13	In class read of Project 2 scenes. Identify Universal and Super Objectives for characters. For next class: Begin Mirror Process for New Character (Iconic Image chosen from artwork of the time

- period, Goody Bag). Coordinate research of your assigned area for presentation next class.
- 2/15 Research Sharing for Project Two.
- Week 7 2/20 Research Sharing for Project Two cont. For the next class session: Bring your character iconic image to share with the group. Be prepared to source your image and address “excepts” prior to selecting the image you’re working from.
- 2/22 Complete Research Sharing. Share Iconic Images. For the next class session: complete the assembling of your Project 2 character “Goody Bag” and bring to class.
- Week 8 2/27 Mirror Process Project 2 Character (Transform using Goody Bag, Structural, Behavioral, 1-10, 10-1 exercise. For the next class session: prepare a three-minute character private moment exercise exemplifying the different time and place work we’ve identified.
- 2/29 Share Private Moment Exercises. For next class: Work with scene partner to draw the Do Re Mi ground plan for our scene arc.
- Week 9 3/5 & 7 Establish and build Project 2 Do Re Mi. “Walk and Talk” reading of Project 2 text.
- \*\*\*Spring Break March 10th thru March 17th\*\*\*
- Week 10 3/19 & 21 *Project Two* Movement Patterning: Scene Objectives, Literal Doing, Composition and Picturization
- Week 11 3/26 & 28 *Project Two* Movement Patterning: Beat Objectives, Primary and Secondary Action, Modifying Impulse
- Week 12 4/2 & 4 Observed Rehearsals: “Potential – Interference = Performance” By this point, you know your potential. What is the interference in you reaching it? Identify the interference and that’s what we’ll address in your observed rehearsal.
- Week 13 4/9 *Project Two* scene run. Peer feedback.  
4/11 *Project Two* Culmination Share
- Week 14 4/16 & 18 *Project 3* 515 Toolbox applied to \_\_\_\_\_? (Laura’s work? Natsuko’s? Louis’? All three? Putting it all together! TBD)
- Week 15 4/23 & 25 *Project 3* 515 Toolbox applied to \_\_\_\_\_? (Laura’s work? Natsuko’s? Louis’? All three? Putting it all together! TBD)

**\*\*\*Culmination of Project Three: 515 Toolbox TBD\*\*\***

\*\*\*Course schedule subject to change according to the needs and progress of the group\*\*\*

### **Note From the Instructor**

We will glean the most from this time together if you hold the overview that the course content is aimed at building a process for you to employ in every maker effort, whether classwork or performance based. The tools are being added to a process you have been developing since you became an actor. Don't worry about "getting it right"!

The principles explored this semester in 515d are processes that take time to absorb and understand. Remain patient, positive and curious about the work. Remember the results are not instantaneous. Your commitment to openness in exploring these concepts is of much greater importance than a definitive result. Resist judgment and expectation of outcome. Explore. Play. Be fearlessly inventive within the parameters given. Each student works and learns in a unique manner.

### **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.

**\*\*The following statements and disclosures portion of this document are subject to SDA updates. Addendums will be posted on the Blackboard posting of this syllabus/contract\*\***

#### **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](http://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](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.

**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>

**Support Systems:**

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*

[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://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](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.

***This syllabus serves as your contract for course #515d, Spring Semester 2024.***