



Course ID and Title: CNTV-478 Horror Film Analysis & Production

Units: 4

Term—Day—Time: Summer 2024- Tues/Thurs — 9:00am-1:20pm

Location: SCA 316

Instructor: Sean Keller

Office: Virtual

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Info: skeller1@usc.edu mobile - 818.642.5586

Teaching Assistant:

Office: [Physical or virtual address]

Office Hours:

Contact Info: [Email, phone number (office, cell), Skype, etc.]

Course Description

This course is a historical exploration of horror films and their relation to society, with both a national and international perspective. The course will look at horror markets within the US, examining for historical and social contexts, as well as looking at the affects and effects of international markets such as Japan, Germany, France, and others. The class will trace how present-day horror movies have been a product of a vast and plentiful history of horror, as well as how social and global forces have changed the path of horror, such as wars, social movements, trends, and other factors. To study a genre, especially one like horror, one must consider the marketing and business side, in addition to audience receptions. The course will be a forum for ample discussion on the meaning of horror films, as well as the business and social sides. This class is a combination of lecture, film screenings, class discussions, and production. You are expected to attend each and be an active participant. You are also expected to complete all assignments prior to class. The productions will be completed on your own time using the USC provided camera, USC sound equipment, and AVID editing software. You will be assigned camera groups, and you will be expected to support your group during their shoots.

Learning Objectives

[Learning Objectives identify the specific, measurable skills a student will demonstrate by the end of the course. Learning objectives should be both taught and assessed by the instructor. They are aligned with the assignments, assessments and learning materials. They complete the sentence “By the end of this course, students will be able to” and avoid verbs such as understand, learn, and know. Refer to CET resources, [Bloom’s Taxonomy](#), [Learning objectives FAQ](#), [Writing learning objectives](#).]

Course Notes

- You are expected to be an active participant in class discussions. Ask questions. Comment. Relate and make connections.

- Due to the nature of this course, all projects MUST adhere to the university safety and hazard standards. If you believe you may have a hazard in your script, you must take all necessary steps to ensure you've had all the appropriate conversations about the project and how to shoot it safely.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

The university will provide each student with a copy of AVID editing software. All of your projects must be edited on AVID. Students will receive six hours of training on AVID.

AVID MEDIA COMPOSER HARDWARE SPECIFICATIONS:

http://avid.force.com/pkb/articles/en_US/Compatibility/Media-Composer-SystemRequirements

Required Additional Sessions & Tutorials

Camera and Cinematography Dates:

Location: SCX Stage 2

- Session One: Thursday 6/?- 2:30-5:50
 - Session Two: Thursday 7/?- 2:30-5:50
- Contact- Jeremy Royce- jroyce@usc.edu

Editing Dates: Location: TBA

- Session One: Tues 6/?- 2:30-5:20
 - Session Two: Tues 7/ ? 2:30-5:20
- Contact- Rommel Barriga- rommelvi@usc.edu

Sound Date: Location: TBA

- Session: 7/?- 2pm- 5:50pm
- Contact- Izumi Morocco- izumiros@usc.edu

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Project Breakdown Students will complete a total of three projects, both individually and collaboratively with anyone you wish to include. You will be doing a casting session/ auditions and using permits for Project 3. Each assignment will be submitted with a one-page self-evaluation worksheet which is available on the class google drive. The self-evaluation is due at the same time as your project. These self-evals should be emailed to me on the day the project is due.

Project 1: Non-Dialogue Self-Portrait aka My Nightmare - DUE 7/11

P1 is a one-minute piece made by each student. The student serves as writer, director, cinematographer, and editor, but you can have others help you in other areas (costuming, acting, lighting, etc). Synchronous dialogue is NOT permitted for this project, though

music, ambience, sound effects, or voice-over may be used. This project is a self-portrait film in which you are to investigate, explore, document, examine, sketch, or illuminate a certain aspect of your own life - perhaps a nightmare or something that scares you. The approach may be either fiction or nonfiction, narrative or impressionistic. Feel free to focus on your love of horror, spooky material, a nightmare, something that gives you anxiety, or fear that says something about you.

Project 2: The Short Film Script- DUE 7/23

P2 is a 3-5 page script to be shot as P3 (see below). Scripts will be read in class to emphasize proper formatting, character development, and making a compelling scare. An emphasis will be placed on proof-of-concept material (a short that could be expanded into a feature). Each person will write their own script. In P3 they will, direct and produce the short, but another student in the trio will edit your piece. This will rotate within the trios. Our SA will place you in trios during the first class and determine who is editing which project. This project should demonstrate a basic knowledge of crafting a scare and creating a dread.

Project 3: The Short Film - DUE 8/1

P3 is a three to four-minute piece filmed (from the script written as P2 above) made by each individual student, but your camera group should be on your set helping as needed. Synchronous dialogue is permitted for this project. Music, ambience, sound effects, or voice over may be used. This project is open to any style, subject, or theme. These projects should have a clearly defined beginning, middle, and end. Composition, lighting, camera movement, editing techniques, sound design, and story structure will be specifically evaluated. You are allowed to cast SAG actors for this one and all locations (campus or off-campus) must be permitted.

Project Grading Criteria

- Did you demonstrate the lessons taught in class?
- Did you follow assignment rules and length requirements?
- Did you demonstrate an evolving understanding of the subject matter?
- Were both the film and self-evaluation turned in on time?
- Did the project show creativity?
- How well did you work with your group members and crew?
- Did you fill out appropriate permits and hazards forms?

An Open Dialogue

Unique to the USC School of Cinematic Arts experience is an intense, open dialogue among students and instructors surrounding each phase of production: script finalization; visualization; scope; exercises; dailies, rough cuts; fine cuts; sound design; and final work. We intend to create and foster an environment in which each student's work is given full support, while at the same time it is open to analysis, critique, and feedback. Our goal is to put film analysis at the service of developing a sharper eye and becoming stronger and clearer filmmakers.

All students are expected to fully participate in class discussions and group critiques to develop skills in non-confrontational criticism. The goal is to engage with the creative processes of your peers in a constructive manner. We do not expect students to feel they

must defend their work or make excuses about what we see on the screen, but, instead, to develop listening skills.

Safety

The personal safety of yourself, your cast, and crewmembers is a vital consideration as you plan and shoot your projects. Please check with your instructors before shooting if you have any questions or concerns. Read the safety handout and understand the contents. Footage shot under unsafe conditions will be withheld from the project; student's privileges may be suspended, and grades lowered. Be sure to discuss all hazardous shooting conditions with your instructors.

*****Each USC project must observe the USC SCA Safety Guidelines as well as professional, ethical and safety standards that will protect everyone on the set. *****

Table 1 Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Class Participation	100	30
Pitches (3) Self Evaluations (3)	60 (10 pts each)	10
P1	100	20
P2	100	20
P3	100	20
TOTAL	460	100

Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

Table 2 Course Grading Scale

Letter grade	Corresponding numerical point range
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

[Describe how and when assignments are to be submitted.]

Grading Timeline

[Announce a timeline for when students can expect grading and feedback from the instructor.]

Course Specific Policies

[Add any additional policies that students should be aware of: late work submissions, missed classes, use of technology in the classroom, etc. [Course-specific policies](#) differ from university policies in that they are set by each instructor or department/program.]

Attendance

[No portion of the grade may be awarded for class attendance, but non-attendance can be the basis for lowering the grade, when clearly stated on the syllabus. Attendance policies may address student athletes with approved Travel Request Letters and students who give advance notice of religious observation.

Include information on alternative course work expectations for students who miss a class session.]

PRODUCTION STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Faculty has discretion to adopt the absence policy that works best for the needs of each course. Many classes across SCA allow 2 absences without consequence. After a 3rd absence their grade can be lowered. Many of our project-based courses, however, require a stricter policy as outlined below:

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. One absence may result in a student's grade being lowered by one notch (IE: A becomes A-). Two absences may result in a student's grade being lowered by two notches (IE: A- becomes B). A third absence may result in a student's grade being lowered another full point (IE: B becomes C). Grades can be lowered by one full point for every additional absence.

Tardiness: A student is deemed late 7 minutes (number can be adjusted as desired) after the class is scheduled to start. One late arrival may not affect your grade. Two late arrivals equate to one full absence. (IE: A becomes A-). Three late arrivals may result in your grade being dropped by two portions (IE: A- becomes B). Four late arrivals may result in your grade being dropped three portions (one full point: B becomes C). Lateness of more than 30 minutes will count as an absence.

Timely attendance is mandatory and failure to attend all class sections from beginning to end may affect grades.

- Exemptions will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, and must be supported by a written accommodation request from the USC Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS).
- Students who become ill and need to self-isolate will be supported in their efforts to stay current with classwork and assignments. Faculty are no longer

required to provide an option for students to zoom into class. However, Faculty may choose to use zoom at their discretion in an effort to help students stay current in their course work.

Students must contact the professor or SA 24 hours prior to class start time if they need to miss class for any reason.

Classroom norms

[Classroom norms describe the behaviors that are encouraged and discouraged during class. They can be a powerful tool for establishing a supportive learning environment. Refer to the CET resource, [A menu of discussion norms.](#)]

Academic Integrity

[The first 5 paragraphs are required to be included on your syllabi.]

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](#).

Use of AI Generators is 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.

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings 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 [mid-semester evaluation](#) is recommended practice for early course correction.]

Course Schedule

[Provide a detailed course calendar that includes a list of deliverables (homework assignments, examinations, etc.) broken down on a weekly basis. The format may vary, but the content must include:

- Subject matter (topic) or activity
- Required preparatory reading or tasks (e.g., viewing videos)
- Deliverables and when each deliverable is due. A blanket statement that there will be a deliverable due at a specified frequency (e.g., there will be homework due weekly) may obviate the need to state when certain deliverables are due

IMPORTANT: In addition to in-class contact hours, all courses must also meet a minimum standard for out-of-class time, which accounts for time students spend on homework, readings, writing and other academic activities. Standard fall and spring sessions (001) require a final summative experience during the University scheduled final exam day and time.]

	Topics/Daily Activities	Reading s/Preparation	Deliverables
6/25 Class 1	<p>Introduction: Go over syllabus, projects, self-evaluations.</p> <p>Meet everyone. – get their 3 favorite Horror Films (and WHY)</p> <p>What is genre? What is a horror film? What makes something scary?</p> <p>Discussions of genre. Listing subgenres – what are the favorite subgenres</p>		<p>Project 1</p> <p>Due Dates: Pitch- 6/27 Project- 7/11</p>
6/27 Class 2	<p>Discuss P1 concepts and elevator pitch ideas.</p> <p>A History of the Horror Genre with Sample Clips</p> <p>FILM STUDY: Creature from the Black Lagoon – or – The Incredible Shrinking Man</p>		Due: P1 Pitches
6/27 CINE	<p>Camera tutorial</p> <p>Thursday 6/27- 2:30-5:20</p> <p>Location: SCX Stage 1</p>		
7/2 Class 3	<p>Horror History Continued and discussion of “contemporary” horror and trends.</p> <p>Predicting future trends . What comes next? How do we know?</p> <p>FILM STUDY: The Thing – or- Jennifer’s Body</p>		
7/1 SOUND	<p>Sound Tutorial</p> <p>SCB B118</p> <p>1:00PM-3:50PM</p>		

7/3 EDITING	Editing Tutorial SCA B118 1:00PM-3:50PM		
7/9 Class 4	<p>Shots, scenes, the language of cinema and the language of horror.</p> <p>Image and Space in Horror.</p> <p>Beats, Conflicts, Crafting Tension, Horror Formulas and Breaking the Structure, and Moments in Horror.</p> <p>Basic Coverage, Using Geography, Director Process.</p> <p>Go over Project 2.</p> <p>FILM STUDY: Dawn of the Dead – or – Videodrome</p> <p>AFTERNOON CINEMATOGRAPHY</p>		<p>Begin writing Project 2 Script.</p> <p>P2 Due Dates” Pitches due- July 18 P2 project due- July 23</p>
CINE	Afternoon Cinematography Tutorial 2:30-5:50 Stage 1		
7/11 Class 5	<p>Screen all Project 1 Short Films.</p> <p>Creating Jump Scares in Horror short films.</p> <p>Show Proof of concept shorts.</p> <p>FILM STUDY: Insidious – or – It Follows</p>		Due: Project 1 Short Film and Self Evaluation.

<p>7/16 Class 6</p>	<p>Pitch Project 2 Share pitches in class</p> <p>Crafting a horror screenplay. Screenwriting workshop – the 12 beat horror outline.</p> <p>Working with gore in horror films.</p> <p>FILM STUDY: TBA</p>		
<p>7/17 EDIT</p>	<p>Editing Tutorial 1:00pm- 3:50PM SCA B118</p>		<p>P2 Pitches Due</p>
<p>7/18 Class 7</p>	<p>Monster Theory</p> <p>History of Monsters Zombies, Vampires, and Ghosts.</p> <p>International Horror Markets and Trends.</p> <p>FILM STUDY: Near Dark – or – The Others</p> <p>AFTERNOON SOUND TUTORIAL!</p>		
<p>7/18 SOUND D</p>	<p>Sound Tutorial 2:30PM – 4:20PM SCB B115</p>		
<p>7/23 Class 8</p>	<p>Go over short horror scripts – assign students to read roles out loud.</p> <p>Critique and give rewrite notes (how to approach a rewrite). Production pitfalls.</p>		<p>P2 DUE Short Film Scripts and Self Evaluations</p> <p>P3 Due Dates: Pitch due- July 25 Project due- Aug 1</p>
<p>7/25 Class 9</p>	<p>Finish any scripts we didn't read in class.</p> <p>Sub-genres lecture - Torture Porn and TBA topic (religious horrors, aquatic horror, etc.)</p> <p>FILM STUDY: TBD</p>		<p>Rewrite Scripts based off class/professor notes</p>

7/30 Class 10	Screening of a feature film followed by a Q and A with the filmmakers. FILM STUDY: TBA		
8/1 Class 11	Screen all P3 Short Films! Making Micro Budget Horror and Navigating Streaming platforms and distributors. Pitching and Treatments Lecture. How to pitch horror. Getting in the room and getting people to read your screenplay. Festivals and finding work in the industry. Convo with horror panel of producers, directors, and writers		Due: Project 3 Short Films Self-Evaluation.

Each student must purchase two memory cards. One that will contain the camera settings, and one that will record media (project footage).

The Sony 64GB v30 (\$25) Sandisk 64GB v30 (\$15) PNY 64GB v30 (\$10) are recommended for storing the camera settings.

Both the Sony 128GB v90 (\$190) and ProGrade 128GB v90 (\$145) SDXC cards are recommended for project footage. These are the only cards tested and recommended.

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.

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.

**PLEASE NOTE:
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN
ANY INSTRUCTIONAL
SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX**