USC Cinematic Arts

Land Acknowledgement
USC acknowledges that we are on the traditional land of the Tongva People. For thousands of years, the Tongva people lived on this land we occupy today and were considered the most powerful indigenous peoples to inhabit the Los Angeles basin. Along with the Tongva, we also recognize the Chumash, Tataviam, Serrano, Cahuilla, Juaneño, and Luiseño People, for the land that USC also occupies around Southern California. To learn about the Indigenous land on which your learning location resides, please visit Native-Land.ca to discover the Original People of your home.

CTPR 386: Film & Television Case Study / Section: 18515 (4 Units)
Fall 2024 Syllabus

Instructor: **John Palmer** / jipalmer@usc.edu
Student Assistant: **Redd Coltrane** / rcingram@usc.edu

Day/Time: **Tuesdays 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m**   Location: **SCA 203**   Office Hours: **By Appt.**

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Most movies and series are made across multiple years, through the efforts of hundreds or even thousands of people, at the cost of millions of dollars. But how?

This course offers a detailed case study of one feature film or show from conception through distribution. Through readings, assignments, lectures, and conversations with key players involved, we will examine the behind-the-scenes processes and collaboration required in movie- or series-making as a craft and commercial art form in the context of a global industry.

This semester's case study will use the recent Netflix feature film THEY CLONED TYRONE (2023), a genre-bending comedy infused with social commentary and written, produced, and directed by School of Cinematic Arts alumni.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE
- Develop an understanding of the complex system behind the making of a feature film or series, including:
    - ideation & development
    - pre-production, production, and post-production
    - creative collaboration
    - legal/business/financial affairs
    - distribution & marketing

WEEKLY LESSONS/TOPICS
Subject to change based on class progress & guest availability. Including, but not limited to:

- Source Material: Original Ideas & Intellectual Property
- The Drivers: Producers & Production Companies
- Development: Screenplay & Pitch Materials
- Talent Packaging & Casting
- The Role of the Director: Artist & Guide

- The Greenlight: Buyers, Studio Executives & Film Financing
- Deal Making: Agents, Managers & Lawyers
- The Magic: Making the Movie
- The Look: Cinematography, Production Design, Costumes & Hair/Makeup
- Post Production: Picture Edit, Visual Effects, Color, Music & Sound Edit/Design/Mix
- The Release: Distribution, Marketing & PR

WEEKLY CLASS FORMAT
Subject to change based on class progress & guest availability. Including, but not limited to:
- Discussion of relevant current events in media and the entertainment business
- Lecture and discussion of required reading and viewing
- Examination of a segment of the creative and distribution process
- Analysis of the case study film
- Guest speaker(s) either intimately involved in the making and release of the case study film/series, or representative of key roles of craft and business in the industry

ASSIGNMENTS
We will review requirements and further details–including submission policies–in class for each assignment, to include:
- Weekly assignments:
  - providing questions for guest speakers
  - course readings
  - in-class reporting on recent industry-related news
  - in-class exercises
- Midterm Exam: Essay Questions
- Final Assignment: In-Depth Analysis, Industry Interview, or Creative Pitch

REQUIRED MATERIALS

1) THEY CLONED TYRONE, Netflix (2023). Directed by Juel Taylor. Available to stream via subscription on Netflix. *(We will watch the film in our first class.)*

2) The Movie Business Book, Fourth Edition, edited by Jason E. Squire. Routledge/Focal Press, 2017. (TMMB)

3) Making Movies, March 19, 1996 Edition, written by Sidney Lumet. Vintage, 1996. (MM)

4) Various articles, essays, and clips as assigned throughout.

5) Each student must maintain an ongoing effort to stay current with industry news. Supplementary and suggested readings, viewings, and listens will be shared in class throughout the semester, and emailed or posted to Brightspace, Google Drive, or similar when appropriate.

GUEST SPEAKERS
Throughout the semester, guest speakers will visit the class to share their knowledge and experiences. Examples of guests include writers, producers, directors, department heads, studio

executives, managers, agents, marketing experts, etc. Confirmed speakers will be announced during class or via email on an ongoing basis, in advance when possible, and subject to change based on guest availability. Any relevant information about guest speakers, including readings/viewings/listens, will be emailed and/or posted to Brightspace, Google Drive, or similar–as appropriate, and in advance when possible. It's crucial that guests are shown respect through timely attendance, active participation, and demonstrated focus.

ATTENDANCE
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 not required to provide an option for students to attend class remotely (e.g. via Zoom). This course will not be available synchronously or asynchronously via Zoom except in very rare, pre-approved cases.

Students must contact the professor and SA via email a minimum of 24 hours prior to class start time if they need to miss class (including arriving late and leaving early) for any reason. Excused tardies and absences will be considered on a case-by-case basis. In the event of a last-minute/emergency tardy or absence (less than 24 hours before class start time), students must contact the SA via email <u>and</u> text before class start time.

GRADING

Assignments and achievement will be evaluated on both subjective and objective judgments, weighted according to the following percentages:

Assessment Tool (Assignments)	% of Grade
Weekly Assignments (will vary week to week)	15%
Midterm Exam: Essay Questions (In-Class, October 8)	25%
Final Assignment: Analysis, Interview, or Pitch (Presented In-Class, December 11)	45%
Class Participation, additional assignments & in-class exercises	15%

This course is graded on a letter-grade basis, using the following scale:

Letter grade	Percentage range
A	100% to 94%
A-	93% to 90%
B+	89% to 87%
B	86% to 83%
B-	82% to 80%

C+	79% to 77%
C	76% to 73%
C-	72% to 70%
D+	69% to 67%
D	66% to 63%
D-	62% to 60%
F	59% to 0%

Assignments will be graded according to understanding and integration of course teachings.

Class participation includes, but is not limited to: arriving prepared, participating in class discussions and Q&As with guests, collaborating with fellow students, etc.

It is expected that students will attend each class–arriving on time and staying for the scheduled duration, actively participate as outlined above, and be prepared for each session by keeping up with the required reading and viewing. These are essential to meaningfully connect with the lectures, discussions, and guest speakers.

All written materials and assignments must be submitted by the expressed deadline.

Failure to follow the above guidelines will result in your grade being impacted accordingly.

Negative grade impacts:
- **Late assignment:** -10% of assignment grade per day *(1 day late -10%, 2 days late -20%, etc.)*
- **Missed assignment or more than 5 days late:** Receive 0% on assignment grade
- **Failure to complete mid-term or present final assignment on scheduled date:**
  Receive 0% on project grade*
  In the event of an illness/emergency/excused absence, contact the professor to discuss.
- **Unexcused tardy:** -5% of overall class grade per tardy
- **Unexcused absence:** -10% of overall class grade per absence

ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES

Adjustments to the syllabus, including course outline and/or assignments, may occur. Students will be notified in class and/or via email and are expected to adapt accordingly.

Students may not record any class sessions, in any way, unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation.

Students may not use screens/devices (laptops, tablets, phones, watches, etc.) during class, unless otherwise instructed or conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Please be prepared to take notes on paper.

When appropriate, course topics, class materials, and assignments will be announced in class and posted to Brightspace, Google Drive, or similar, in advance when possible. Consultations and final assignment appointments will be scheduled via an online scheduling tool and schedules will be posted to Brightspace, Google Drive, or similar.

<u>COURSE SCHEDULE & OUTLINE</u>

Class #1: Tuesday, August 27
- Introductions. Course overview/review syllabus & assignments. Class protocols.
- Screening: THEY CLONED TYRONE
- Assignment 1: Read TMBB Chapters 1-4 (*Introduction*, *The Creators*), MM Chapter 1 (*The Director*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA

Class #2: Tuesday, September 3
- Lecture/Discussion: Source Material (Original Ideas & Intellectual Property), The Drivers (Producers & Production Companies)
- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Class Reporter Assignments
- Assignment 1: Read TMBB Chapters 5-8 (*The Property*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA
- Assignment 3 (Reporter Group 1 Only): Research industry news & prepare report

Class #3: Tuesday, September 10
- Class Reporters: Industry News
- Lecture/Discussion: Development (Screenplay & Pitch Materials), The Role of the Director (Artist & Guide)
- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment 1: Read TMBB Chapters 9-15 (*Money*, *Management*) & MM Chapter 2 (*The Script*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA

Class #4: Tuesday, September 17
- Overview: Midterm Exam & Final Assignment
- Lecture/Discussion: Talent Packaging, Casting, The Greenlight (Buyers, Studio Executives & Film Financing)
- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment 1: Read TMBB Chapters 16-19 (*The Deal*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA
- Assignment 3 (Reporter Group 2 Only): Research industry news & prepare report

Class #5: Tuesday, September 24
- Class Reporters: Industry News
- Lecture/Discussion: Deal Making (Agents, Managers & Lawyers)
- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment 1: Read TMBB Chapters 20-21 (*Production*), MM Chapter 7 (*Shooting the Movie*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA

Class #6: Tuesday, October 1
- Lecture/Discussion: The Magic (Making the Movie)

- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment 1: Review your notes in preparation for midterm exam
- Assignment 2: Send final assignment idea to Professor & SA

Class #7: Tuesday, October 8
IN-CLASS MIDTERM: Essay Questions. Bring your laptops!

Class #8: Tuesday, October 15
- Workshop: Final Assignment
- Assignment 1: Read MM Chapter 5 (*The Camera*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA
- Assignment 3 (Reporter Group 3 Only): Research industry news & prepare report

Class #9: Tuesday, October 22
- Class Reporters: Industry News
- Lecture/Discussion: The Look (Cinematography)
- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment 1: Read MM Chapter 6 (*Art Direction and Clothes*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA

Class #10: Tuesday, October 29
- Lecture/Discussion: The Look (Production Design, Costumes & Hair/Makeup)
- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment 1: Read MM Chapters 9-11 (*Cutting Room*, *Music*, *Mix*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA
- Assignment 3 (Reporter Group 4 Only): Research industry news & prepare report

Class #11: Tuesday, November 5
- Class Reporters: Industry News
- Lecture/Discussion: Post Production (Picture Edit, Visual Effects, Color, Music & Sound Edit/Design/Mix)
- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment 1: Read TMBB 25-28 (*Marketing*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA

Class #12: Tuesday, November 12
- Lecture/Discussion: The Release (Marketing & PR)
- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment 1: Read TMBB 25-28 (*Revenue Streams*, *Theatrical Distribution*), MM Chapter 13 (*The Studio*)
- Assignment 2: Submit two questions for next week's guest speaker(s) to SA
- Assignment 3 (Reporter Group 5 Only): Research industry news & prepare report

Class #13: Tuesday, November 19
- Class Reporters: Industry News
- Lecture/Discussion: The Release (Distribution)

- Guest Speaker(s): TBC
- Assignment: Send final assignment plan to Professor & SA
- Assignment 1: Schedule final assignment w/ SA

Class #14: Tuesday, November 26
- 1:1 FINAL ASSIGNMENT MEETINGS w/ Professor. To be scheduled.

Class #15: Tuesday, December 3
- Lecture/Discussion: How to Get an 'A' on the Final Assignment
- Workshop: Final Assignment
- Lecture/Discussion: Class Review
- In-Class Exercise: Film Teams

FINAL: Wednesday, December 11, Time & Location TBC
PRESENTATION OF FINAL ASSIGNMENT

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

The School of Cinematic Arts Support Systems and Statements:

Diversity and Inclusion are foundational to the SCA community. We are committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation, or violence against persons or property. If students are concerned about these matters in the classroom setting, they are encouraged to contact their SCA Diversity and Inclusion Liaison, http://cinema.usc.edu/about/diversity.cfm; e-mail diversity@cinema.usc.edu or anonymously submit a report on SCA Community: https://scacommunity.usc.edu/secure/diversityEquity/ You can also read more about how to report discrimination based on a protected class here: https://eeotix.usc.edu/get-help/what-are-my-choices-text/

SCA Office of Student Services
213-740-8358 or StudentAffairs@cinema.usc.edu

SCA Embedded Therapists
Students enrolled in an SCA major program can schedule an appointment with an embedded therapist for the School of Cinematic Arts through the student health portal MySHR.

SCA Community
For additional SCA resources please visit scacommunity.usc.edu

Creative Technology and Support
(213) 821-4571
creativetech@cinema.usc.edu
Location: SCA 128
Support Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 8:30 PM
https://knowledgebase.sca.usc.edu/
https://workstations.sca.usc.edu/

Physical Production Office
The Physical Production Office assists students and faculty with production-related matters including production numbers, locations, permits, insurance, gear and equipment vendors, safety issues, and crew and actor policies. More information can be found by visiting the online Production Procedures and Safety Handbook. The Physical Production Office is located at SCA 304 and is open every weekday from 9am-5pm (Fridays 9am-1pm). You can also reach the Office by calling 213-740-1298 or by email at spo@cinema.usc.edu.

Office of Industry Relations
School of Cinematic Arts - SCA 235
(213) 740-4432
ir@cinema.usc.edu

Cinematic Arts Library Research Guide
https://libguides.usc.edu/cinema

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.

Academic dishonesty has a far-reaching impact and is considered a serious offense against the university. Violations will result in a grade penalty, such as a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and disciplinary action from the university itself, such as suspension or even expulsion.

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.

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 is prohibited, *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 is prohibited. 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 relation to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. Distributing course material without the instructor's permission will be presumed to be an intentional act to facilitate or enable academic dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Policy for the use of AI Generators:

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. If found responsible for an academic violation, students may be assigned university outcomes, such as suspension or expulsion from the university, and grade penalties, such as an "F" grade on the assignment, exam, and/or in the course.

Statement on University Academic and Support Systems:

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.

Student Financial Aid and Satisfactory Academic Progress:

To be eligible for certain kinds of financial aid, students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward their degree objectives. Visit the Financial Aid Office webpage for undergraduate- and graduate-level SAP eligibility requirements and the appeals process.

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 consists 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) 740-2500*
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 - *UPC: (213) 821-9556, HSC: (323) 442-0382*
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.