

## **Course ID and Title: CTPR 409 - Practicum in Television Production**

*The Water Cooler*

**Units: 2**

**Term—Day—Time: Fall 2024, Friday 9-11:20a**

**Location: Robert Zemeckis Center for Digital Arts, Studios B**

**Instructor: Steve Martinez**

**Office:** Robert Zemeckis Center, Trojan Vision Teacher's Office

**Office Hours:** Available upon request, in person or via Zoom.

**Contact Info:** [Stevenm8@usc.edu](mailto:Stevenm8@usc.edu)

Most replies via e-mail will come within 24-48 hours.

**Teaching Assistant / Student Assistant: Martin Lee**

**Contact Info:** [mlee7482@usc.edu](mailto:mlee7482@usc.edu)

### **Course Description**

This course introduces students to the basic concepts of live multicamera television production. For shows produced in this course, students learn the creative, technical, and practical procedures for hands on, in-studio weekly television production. Over the semester, each class functions as a team to produce a season of shows that livestream on the Trojan Vision website (TrojanVision.com).

Trojan Vision shows are modeled on the popular classics of live television. Formats include morning news, talk shows & interviews, game shows, cooking shows, music performance, sports talk, sketch comedies and entertainment news. After a period of instruction and practice, students produce multiple episodes of their show over the span of the semester.

### **Learning Objectives**

Students will learn the basics of multicamera live television production. This includes but is not limited to how to pitch story ideas, write scripts, cast and direct talent, take on crew positions (camera, sound, graphics, tech director, director, teleprompter, playback and floor manager), operate studio and control room equipment, edit video clips, field produce videos, rehearse and record live shows and in some instances post-produce recorded shows.

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Recommended Preparation:** Watch an episode or two from last season of *The Water Cooler* to get a feel for the production style and tone of the show. Past episodes are available on TrojanVision.com

### **Course Notes**

This class is for a letter grade and is open to all students, graduate and undergraduate, from any school or department in the university. It is assumed that students enrolling in CTPR 409 have no television production experience. All skills needed to successfully complete this course are taught in the class. It will be a mixture of in-person and at-home work.

### **Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

Some basic video editing skills will be a regular part of students contribution to class. A class lesson focused on editing will be provided for everyone, regardless of editing proficiency.

For field productions, students work in teams and outside of class time to pitch, write, produce, shoot and edit videos to be dropped in to future show episodes. Students can use personal devices to shoot field productions. SCA also has equipment available for rent for students seeking additional production quality.

### Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

None

### Optional Readings and Supplementary Materials

Optional reading on multicamera production is available digitally from USC Libraries.

Cury, Ivan. *Directing & Producing for Television, 5th edition*. Routledge Press, 2017.

Owens, Jim. *Television Production, 16th edition*. Focal Press, 2015.

### Description and Assessment of Assignments

Students are responsible for all aspects of the production of *The Water Cooler*, from ideation to scripting the rundown to the execution of production on the stage and the control room. In the week leading up to a show, students will be responsible for graphics, b-rolls, and all aspects of show preparation. Students will also submit a project summarizing their progress at the end of the semester.

### Participation

Credit for participation involves the timely completion of assignments during show rehearsals and shows, availability to assist your teammates in the crew on show preparation, and completion of assignments outside of the studio in preparation for the show. The application of feedback is critical in demonstrating progress throughout the semester, so please pay attention to notes on how to improve as the semester progresses.

### Grading Breakdown

Grades are based on the timely submission of assignments and the execution of crew assignments. The instructor will also evaluate students' preparation in class, engagement in discussions, professional behavior, punctuality, and team collaboration.

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Participation	150	15
Collaboration	150	15
Show Assignments	250	25
Crew Assignments	300	30
Final Assessment	150	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100</b>

### Grading Scale

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale:

#### Letter Grade & Percentage Range

A	100% to 94%	C	76% to 73%
A-	93% to 90%	C-	72% to 70%
B+	89% to 87%	D+	69% to 67%
B	86% to 83%	D	66% to 63%
B-	82% to 80%	D-	62% to 60%
C+	79% to 77%	F	59% to 0%

## **Assignment Submission Policy**

Assignments can be uploaded to the class google drive folder weekly leading up to shows and rehearsals. Google drive link will be shared with students once class is set after add/drop period. Late assignments will be subject to a grading penalty.

## **Attendance**

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. This class is performance-based and attendance is extremely important. Each student will be allowed two excused absences. An excused absence constitutes notifying the professor and SA at least 24 hours prior to class, unless given special permission otherwise.

One unexcused absence may result in a student's grade being lowered by one notch (IE: A becomes A-). Two unexcused absences may result in a student's grade being lowered by two notches (IE: A- becomes B). A third unexcused 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 15 minutes 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**

Cell phones, laptops, tablets and other personal devices may only be used in class for show related work. Personal cell phone usage should be limited to class breaks aside from emergencies. Sandals and open-toe shoes are not permitted in the studios. Students should dress appropriately for crew jobs in the facility.

## **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](#).

### **AI Generators Policy**

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. In addition, a [mid-semester evaluation](#) will be provided as well. The SA will handle the distribution and collection of evaluations.

### **Course Schedule**

NOTE: Once the semester begins, the instructor will decide the dates for live show recordings and those dates may be subject to change.

**Week 1 – 8/30**

Student orientation, syllabus review and facility tour.

Introduction and breakdown of The Water Cooler.

Assignment: Watch clips from past episodes of The Water Cooler in preparation to discuss in class  
Week 2.

**Week 2 – 9/6**

Overview of facility equipment and crew positions. Instruction on relevant TV terms often used in production.

Assignment: E-mail Professor and SA your Top 3 most desired crew positions. Be prepared to answer questions on relevant TV terms.

**Week 3 – 9/13**

Introduction to field production, out-of-studio packages and pitches. Ideas on pitching stories, scripting, research, hosts and guests. Introduction to camera operation. Crew exercises in rotation. Learning to set up and strike studio.

Assignment: Come with questions on designated crew positions. Be prepared to answer questions on relevant TV terms.

**Week 4 – 9/20**

Instruction on how to cut VOs/B-rolls for class. Crew exercises in rotation.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for next week's rehearsal

**Week 5 – 9/27**

Episode 1 run-throughs and rehearsals. Episode 1 crew assignments.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for Episode 1.

**Week 6 – 10/4**

Episode 1 livestream. Postmortem & post-production instruction.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for Episode 2.

**Week 7 – 10/11**

Fall Recess – NO CLASS

**Week 8 – 10/18**

Episode 2 livestream and postmortem.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for Episode 3. Group 1 prepares out of studio segment for air in Episode 3.

**Week 9 - 10/25**

Episode 3 livestream and postmortem. Group 1 out of studio segment due.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for rehearsal next week. Group 2 prepares out of studio segment for air in Episode 4.

**Week 10 – 11/1**

Switch crew positions. Episode 4 run-throughs and rehearsals. Group 2 out of studio segment due.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for Episode 4. Group 3 prepares out of studio segment for air in Episode 4.

**Week 11 – 11/8**

Episode 4 livestream and postmortem. Group 3 out of studio segment due.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for Episode 5. Group 4 prepares out of studio segment for air in Episode 5.

**Week 12 – 11/15**

Episode 5 livestream and postmortem. Group 4 out of studio segment due.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for Episode 6. Group 5 prepares out of studio segment for air in Episode 6.

**Week 13 – 11/22**

Episode 6 livestream and postmortem. Group 5 out of studio segment due.

Assignment: Edit B-rolls, prepare graphics, lower thirds, etc. for Episode 7. Groups can submit additional out of studio segment package for Episode 7 for extra credit, or assist producers in editing packages as well.

**Week 14 – 11/29**

Thanksgiving – NO CLASS

**Week 15 – 12/6**

Episode 7: One-hour season finale show livestream and postmortem.

Assignment: Final assessment due 12/11

**Finals Week**

Final assessment due on December 11. Submit Final assessment as a summation of technical and creative progress.

Refer to the final exam schedule in the USC *Schedule of Classes* at [classes.usc.edu](http://classes.usc.edu).

## **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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://scacommunity.usc.edu)

### **Creative Technology and Support**

(213) 821-4571

[creativetech@cinema.usc.edu](mailto: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](mailto:spo@cinema.usc.edu).

### **Office of Industry Relations**

School of Cinematic Arts - SCA 235

(213) 740-4432

[ir@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:ir@cinema.usc.edu)

### **Cinematic Arts Library Research Guide**

<https://libguides.usc.edu/cinema>

### ***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.

## **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 accommodation is not retroactive. More information can be found at [osas.usc.edu](https://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto:osasfrontdesk@usc.edu).

### **Support Systems:**

*COVID-19 Resource Center* - <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/what-should-i-do/>

*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](mailto: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