



THTR 216: Movement for Actors

Section 62770

Units: 2

Fall 2024

Monday/Wednesday 12-120pm

Location: DAB 213

Instructor: Zach Steel

Office: JEF 208

Office Hours: Wednesday, 4-5pm (please call/email for appt.)

Email: zsteel@usc.edu

Cell: 347-546-0298

Slack: @Zachary Steel

IT Help: ITS

Hours of Service: 7am-10pm PST

Contact Info: 213-740-5555 or consult@usc.edu

Course Description

The course will enlighten students to the dynamic potential of a physical approach to acting. Experiencing the discursive and expressive power of the body in space is an essential part of the actor's training. What narrative and personal information is being conveyed when we are discovered on stage and how can we empower ourselves with choice to support the story we want to tell? There are many physical elements that exist in theatre and they are often given a back seat to text. In this class, we will challenge the notion of text as king and discover all the myriad ways we can communicate with an audience. Students will work independently in this class and in groups.

Learning Objectives

- To define the nine Viewpoints
- To utilize Viewpoints as a basis for performance and composition
- To devise original theatre based on Moment Work and composition
- To apply the principals of physical theatre for analysis and feedback on in-class work
- To evaluate the work done in SDA shows and professional work using the principals explored in class.

Course Notes

Bring Journals to class (physical pen/paper, no electronics)

Attire: Comfortable clothing appropriate for movement (not too revealing/distracting). Bring layers for different spaces and temperatures. Work out / yoga attire are great (no jeans, short shorts, mid-riff, low cut tops). Minimal jewelry (must be safe for everyone) Hair off the face (unless for specific performance purposes). Athletic or dance shoes, and be prepared to work barefoot also. Grades will be affected if inappropriately dressed.

Phones/Electronic Devices must be off your body, in the bag, and out of sight during class (unless cleared by the instructor for possible classwork) Stating the obvious but no texts, calls, email for the duration of the class.

Attendance: For a movement class based on active and experiential learning, your body must be in class to move! Attendance and participation in class is mandatory. No unexcused absences are allowed, in accordance with School of Dramatic Arts guidelines.

Each unexcused absence will result in a -2 point reduction in your overall grade. An excused absence is due to Covid related / serious illness, grave emergency, or the appropriate SDA leave of absence. Manageable personal and family matters do not constitute a basis for an excused absence. You are responsible for all work missed.

If you have to be absent for an extended period of time due to covid or other serious illness, we will work together to keep your educational experience going. If you need to zoom in, you must alert me in advance so I can set it up in the classroom (if possible).

Lateness is disruptive and unprofessional. If you enter after attendance has been taken you are considered late, a -1 point deduction will be taken. If the student has three or more unexplained absences or "tardies" during the course, their final overall grade will be docked -5 points.

Classroom Norms

Because this work utilizes our entire self, it can cause us to feel vulnerable. It is important that we approach this work with empathy and support of each other's experiences. We all are on different paths and will relate to this work in different ways. It will look and feel differently on all of our bodies. I ask that when judgement and self-criticism show up, notice it. Those things often get in the way of us being able to fully surrender to the work of the present moment. No one is an expert immediately. Be patient, this stuff takes time. Stay curious, positive, and playful.

We will come up with a community agreement on physical touch in the first week of classes.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

All readings will be provided and are available on Brightspace.

-*The Viewpoints Book* by Anne Bogart and Tina Landau

-*Moment Work* by Moisés Kaufman and Barbara Pitts McAdams

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Weekly Journal – Students are responsible for weekly entries, both in-class notes and logging, and reflections on the work done in class. Connections made between class and work done outside of class, life experiences, performances (as audience or as performer) should be covered in these reflections.

ViewPoints/Composition – Students are to present group compositions based on in class prompts. At least one outside-of-class rehearsal is required.

Movement Analysis – An oral presentation on a clip from a favorite piece of comedic material to be shared in class with the movement from the piece analyzed through a viewpoints lens.

Gappers Presentations – A final group presentation of an original piece devised from the short story, *The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip*. Two outside-of-class rehearsals are required.

Written Final – A timed, written exam administered on Brightspace. The prompts will cover the material covered throughout the semester: terminology used, principles and concepts, and more open-ended questions as well.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
In-Class Activities	100	20
Discussion	100	5
Weekly Journal	100	15
Viewpoints/Comp.	100	15
Movement Analysis	100	15
Gappers Presentations	100	15
Written Final	100	15
TOTAL	700	100

Grading Scale (Example)

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Assignment Submission Policy

Aside from the final written exam and the movement analysis which will be on Brightspace, all assignments will be presented in class, or turned in in person.

Reading will be available on Brightspace.

AI Policy

I expect you to use AI (e.g., ChatGPT and image generation tools) in this class. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill, and I welcome the opportunity to meet with you to provide guidance with these tools during office hours or after class. Keep in mind the following:

- AI tools are permitted to help you brainstorm topics or revise work you have already written.
- If you provide minimum-effort prompts, you will get low-quality results. You will need to refine your prompts to get good outcomes. This will take work.
- Proceed with caution when using AI tools and do not assume the information provided is accurate or trustworthy. If it gives you a number or fact, assume it is incorrect unless you either know the correct answer or can verify its accuracy with another source. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool. It works best for topics you understand.
- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please include a paragraph at the end of any assignment that uses AI explaining how (and why) you used AI and indicate/specify the prompts you used to obtain the results what prompts you used to get the results. Failure to do so is a violation of academic integrity policies.

- Be thoughtful about when AI is useful. Consider its appropriateness for each assignment or circumstance. The use of AI tools requires attribution. You are expected to clearly attribute any material generated by the tool used.]
- For more information on how to cite or credit AI, visit <https://libguides.usc.edu/generative-AI>

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 with me as the instructor to offer any feedback on the course.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
Week 1 8/26, 8/28	Introduction -syllabus -personal intros -how will this class work? -Viewpoints		
Week 2 9/2 (no class), 9/4	Viewpoints -Introductory exercises	Reading DUE 9/4: Viewpoints, Chapter 5	
Week 3 9/9, 9/11	Viewpoints -Exploration of the viewpoints in time and space		
Week 4 9/16, 9/18	Viewpoints -Exploration of the viewpoints in time and space		
Week 5 9/23, 9/25	Composition -Group structured improvisations		
Week 6 9/30, 10/2	Composition Presentations	Must have rehearsed with you group at least once before your presentation	

Week 7 10/7, 10/9	Composition Presentations		DUE 10/9: Movement Analysis Paper
Week 8 10/14, 10/16	Viewpoints Review		
Week 9 10/21, 10/23	Moment Work -Theatrical Elements -Gesture, Architecture, Space	Reading: Moment Work, Part 1: Tectonic's Antecedents, History, and Approach	
Week 10 10/28, 10/30	Moment Work -Props, Costumes, Lights		
Week 11 11/4, 11/6	Group Project – Gappers of FriP		
Week 12 11/11 (no class), 11/13	Group Project – Gappers of FriP		
Week 13 11/18, 11/20	Review		
Week 14 11/25, 11/27 (no class)	Review		
Week 15 12/2, 12/4	Site Moments Final Presentation	Must have rehearsed with you group at least twice before your presentation	DUE 12/1: Weekly Journals
FINAL 12/13 11-1	Final Meeting TBD		Timed written exam administered on Brightspace, taken in your own time before Friday, 12/13, 1pm

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.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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](#).

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.

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

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.