

**Costume Construction THTR 231**

**Units: 3**

**Fall 2023 - Mon, Wed. – 8:00-9:50 am**

**Location:** PED 114E and 114F (Costume Shop)

**Instructor:** Charlotte Stratton (she/her/hers)

**Office:** 114F (Costume Shop)

**Office Hours:** By appointment in costume shop

**Contact Info:**

**Cell phone:** (818)679-8047

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**Course Description**

Theory and practice in construction of costumes. Emphasis on sewing and patterning skills used to create unique garments for theatrical or personal use. Previous sewing skills are not necessary.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

Use the sewing machine for the construction of simple and more advanced garments. Identify and choose fabrics that are most suitable for the construction of specific costumes.

Become familiar with basic pattern sloper shapes and the methods of altering them to change design elements as desired and making simple fit alterations.

**Course Notes**

I will utilize Blackboard for the communication of assignments and provide links to additional information for the class. Some assignments will also be turned in through Blackboard.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

**Textbook:**

The Reader's Digest Association. *Complete Guide to Sewing: Step-by-Step Techniques for Making Clothes and Home Accessories*; Updated Edition; 2022.

Please purchase this book and have it ready to use in class. I will provide the pages that will be used the first few weeks in class in case acquiring it immediately is problematic for you. This is the single best sewing technique book that I have come across, and if you plan to continue sewing after this class, you will be able to refer to it throughout the rest of your life. It is a wonderful reference tool for sewing, tailoring, and even home decorating.

**Sewing Patterns:**

New Look Pattern #6859 - pajama pants

New Look Pattern #6232 - button up shirt

These patterns are available for purchase at sewing stores, but I will also have them available for \$5/pattern in class.

**Fabric:**

Depending on the style of pajama pants you choose to make (shorts, 3/4 length, or full-length) you will need to buy 1.5-3.25 yds. of cotton fabric or cotton flannel fabric. The button-up shirt will take 3-3.25 yards. It must be woven, **NOT** knit or stretch fabric, as this is more difficult to sew and will give you more of a challenge than I'd like for you to have this semester.

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

*Learning objective: Use the sewing machine for the construction of simple and more advanced garments.*

Sewing projects #1 -Pajama pants, and #2- Button-up shirt:

You will make a pair of pajama pants with pockets and a button-up shirt with the use of an existing pattern to the size that you choose. The first project project will be completed over 3 weeks, while the second will take about 5 weeks. They will both be guided step-by-step in class. Some outside work will be necessary to complete the steps we go over in each class period. The specific steps we will do each day are outlined in the syllabus. The grading rubric is outlined at the end of the assignment, and includes assessments of technical skills, overall appearance of finished garment, participation and work ethic, and time management skills. Skills that are developed during the first project will be used and built upon during the completion of the final project.

*Learning objective: Become familiar with basic pattern sloper shapes and the methods of altering them to change design elements as desired and making simple fit alterations.*

We will discuss how to alter the patterns for both projects to fit the way the wearer would like. This will include garment length, and size and shape of collar and cuffs. We will discuss the theoretical methods of altering the sloper shapes to create costumes that we will look at on the dress forms and in photographs and drawings.

A mid-term and final test will be given that reviews much of the information learned through the completion of the projects assigned throughout the semester.

*Learning objective: Identify and choose fabrics that are suitable for the construction of specific costumes or pieces of apparel.*

We will compare and contrast many fabrics throughout the semester and discuss their suitability for a variety of costume and clothing uses.

A paper comparing the fabric and construction techniques of several garments will be due in the mid-term.

## Grading Breakdown

- 20% Project 1 - Pajama pants
- 20% Sewing samples, participation assignments and quizzes
- 15% Midterm exam and paper
- 30% Project 2 - Button-up shirt
- 15% Final exam

Sewing samples will be due at the beginning of the class following the one in which they are assigned.

Extra credit assignments (zipper samples) may be completed at any time throughout the semester, though they are scheduled in Weeks 11-14 in the syllabus. This should allow you some flexibility in case the end of your semester is particularly full.

Due dates for sewing projects are shown in the weekly breakdown and loss of points for late submission are explained in the grading rubric.

## Assignment Rubrics

Sewing samples are worth 5 points each, based on the following criteria: turned in on time, stitching is even/tension is good, pressed well and threads trimmed.

### Sewing project rubric - 100 pts. possible

Grading Criteria	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-20
<b>Machine Operation</b>	Student has poor knowledge of machine and needs help with threading and adjusting sewing machine on a daily basis.	Student needs help with the sewing machine most of the time.	Student needs help with the sewing machine some of the time.	Student knows how to thread the sewing machine and adjust the settings. Student operates machine proficiently.
<b>Skills and Techniques</b>	Seams are not straight or accurate. No backstitching. Hand sewing does not hold together.	Most seams are not straight or accurate. Forgets to backstitch or secure ends. Hand sewing is done incorrectly and/or is messy.	Seams occasionally are not accurate. Most seams are backstitched or secured. Handstitching is accurate, but sometimes is too tight, big, or uneven.	Seams are even, backstitched, and accurate. Hand stitching is secured with a knot and is even, straight, and secure.

<p><b>Construction of Finished project</b></p>	<p>Multiple mistakes made and not fixed. Loose threads, not ironed as sewn, messy presentation, Seams are puckered and there are holes in most seams.</p>	<p>Rarely takes the time to fix mistakes. Many loose threads, not a polished presentation. Seams often have puckers and/or holes in seams.</p>	<p>Leaves some mistakes unfixed, but not noticeable. Occasional loose threads, but still neat and well pressed Minor puckers in seams.</p>	<p>When mistakes are made, student attempts to fix them. Loose threads are cut, and all seams, straight and curved, are well pressed. Seams are not puckered.</p>
<p><b>Participation and work ethic</b></p>	<p>Leaves area messy, doesn't put things away, and little work is accomplished in class each day. Frequently misses class. Unsafe use of equipment.</p>	<p>Frequently leaves area messy, didn't work productively in class on many days. Occasionally misses class. Frequently uses equipment unsafely.</p>	<p>On most days, leaves work area clean and works consistently in class. Has some productivity issues. Attends most classes. Usually uses equipment safely.</p>	<p>Uses class time to work consistently on project. Materials are put away and work area left clean. Always attends class. Always productive. Uses equipment safely.</p>
<p><b>Time Management</b></p>	<p>Project was not submitted by due date and was incomplete. Missed most preliminary deadlines.</p>	<p>Project was submitted, but not complete or not by due date. Missed many preliminary deadlines.</p>	<p>Project was finished and submitted on time with a push at the end. Met most preliminary deadlines.</p>	<p>Project was finished early or on time without a push at the end. Submitted on time and met preliminary deadlines.</p>
<p><b>Self-evaluation (Please write a short response explaining your evaluation)</b>  <b>(+5 points extra credit)</b></p>	<p>This work is incomplete or otherwise unfinished. (Based on the above criteria, please write a 1-2 paragraph reflection evaluating your work.)</p>	<p>This work has lots of room for improvement. (Based on the above criteria, please write a 1-2 paragraph reflection evaluating your work.)</p>	<p>This work could be improved. (Based on the above criteria, please write a 1-2 paragraph reflection evaluating your work.)</p>	<p>This is good solid work. This is my very best work. (Based on the above criteria, please write a 1-2 paragraph reflection evaluating your work.)</p>

Course schedule	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Assignment Dates
<b>Week 1</b>	<p>Aug. 21 -Review syllabus and grading rubric. Introduction to sewing machine. Practice threading, straight stitch and zig-zag on paper. Sew three regular seams with two colors of thread. Perfect the tension by making it too loose, too tight, then perfect.</p> <p>Aug. 23 – Ironing techniques. Press all seams open. Double topstitched seam, welt seam. Introduction to overlock.</p>	<p>Sewing machine and tension – videos on BB Regular seam- pg. 85</p> <p>Ironing video on BB. Double topstitched seam and welt seam- pg. 94 Seam finishes – pg. 88</p>	<p><b>Regular seams -due at end of class or beginning of the next class.</b></p> <p><b>Double topstitched seam and welt seam due at the beginning of next class. Focus on PERFECT ironing.</b></p>
<b>Week 2</b>	<p>Aug. 28 - French seam. Threading needle, knots and thread chains. Look at pj pants pattern. How to determine size, fabric and notions needed, etc.</p> <p>Aug. 30 -Flat-felled seam. Buttons, hooks, bars and snaps. Buttonholes- practice in class.</p>	<p>French seam -pg. 90</p> <p>Flat-felled seam- pg. 90 Buttons-pp. 317-318 Fastenings-pp. 320-323 Buttonholes-pg. 300 and sewing machine manual Hand sewing tips pg.68</p>	<p><b>French seam and thread chain samples due at the beginning of the next class.</b></p> <p><b>Flat-felled seam, buttons, buttonholes, and fastenings due at the beginning of next class.</b></p>

Course schedule	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Assignment Dates
<b>Week 3</b>	<p>Sept. 4 – Labor Day</p> <p>Sept. 6- Hand-sewing samples. Tailor’s tacks, Basting, running stitch, backstitch, whipstitch, slipstitch, catchstitch, and blind hemming stitch.</p> <p>Demo of cutting out pajama pants.</p> <p>Talk through sewing instructions. Make additions to the pattern instructions as directed.</p>	<p>No class</p> <p>Hand sewing tips and stitches pp. 68-82</p> <p>Cutting and marking the pieces- pg.56-65</p> <p>Watch cutting videos.</p> <p>Altering basic patterns to fit. Pg. 36-55</p>	<p><b>Hand-sewing samples due at the beginning of the next class.</b></p> <p>Cutting out pajama pants and marking them. <b>Must be ready to sew on Sept. 13.</b></p> <p><b>Next week:</b>  <b>Sept. 6 and 11- Quiz on threading machine, winding bobbin, changing feet, changing the needle and changing thread.</b></p>
<b>Week 4</b>	<p>Sept. 11 – Talk about basic alterations for pants. (length, fit)</p> <p>Cut out pajama pants. Mark matching notches only (mark dots with tailor tacks)  <b>Quiz- anytime this week.</b></p> <p>Sept. 13 – Continue cutting and marking. Be ready to sew on Sept. 18.</p>	<p>Altering basic patterns to fit. Pg. 36-55</p> <p>Cutting and marking- pg.56-65</p> <p>Marking the cut pieces pg. 65</p>	<p><b>Sept. 6 and 11- Quiz on threading machine, winding bobbin, changing feet, changing the needle and changing thread.</b></p> <p>Practice while sewing pants: threading machine, winding bobbin, changing feet, changing needle, changing thread.</p>

Course schedule	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Assignment Dates
<b>Week 5</b>	<p>Sept. 18- Begin sewing pants, starting with buttonholes. All views- Steps 1-5</p> <p>Sept. 20- Finish steps 1-5. If finished, move on to the next steps. Steps 6-10 on B,C &amp; D take longer.</p>		
<b>Week 6</b>	<p>Sept. 25- View A- Steps 6-8 View B, C, and D- Steps 6-10</p> <p>Sept. 27- Waistband casing- All views- see View A, steps 9-15 Machine blind hem sample.</p>		<p><b>Machine blind hem sample due at the beginning of next class.</b></p>
<b>Week 7</b>	<p>Oct. 2 – Hem. View A- step 16 or 17 View B – steps 11-13 View C – steps 14-15 Double needle sample.</p> <p>Oct. 4 –<b>Pajama pants due today.</b> Gathered/eased seam samples. Demo shirt layout options. Go over basic alterations for sleeve and body length, cuff width, and collar shape.</p>	<p>Bias pg. 263 Binding pg.267 Hems pg. 254</p> <p>Seams with fullness- pp.96, 120-121</p> <p><b>You may choose to cut out shirt at any time this week or next. Sign up will be available to avoid too much overlap. All will begin to sew Oct. 16.</b></p>	<p><b>Purchase fabric for shirt. Wash and iron it.</b></p> <p><b>Double needle hem sample due at the beginning of next class.</b></p> <p><b>Finished pants due Oct. 4 end of class.</b></p> <p><b>Gathered/eased seam samples due at the beginning of next class.</b></p>

Course schedule	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Assignment Dates
<b>Week 8</b>	<p>Oct. 9 – Cut out shirts.</p> <p>Oct. 11 - Cut out shirts. Mark notches. Cut interfacing.</p>	<p><b>Wash and iron fabric for shirt.</b></p> <p>Review cutting and marking, pp. 56-65.</p> <p><b>You may choose to cut out shirt at any time this week. Sign up will be available to avoid too much overlap. All will begin to sew Oct. 16.</b></p>	<p><b>Fall Recess Oct. 12-13</b></p>
<b>Week 9</b>	<p>Oct. 16 – Steps 1-5 Stay stitching and pockets</p> <p>Oct. 18- <b>Midterm exam.</b> Finish steps 1-5</p>	<p>Darts pp.101-102 (more...pp 103-107) Stay-stitching pg. 84 Pockets pg. 235 (more...pp. 232-251)</p> <p><b>Midterm exam.</b></p>	
<b>Week 10</b>	<p>Oct. 23- Steps 6-11 Yoke</p> <p>Oct. 25- Steps 12-19 Sleeve placket.</p>	<p>Cuffs with placket pp. 228-229</p>	
<b>Week 11</b>	<p>Oct. 30 – Steps 20-22 Sleeves</p> <p>Nov. 1 – Steps 23-24 Side seams and making cuffs.</p>	<p>Sleeves Pg. 217 (more...pp.214-221)</p> <p>Cuffs with placket 228-229 (more sleeve finishes and cuffs pp.224-231)</p>	<p><b>EXTRA CREDIT- Centered zipper sample. Pg. 286-287</b></p>



<b>Course schedule</b>	<b>Topics/Daily Activities</b>	<b>Readings and Homework</b>	<b>Assignment Dates</b>
<b>Week 12</b>	Nov. 6 – Steps 25-26 Applying cuffs.  Nov. 8 – Steps 27-30 Hem and begin front bands.		<b>EXTRA CREDIT- Lapped zipper sample. Pg. 290-291</b>
<b>Week 13</b>	Nov. 13 – Steps 28-30 Finish front bands.  Nov. 15 – Steps 31-33 Collar	Shirt collar with stand Pg. 181	<b>EXTRA CREDIT- Exposed zipper sample. Pg. 288-289</b>
<b>Week 14</b>	Nov. 20 – Steps 34-36 Collar  Thanksgiving Break Nov. 22-26		<b>EXTRA CREDIT- Invisible zipper sample.</b>
<b>Week 15</b>	Nov. 27 Step 37- Buttons and buttonholes.  Nov. 29 – Turn in finished shirt! Present to class. Demo on taking a pattern from an existing garment.	Buttons and buttonholes- pp. 300-301  Bring in a personal garment if you are interested in taking a pattern from it.	<b>Finished shirt due today, Nov. 29.</b>
<b>FINAL</b>	Dec. 6 - 8-10 am		<b>Final exam Dec. 6 8-10 am</b>

### **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 Conduct:**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

#### **Statement for Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 814-4618 (Vidoe Phone), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

#### **Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis**

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See the university’s site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

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#### **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 the physical, psychological, social, and emotional wellbeing. In alignment with professional and industry standards, we will integrate core principles and techniques of Intimacy in Theatre 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.

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### **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>

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### **Support Systems:**

*Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call*  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling)

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call*  
[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press "0" after hours – 24/7 on call*  
[studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault](http://studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault)

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298*  
[equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu), [titleix.usc.edu](http://titleix.usc.edu)

Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

*Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298*  
[usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report](http://usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report)

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity | Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

*The Office of Student Accessibility Services - (213) 740-0776*

<https://osas.usc.edu>

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

*USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710*

[campussupport.usc.edu](http://campussupport.usc.edu)

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

*Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101*

[diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

*USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu), [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

*USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call*

[dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)

Non-emergency assistance or information.