

# USC School of Dramatic Arts

**THTR 397:** Screen and Voice Acting Practicum (63002R & 63006R)

**Semester:** Fall 2024

**Instructor:** Prof. Bayo Akinfemi

**Office:** Tue & Thur 3 - 4pm (By appointment)

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

## Course Description

This course is designed to guide students through the creation and development of a media project with an emphasis on screen acting. Students will work together in pairs or trios to produce a 3 - 5 minute short film. All members of a team **MUST** appear on screen. Bold and innovative ideas are strongly encouraged. This is not a filmmaking practicum; it's about screen acting. Filmmaking will serve as the vehicle for achieving the primary objective. In addition, students in this practicum will audition for, and participate in SCA student film and voice acting projects. Students will also be credited for participation in other projects beyond SCA and USC.

## Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students will need internet access as well as access to a working digital camera. Mobile phones or tablets are desirable for easy mobility and access. Basic editing software (ie iMovie, Movie Maker, etc.), access to basic sound and lighting equipment may also be useful, but *not* required.

## Suggested Readings

- *Directing Actors: Creating Memorable Performances for Film and Television* by Judith Weston. 1996
- *Shooting to Kill* by Christine Vachon & David Edelstein. 2002

## Grading Breakdown

- Project proposal: **5** (This is your pitch document. It should include your project title, logline, synopsis and character description.)
- Script: **10** (3 - 5 pages standard industry format)
- Pre-production: **10** (Location scouting, rehearsals, wardrobe, props, hair & make-up prep)
- Production: **15** (Filming)
- Post-production: **15** (picture and sound editing)
- Production Journal: **10** (One journal will be submitted for the entire team at the end of the semester. It should include detailed information about your project from inception to completion. All items such as project project proposal, script, pictures of your location, wardrobe, props should be included. Detailed notes about your preparations, rehearsals should include dates and specific responsibilities of each team member. Needless to say that each team member's contribution to the project and the journal **MUST** be identified.)

- Collaborative Effort: **15**
- Personal Journal: **10** (Please make detailed notes of all submissions, self tapes and in-person auditions for SCA and all other projects both in and outside of USC. Your notes should include project title, audition date and time, callback information and production dates, if you book the project. Create a file for saving all your self-tapes. Due for submission at the end of the semester.)
- SCA Projects and others: **10**

**Total: 100 points**

**Grading Scale**

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

**Further Participation Notes:**

All aspects of a life in the entertainment Industry is nothing short of a fully collaborative, immersive process. I cannot emphasize enough how much (more) you will learn by listening to, working with, and supporting your fellow teammates.

**Assignment Submission Policy**

Assignments will be discussed in detail at the end of each class period. Assignments will be either emailed, uploaded, or presented in class.

**Late Submission Policy**

Assignments are expected to be completed by the due date & time. Grades on late assignments will be deducted appropriately. I reserve the right to not accept late assignments at my discretion.

**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**

**\*\*\*SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS NEEDED. \*\*\***

	Topics / Daily Activities	Homework	Deliverables
Week 1	Intro to course. Team formation.	Team members work together on ideas for project.	Proposal. Must include project title, logline, synopsis and character description.
Week 2	Submission of project proposal.	Team will meet with instructor to discuss project idea. Write first draft of script.	

Week 3	Feedback from instructor on first draft of script.	Write second draft of script. Begin pre-production.	
Week 4	Notes on second draft.	Final pass on script. Pre-production continues...	
Week 5	Table read script with instructor. Feedback.	Lock script. Rehearsals. (On location, if possible.)	
Week 6	Finalize prep. Discuss production with instructor.		
Week 7	Production		
Week 8	Screen dailies with instructor Production		
Week 9	Screen dailies with instructor Production. Wrap production.		
Week 10	Editing. Rough cut. (Assemble storyline)		
Week 11	Screen rough cut with instructor. Feedback	Second cut.	
Week 12	Screen second cut with instructor. Feedback	Final cut	
Week 13	Screen Final cut with instructor. Feedback	Picture lock. Sound & music edit	
Week 14	Screen final cut with music and sound. Feedback	Final edit. Lock picture and sound.	
Week 15	Final Screening. Submission of production journal. Submission of personal journal.		

**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.

## **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 Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from OSAS. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. OSAS is located in GFS 120 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website for OSAS and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 814-4618 (Video 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.

### **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  
[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.