USC School of Dramatic Arts

THTR 495: Experimental Theatre Workshop I: Immersive Storytelling
Units: 4.0
Fall 2024—Mon, Wed—Time: 5:00-6:50 pm

Location: PED 205

Instructor: Corinne Chooey
Office: Virtual
Office Hours: Fridays 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm and by appointment
Contact Info:
Email: chooeydi@usc.edu
Phone: (818) 577-7146
Will respond to emails and calls within 48 hours.

Course Description
This hands-on lab course will introduce students to the fundamental elements of developing an immersive theater production from ideation to completion. A continuation of SDA's production of "Ghosts of USC", this performance and production lab focuses on developing immersive storytelling and production skills. Students will learn to devise an original work through long-form narrative improv workshops and writing sessions. Some site-specific design and production skills will be taught within the theatrical venue. Practical business skills in working with creative agencies and production companies will also be covered. Lectures will include special guest speakers from Los Angeles' Company of Angels Theater.

Learning Objectives
At the end of the semester, students will produce and perform in an immersive theatrical production on the USC campus for invited guests and faculty members. Students will also develop an appreciation of immersive theatrical storytelling and explore different career paths included in this specialized area of the Entertainment Industry. Open to all levels. No audition required.

Prerequisite(s): None.
Recommended Preparation: Experience in improv performance, creative writing and/or production skills is helpful, but not required. Comfort with social media and digital content creation is also helpful.

Course Notes
Grading Type: Letter or Credit/No Credit
Technology-enhanced learning strategies will be used in this class and can be accessed on any wi-fi enabled electronic device (i.e. cellphone, tablet, laptop, etc.)

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials
None.

Description and Assessment of Assignments
Assignments will be given to instruct students on the steps necessary to create an original immersive theatrical production. Full completion of the assignments will enable students to produce and perform in

the final presentation at the end of the semester. Assignments will align with the four phases of devised work development: research, storytelling through writing, performance, and production.

Participation
Class participants must complete all research, writing, performance, and production assignments to receive a grade/credit.

Grading Breakdown

Assessment Tool (assignments)	Points	% of Grade
Research and Story Development	10	10
Writing Assignments	10	10
Performance	10	10
Production Design	10	10
Rehearsals	30	30
Final Presentation	30	30
TOTAL	100	100%

Grading Scale

Letter grade	Corresponding numerical point range
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

Attendance
Students must attend all sessions for full credit. Student athletes with approved Travel Request Letters and students who give advance notice of religious observation will be accepted. Submit all documents via email to choeeydi@usc.edu at least 5 business days before planned absence.

Classroom norms
As a performance theatre class, we will utilize the etiquette of requesting and granting consensual physical contact among all participants. Students who do not grant consent to physical contact will not be penalized in any way.

Zoom etiquette
Use respectful language at all times as hate speech has no place in respectful conversations. Cursing, name-calling, racial insults, and deliberate inflammatory opinions should be avoided. No screen captures will be allowed without expressed consent from all session participants. If student is unable to keep their camera on during the synchronous Zoom session, please contact instructor at chooeydi@usc.edu prior to the class session.

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, 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 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 dishonestly and is strictly prohibited. (Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook, page 13).

Course Evaluations

Course evaluation will occur at the end of the semester. Mid-semester evaluation may be provided upon request. Email instructor at chooeydi@usc.edu to request an appointment.

Course Schedule

The following table provides a detailed course calendar that includes a list of deliverables (homework assignments, examinations, etc.) broken down on a weekly basis. Deliverable due dates are included.

Contact instructor at chooeydi@usc.edu if you will miss any due dates **before** they are due so that other arrangements can be made for you to fulfill the class requirements.

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.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings/Preparation	Deliverables
Week 1: **Mon. Aug 26**	Welcome and Intros An introduction to Immersive Theater with guest speaker, Ethan Dizon Intro to Social Media channel		ASSIGNMENT: Review Class syllabus. Come with any questions you may have about the class. (Due 8/26)
Week 1: **Wed. Aug 28**	LECTURE: The Hero's Journey and other storytelling tools IMPROV: Story Structure exercises		ASSIGNMENTS: Read What is "Immersive" and Why does the way we use the term matter? Email headshot and a 25-word bio to chooeydi@usc.edu for class social media channel. (Due 9/2)
Week 2: **Mon. Sept. 2**	**HOLIDAY - NO CLASS**		
Week 2: **Wed. Sept.4**	LECTURE: We're hired! Review client's requirements and "The Watcher" story. IMPROV: Genres		
Week 3: **Mon., Sept. 9**	LECTURE: USC Field Trip WRITERS ROOM: Story ideation with guest speaker, Judy Soo Hoo IMPROV: Space specific improv		ASSIGNMENT: Review Story Dossier and client's requirements. Come with any questions/feedback you may have about the story and/or client's requirements. (Due 9/9)
Week 3: **Wed. Sept. 11**	LECTURE: Guest speaker, Claire Bernstein, Dramaturg WRITERS ROOM: Story ideation with Judy Soo Hoo IMPROV: Time specific improv and physicality		ASSIGNMENT: Review floorplan of PED building. Bring a list of site-specific observations. (Due 9/11)

Week 4: **Mon. Sept. 16**	LECTURE: Internal Character point-of-view WRITERS ROOM: Character pitches IMPROV: Character development exercises		ASSIGNMENT: Read Claire's Dramaturg packet and the following articles: Slang Words that take you back to a different time Classical Greek Phrases VIDEO: Trojan War Story (Due 9/16)
Week 4: **Wed. Sept. 18**	LECTURE: External Character Laban WRITERS' ROOM: Character pitches IMPROV: Character development exercises with Sara Laskey		ASSIGNMENT: Think of 2-3 characters that you would like to play in our story and pitch them during our writers' room session. (Due 9/18)
Week 5: **Mon. Sept 23**	PERFORMANCE: Character Monologues WRITERS' ROOM: Scenes DIGITAL LAB: Character photo/video and audience prompt (Part One)		ASSIGNMENT: Write a one-minute character monologue from 1928. You will present your character monologue to the class. Email your written document to the instructor at chooeydi@usc.edu (Due 9/23)
Week 5: **Wed. Sept 25**	LECTURE: Immersive production elements DESIGNERS LAB: Immersive element design WRITERS' ROOM: Scenes DIGITAL LAB: Character photo/video and audience prompt (Part Two)		ASSIGNMENT: Bring costume pieces for your 1928 and Greek characters. (Due 9/25)
Week 6: **Mon. Sept 30**	**ACT ONE REHEARSAL**	ONGOING EXERCISE: Contact your scene partner(s) and discuss scenes (Zoom rehearsal room available) NOTE: if you are not performing in the first few scenes, you must still attend rehearsal and observe the development process. ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.	

Week 6: Wed. Oct 2	ACT ONE REHEARSAL	ONGOING EXERCISE: Contact your scene partner(s) and discuss scenes (Zoom rehearsal room available) NOTE: if you are not performing in the first few scenes, you must still attend rehearsal and observe the development process. ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.	
Week 7: Mon. Oct 7	ACT TWO REHEARSAL	ONGOING EXERCISE: Contact your scene partner(s) and discuss scenes (Zoom rehearsal room available) NOTE: if you are not performing in the first few scenes, you must still attend rehearsal and observe the development process. ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.	
Week 7: Wed. Oct 9	ACT TWO REHEARSAL	ONGOING EXERCISE: Contact your scene partner(s) and discuss scenes (Zoom rehearsal room available) NOTE: if you are not performing in the first few scenes, you must still attend rehearsal and observe the development process. ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.	
Week 8: Mon. Oct 14	ACT THREE REHEARSAL	ONGOING EXERCISE: Contact your scene partner(s) and discuss scenes (Zoom rehearsal room available) NOTE: if you are not performing in the first few scenes, you must still attend rehearsal and observe the development process. ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.	
Week 8: Wed. Oct 16	ACT THREE REHEARSAL	ONGOING EXERCISE: Contact your scene partner(s) and discuss scenes (Zoom rehearsal room available) NOTE: if you are not performing in the first few scenes, you must still attend rehearsal and observe the development process. ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.	
Week 9: Mon. Oct 21	TECH REHEARSAL: ACT ONE		ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.

Week 9: **Wed. Oct 23**	**TECH REHEARSAL:** **ACT TWO**		ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.
Week 10: **Mon. Oct 28**	**TECH REHEARSAL:** **ACT THREE**		ASSIGNMENT: Create one social media post to promote our production.
Week 10: **Wed. Oct 30**	**TECH REHEARSAL:** **FULL SHOW**		
Week 11: **Mon. Nov 4**	**TECH REHEARSAL:** **FULL SHOW**		
Week 11: **Wed. Nov 6**	**TECH REHEARSAL:** **FULL SHOW**		
Week 12: **Mon. Nov 11**	**HOLIDAY - NO CLASS**		
Week 12: **Wed. Nov 13**	**PERFORMANCE #1 (FINAL)**		
Week 13: **Mon. Nov 18**	**PERFORMANCE #2 (FINAL)**		
Week 13: **Wed. Nov 20**	**NO CLASS**		
Week 14: **Mon. Nov 25 –** **Sun. Dec 1**	**HOLIDAY - NO CLASS**		
Week 15: **Mon. Dec 2**	**Post-show Production Meeting**		
Week 15: **Wed. Dec 4**	**GUEST LECTURE FROM INDUSTRY PROFESSIONAL**		
Week 16: **Sat. Dec 7 –** **Tues. Dec 10**	**STUDY DAYS – NO CLASS**		
Week 17: **Wed. Dec 11**	**FINAL EXAM**	Group Assignment: Final Summative Experience	
Week 17: **Mon. Dec 16**	**NO CLASS**		
Week 18: **Mon. Dec 19 –** **Fri. Jan 12**	**WINTER RECESS – NO CLASS**		

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion + Intimacy in Theatre 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

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 - (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.