



CTIN 295 Themed Entertainment Production Crew

2 Units

Spring 2025, Thursdays 5pm - 8:20pm PT

Location: [Technical Theater Lab](#), 1020 Bloom Walk, Los Angeles, California 90089.

Instructor(s): Justin Brooks

Office Hours: Office hours will be made available on an as-needed basis. Students shall email instructor(s) to set up time for a virtual or in-person meeting.

Contact Info: Instructor(s) can be contacted via email. Please allow one full business day for a response.

- [Justin Brooks](mailto:jabrooks@usc.edu): jabrooks@usc.edu

Course Description

During the fall term two student groups developed a “blue sky” design idea for two, distinct, themed entertainment projects. At the beginning of the first class they will present their concept to this crew class. The goal of this class is to take that high level design, turn it into a producible design and then build it and operate it.

During the course of the term we will:

- Research and explore materials and techniques to be used to design and build this project.
- Plan and estimate the project.
- Build the project.
- Operate the project for at least one day.

Learning Objectives

The goal of this class is to give students a first or second experience taking a project from being just an idea, to being something physical that is engaged with by actual guests. One of the biggest challenges for newcomers in industry is realizing the differences between theory and practice and learning how to deal with the real-time challenges that make practice diverge from theory when it does.

This class is also designed to provide in-major Themed Entertainment students basic working knowledge of some of the production operations used in designing and building themed entertainment projects. Translating an idea from the head to paper to physical reality is a process that is not always intuitive, especially to students who have spent a lot of time engaged in film or game worlds where things can fly, be impossibly large, don't have to deal with the limits of human strength or speed, may not have to deal with variations in age and interest, etc.

Assignments

Weekly Work Notebook

Because the class uses many different techniques to design and build with students are to create notebooks, which capture these techniques and processes. They should be ready for professor's review at any time.

How the document is organized will be part of what the instructor is looking at and part of what he or she will be grading upon. The best notes will be organized in such a way that as new information is added it gets plugged into an overarching structure that makes it easy to find related information. Simply organizing the information by date will not be satisfactory. A suggestion for organization: think about scope hierarchy, technique exploration, in addition to the day-by-day progress updates for weekly submissions.

Students will keep a working notebook, in Google Doc format, and shall submit PDF exports of the notebook on a weekly basis. In each weekly submission, students must include:

1. A list of work committed to and/or assigned the previous week
2. A summary of work complete, with photo evidence of said work.
3. A list of work committed to for the following week.

Requirements:

- **Content:** See above.
- **Format:** Ongoing notebook kept via Google Doc, weekly submissions via PDF.
- **Due Date:** weekly at 11:59pm PST the day before class.

Late Policy

Unique to this course is the themed entertainment production and operation environment, where on-time (on-scope, and on-quality) delivery is of utmost importance. As such, work delivered late will not receive any credit.

The exception to this policy is students who have, well in-advance of an assignment due date (to the order of several weeks, not days, and certainly not hours before an assignment is due, asked and received approval in writing from the course professor to submit an assignment late.

Midterm and Final Papers

Midterm and Final Paper

Write 2 short papers (mid-term and final) describing and analyzing your experience. Specifically the papers will be judged based upon their analysis of the project's goals and how well or poorly development to that point has gone.

The papers should look especially at places where theory and practice have diverged, such as:

- The anticipated number of hours required to accomplish a task vs the actual number to do it.
- The initial presumed quality of workmanship vs the quality of workmanship actually delivered.
- The theoretical ease of use / intuitiveness of use of interactive components vs how well they work for guests.
- Etc.

Midterm and Final Paper Requirements:

- **Content:** An *analysis* of the production experience, with thorough examples, personal exploration, and plan for improvement.
- **Format:** PDF
- **Due Date:** TBD

Final Exam

As noted above, the “final exam” is really the operation of the attraction with real guests and doing a report about how and where the attraction was successful and unsuccessful and why. Part of the analysis should be the student’s own observations, but they should be based upon actual evidence provided by talking to guests, observing guests, perhaps (if they allow it) even videoing guests as they experience the attraction.

Grades will be based upon

- Inventiveness (this is a creative field after all)
- Entertainment/educational value of the project
- Project organization
- Follow through on timelines
- Delivery of scope both in quality and quantity of team play.

This last aspect is often most difficult to evaluate directly since the instructors watch everything everybody does throughout the term. To help with this, individuals will be required to use the instructor’s “office hours” to meet as needed, but no less than 3 times during the semester so that instructors can monitor students’ levels of engagement, progress and learning. The instructor recognizes that this is imperfect but it is how managers all over the world manage projects of every possible scale.

Grading Breakdown

Assessment	Points	% of Grade
Class Notebook	100	10%
1st Office Hours Report	100	10%
2nd Office Hours Report	100	10%
3rd Office Hours Report	100	10%
Mid Term Project Report	150	15%
Final Term Project Report	150	15%
Final Exam / Operation	100	10%
TOTAL	1,000	100%

Grading Scale

Letter grade	Corresponding percentage 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

Assignment Submission Policy

Written assignments shall be submitted before their respective due dates to course instructors via email or class website as indicated by the instructors, should have a descriptive subject line (must include “CTIN 295”) and must be submitted from the student’s USC email address.

Attendance

We assume everything we do in class is part of the class structure and part of the integrated learning that is why students are in the class in the first place. This means that students who miss classes miss the opportunity to learn, whatever the reason for the absence. The goal for the class is to learn. If you're not in class you can't do that learning. So, punctual attendance at all classes is mandatory. Students arriving more than five minutes late to three classes, more than ten minutes late to a single class, or leaving early, will be marked as being absent from class, unless prior permission has been obtained from the instructor. The following guidelines are from the Interactive Media & Games Division handbook regarding absences and grading and apply to all students.

Guidelines for absences affecting grading

Two absences: lowers the grade one full grade point (for example, from A to B)

Three absences: lowers the grade two full grade points

Four or more absences: request to withdraw from course (instructor's discretion)

Instructors' Right to Amend Syllabus

Instructors reserve the right to amend this syllabus, including content, assessments, assignments, and point distributions on an as-needed basis throughout the term. Students will be notified by email and/or an in-class announcement when revisions are made.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Attribution

Generative AI is a fast evolving technology that is already being used in the themed entertainment industry. The norms around use of AI and disclosing said use is in its infancy. For this course, AI tools should be considered just that, tools. However, given the academic context, and the evolving norms around disclosure, there will be specific attribution required when using AI tools.

Students are free to use any artificial intelligence (AI) tools with the express caveat that they must disclose and attribute the use of said tools. Students using such tools must append a statement to any submitted assignment providing attribution: which submitted section(s) were developed using AI tools, the specific tool used, and the input and/or prompt provided to the AI tool.

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](#).

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).

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, comprises 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 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.

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.