

**Location:** PED 205

**Instructor:** Robert Bailey

**Office Hours:** Tues/Thurs 11:00 am- 12:00 pm.,  
or by appointment

**Contact Info:** [rebailey@usc.edu](mailto:rebailey@usc.edu) 310 795 3759 (cell)

### **Course Description**

Introduction to scene study in contemporary plays: the fundamentals for analyzing a text and arriving at truthful, compelling performances.

### **Learning Objectives**

Through a program consisting of individual and group acting exercises, structured improvisations, and assigned scene work, students will be exposed to the challenges presented by the extraordinary rigors of theatrical and cinematic storytelling. The class is designed to be experiential, as opposed to theoretical, in nature. Students will work with problem-solving techniques unique to the craft of the actor:

- textual analysis leading to active participation in imaginary circumstances
- elements of characterization
- physical, vocal and emotional preparation
- definition of a scene or play's dramatic action through a clear and thorough understanding of intentions, objectives, obstacles and relationships to other characters
- communion with fellow actors
- development of an unbroken chain of thoughts, intentions and inner stimuli to action
- delivering the text with clarity, power and rhythm
- commitment to a full and fearless physical-vocal-emotional expression

### **Required Readings**

How To Read A Play by Ronald Hayman

### **Supplementary Materials**

- An Actor's Journal in which you will record your questions and insights derived from class work, rehearsals, assigned readings and independent explorations into character and the world of the play.
- Students are responsible for rehearsal versions of costumes, set dressing and props.
- For most classes, dress in loose-fitting clothing that permits a wide range of movement.

### **Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Students should be prepared to participate in all assigned readings and class work in a timely manner. Questions, passionate responses and debate are encouraged. Scene work must be adequately rehearsed outside of class hours. Due dates for being off-book must be strictly

observed. Lack of attention or enthusiastic participation in these areas will seriously weaken your grade.

### **Grading Breakdown**

100 total points possible

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 50 points | Active participation in, and full preparation for, all class sessions |
| 15 points | First Scene Presentation  |
| 10 points | First Written Score   |
| 15 points | Second Scene Presentation   |
| 10 points | Second Written Score  |

### **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 |

### **Assignment Submission Policy**

Assigned scenes must be completed upon the scheduled presentation date ONLY.

### **Grading Timeline**

Grades for indicated assignments will be provided upon completion of instructor's review and assessment.

### **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.

### **Additional Policies**

1. This is a process-oriented class. Attendance is imperative. Class exercises and discussions are experiential in nature and “make-up work” is not possible. Scheduled observed rehearsals that are missed **will not be rescheduled**.
2. Late work will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor and then will be docked no less than 2 points per day past due. Written work that is accepted after the due date must be **date-stamped** in the DRC administrative office before being placed in the instructor’s mailbox. All written work must be submitted in hard copy.
3. To give yourself the most positive experience in THTR 152, be punctual, prepared and responsible, as other students are depending on you.
4. There will be no unexcused absences. Three tardy episodes constitute one absence.
5. Check your email regularly. Scheduling changes and other timely information may be sent over the internet.

**Use of cell phones, tablets, laptops or other devices, without express permission of instructor, is prohibited in class. Scene material must be PRINTED out; actors may not carry a laptop, cell phone or any other device while working on the material.**

### **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](#).

## Policy for the use of AI Generators

This course aims to develop creative, analytical, and critical thinking skills. Therefore, all assignments should be prepared by the student working individually or in groups. Students may not have another person or entity complete any substantive portion of the assignment. Developing strong competencies in these areas will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, using AI-generated text, code, or other content is prohibited in this course, will be identified as plagiarism, and will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

## 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 dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

## Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

|                                | Topics/Daily Activities  | Readings and Homework  | Deliverable/ Due Dates  |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Week 1</b><br>1/14,<br>1/16 | <b>Course Introduction.</b><br>Work with prepared monologues and suggested short plays.  | Read Hayman HOW TO READ A PLAY pp. 9-31 for Week Two.                      | Prepare to discuss assigned reading.  |
| <b>Week 2</b><br>1/21,<br>1/23 | Practical scene analysis.<br>Appraising the facts, getting the story straight, dividing the scene into beats.<br>First Scene Partnerships created. | Read Hayman pp. 40-56 for Week 3.  | Prepare to discuss assigned reading.  |
| <b>Week 3</b><br>1/28,<br>1/30 | The Magnet: how the ending affects everything that happens.<br>Developing the character arc.   | Read Hayman pp. 57-81 for Week 4.<br>Outside rehearsal with scene partner. | Prepare to discuss assigned reading.<br>Submit rehearsal report by email. (One report per partnership.) |
| <b>Week 4</b><br>2/4, 2/6      | The inner score (associations, impulses, thoughts, objectives) and   | Read Hayman pp. 82-110 for Week 5.   | Prepare to discuss assigned reading.  |

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|  | the through line of action.  | Outside rehearsal with scene partner.<br>Begin writing out the inner score for your character in the scene, which will be due Feb. 25. | Submit rehearsal report by email.  |
| Week 5<br>2/11,<br>2/13  | Characterization: the search for points of identification through imagination and personal experience.                         | Outside rehearsal with scene partner.  | Submit rehearsal report by email.  |
| Week 6<br>2/18,<br>2/20  | Refining the score of action, physical-vocal transformation, uses of properties, staging and independent activities.           | Outside rehearsal with scene partner.<br>Complete work on inner score.   | Submit rehearsal report by email.<br>Written Score due Feb. 25.  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Week 7<br>2/25,<br>2/27  | SCENE PRESENTATIONS.<br>First written score due.   | Read assigned full-length play(s).   | Prepare notes for play analysis.   |
| Week 8<br>3/4, 3/6   | Group analysis of full-length play(s). The primacy of imagination.   | Make a closer reading of key transitional moments in the play(s).  | Identify the major transitions affecting the character and prepare to improvise these in the next class. |
| Week 9<br>3/11,<br>3/13<br>-----<br>SPRING<br>BREAK<br>3/16-<br>3/23 | Playing the external plot: improvisations based on major transitions in the text. Answer the question: "What would I do if..." |  |  |
| Week 10<br>3/25,<br>3/27   | New scene partnerships created.<br>In-class group work on physicalizing moments from the text.                                 | Begin outside rehearsals.  | Submit rehearsal report by email.  |
| Week 11<br>4/1, 4/3  | Scene work: setting the scene, the opening beats and the "moment before".  | Outside Rehearsals.<br>Begin writing the score for your character in the scene.  | Submit rehearsal report by email.  |
| Week 12<br>4/8, 4/10   | Scene work: developing an image of the character; exercises in characterization.   | Outside Rehearsals.<br>Use photographs, paintings and observation in the search for characterization.                                  | Submit rehearsal report by email.  |
| Week 13<br>4/15,<br>4/17   | Scene work: the inner score and the unbroken line of action; incorporating props.  | Outside Rehearsals.  | Submit rehearsal report by email.  |

|                                 |   |                            |   |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Week 14</b><br>4/22,<br>4/24 | <b>Scene work:</b><br><b>commitment to the text;</b><br><b>operative words,</b><br><b>rhythms, pauses and</b><br><b>intonations, vocal power</b><br><b>and clarity of speech.</b> | <b>Outside Rehearsals.</b> | <b>Submit rehearsal report by email.</b>  |
| <b>Week 15</b><br>4/29, 5/1     | <b>Scene work: run-</b><br><b>throughs utilizing</b><br><b>rehearsal versions of</b><br><b>costumes, setting and</b><br><b>props. OFF-BOOK.</b>                                   |                            | <b>Final scene presentations and</b><br><b>written score due by beginning of</b><br><b>exam, May 8.</b> |
| <b>FINAL</b>                    | <b>Final Exam Thursday</b><br><b>May 8, 2:00 to 4:00 pm.</b><br><b>SCENE PRESENTATIONS.</b><br><b>Second Written Score</b><br><b>due.</b>   |                            |   |

#### **RECOMMENDED READING**

**Acting: The First Six Lessons by Richard Boleslavsky**  
**An Actor Prepares by Konstantin Stanislavsky**  
**On the Technique of Acting by Michael Chekhov**

#### **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.

#### **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](https://osas.usc.edu). You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at [osasfrontdesk@usc.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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.