

USC School of Dramatic Arts

**THTR 427: Audition Technique for Film,
Television, and New Media (Section 001-63127R)**
Units:2.0
Spring 2025/Wednesdays/4-5:50pm
Location: SHR -room 105

Instructor: Adam Chambers

Office Hours: Per request/Reach out and we'll discuss

Contact Info: adamcham@usc.edu

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to develop the auditioning skills needed to successfully build a career as an actor and compete at a professional level in a variety of theatrical and media venues; develop interviewing and cold reading skills; collect and prepare suitable audition materials; integrate acting skills into fully realized audition pieces; detect personal habits and fears that might inhibit effective auditioning; and increase confidence and implement professional decorum and discipline in a collaborative environment. It is a performance class so you will be doing that often in the class so attendance and excellent performances are expected.

Learning Objectives

- Get a deep dive into the process of auditioning for on camera and other media projects. Learn how to book a job.
- Understand every aspect of auditioning. Get a an overview of the process and the actor's place in it.
- We will look into the casting director's perspective and not only understand how auditions are facilitated, but how casting directors are the essential conduit between actor and production.
- The actor will learn the process of breaking down audition sides practically for an audition situation to suit the individual actor's ability.
- Actors will get a full assessment of their physical presence, energy and how the carries themselves; the body is essential to powerful auditioning.
- Actors will learn how to play multi-character scenes in audtions and discuss eye-line and various other factors that could potentially affect these type of auditions.
- Actors will understand the use of props, wardrobe, environment, etc. in auditioning on-camera and how to make smart decisions regarding them.
- Actors will get a complete understanding of comedic (multi vs. single cam) and dramatic (procedural, serials, etc.) content and the inherent differences and nuances to consider when auditioning for either genre. Along with other genres as well. (ex: horror, web series, kids shows)
- Actors will understand what are the practical elements of strong self-taping and what the actor can control in creating auditions that stand out.
- Actors will also touch upon the business of auditioning and how to maintain good standing with casting, directors, producers, networks, etc. through strong auditions, work ethic, and connections.
- Actors will learn more about the business side of the acting and what tools they need to help get auditions and what individual work they will need to do. (ex:Pictures, Resume, Reels, Websites)

- Actors will also be given the opportunity to ask questions to other people in the business as I will be bringing in guests to speak from time to time so they may get some other perspectives and some may get the chance to perform for some of them.
- Actors will be lead in emotional availability work to really explore the range they are capable of getting to.
- Actors will really explore their types and find their through line and what they have to bring to each role they will play.
- Actors will work on even creating some of their own work so they can see how that helps them get the auditions they want.

A Note From Adam: As a working actor and director I want to help make the process of auditioning fun and less stressful and allow actors to see all the things that we do to complicate the process. A relaxed and confident actor is a the best kind of actor so I will be showing you ways to demystify the process. With all of this said, I am trying to recreate the real industry for you. So some of the classes will need to be adjusted based off of guests schedules and sometimes the material will be sprung on you at the last second to give you a real practice of what its like to balance life and work. Some of the classes may in the syllabus may need to be adjusted based off of schedule issues. Students should understand that the grading for this course is inherently subjective. I can (and will) specify my expectations for each assignment, and can discuss the grades I believe you have earned, but I cannot provide a scientific, objective justification for each grade. I welcome conversations about grades, and will always frame those conversations around my perception of your work and ability where is currently stands.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Since several assignments will include self-taping, 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. You will be required to bring your laptop to class from time to time to share the footage you have.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

You will be auditioning. Participation is key. I want this to be treated like the real industry so there will times when you get the audition material at the last second or the night before its due. That's all part of the training process. How you show and who shows up is going to be a big part of this grade. It's a self discipline so it falls on your shoulders.

Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Points	% of Grade
Performnaces	40	40
Attendance	15	15
Participation	15	15
Professional Behavior	15	15
Final	15	15
TOTAL	100	100

Performances- How each performance is performed. Etc, memorization, choices, commitment. Is improvement happening. You will be given a scale of 1-10 on each performance you do in class. These will be based off of believability, prep, accuracy,

entertainment, truthfulness, timing, and overall connection. This is up to the instructor to decide the score based off of their professional experience. You will be allowed to turn in self tapes to make up for lower scores based off the feedback.

Attendance- Tardy attendance if less than 15 minutes will result in half point deduction from the attendance grade for the day. A tardy arrival of more than 15 minutes will result in no points for attendance recorded for the day.

Participation- Engaged in class, asking questions, trying each an every activity fully.

Professional Behavior- How each student speaks with one another and the instructor, how they dress for the roles, how they take direction. Coomunication.

Final- The final performance.

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

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

Late Submission Policy

Assignments are expected to be completed by the due date & time. Grades on late assignments will be deducted. If an assinment is late it is deducted 15% for that assignment. Every week after that its late the assignment is deducted another 15% per week its late. Some classes will have particular workshops/activities that are done only in class. It is your responsibility to commincate with the instructor or other students to see what the missed assignments were or will be and to coordinate with the instructor how or when you plan to make up the missed work.

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](#).

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. I will often give you feedback after performances in the class directly but that is not a guaranteed direct reflection of your grade.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

A note from Adam: Questions are the best way to learn something. So please don't be afraid to ask anytime you have one. I will leave room in the course for this so please be prepared that questions may move some things around and could extend classes into the following weeks. We also have to leave room for the possibility of not getting to everyone in one class and it extending into the beginning of another class.

I want to make sure that we leave room for relevant and new ideas and information to play a part in the teaching of this class.

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
Week 1 1/15/25	-Intro to class - What to expect -How to make acting long term	This is a lecture day with opportunity for questions.	
Week 2 1/22/25	-Tricks for the audition. How to to get one? How to prpe and what are we looking for. -What is a good tape?	We will be breaking down the step by step do's and don't's of auditioning.	
Week 3 1/29/25	-Type cast -Through Line -Who are you?	-Enneagram test	You will be given the link to the free test that week. You must bring in the given info you find the day of class for an inperson discussion
Week 4 2/5/25	-Headshots -Reels -1 min monologues Week 3-4 will blend together	We will be talking about the impotance of these items and taking a look at what people currently have and how to improve or add to what they got.	One memorized 1 min monologue. With a possible back up one. Also, any current headshots, reels, they do have.
Week 5 2/12/25	-Commercial audition	In person mock commercial audition	Material will be set a day before class.
Week 6 2/19/25	-Different kinds of auditions. (Crime drama, sitcom, kid show, single cam,)	In person mock auditions with different genres.	Memorized pieces are due day of class and in person.
Week 7 2/26/25	-Different kinds of auditions. (Crime drama, sitcom, kid show, single cam,)	In person mock auditions with different genres.	Memorized pieces are due day of class and in person.
Week 8 3/5/25	-Self Tape Challenge (Horror)	We will be given material to self tape and we will review in the class.	Completed self tapes sent before the class starts.
Week 9 3/12/25	-Self Tape Challenge	Students will be doing another self tape to keep refining the skill	Completed self tapes sent before the class starts
Week 10 3/26/25 Week 11 4/2/25	-Writing for another person -performing the original material the next week	Each student will be writing for another student an audition that would fit their type.	Writing will be done in class with the scene partenrs. -the material will be excepected in person on week 11
Week 12 4/9/25	-Guest Speaker	We will be having an industry professional come into class for a Q&A	-Guest Speaker

Week 13 4/16/25	-Zoom audition.	We will be running a zoom audition very similar to the industry now and each student will be required to be in their own spaces.	Link and material will be sent before and memorized will be required to do the audition.
Week 14 4/23/25	-Chemistry reads	We will be pairing you up with people to see how you have the best chemistry with.	Different material will be sent the week before so you can come in prepared.
Week 15 4/30/25	-Interview and one shot	In class interview and one shot to do one thing. What is it that you choose?	Memorized pieces are due day of class and in person.
Week 16 Final 5/7/25 4:30pm- 6:30pm	A full sent in package with headshot, reel, and a self tape reel is due as if you are sending to an agent / manager.		

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. 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.