



# USC

**CPTR 523**  
**Section 18625R**

## INTRODUCTION TO MULTI-CAMERA PRODUCTION

**Units: 2**  
**Fall 2025**  
**Tuesdays: 1:00PM-4:50PM**  
**Location: RZC Stage A**

**Professor:** Robert Schiller  
**Office:** SCA 408  
**Office Hours:** By Appointment  
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**Brightspace Link:** <https://brightspace.usc.edu/d2l/home/215831>

### **COURSE SUMMARY**

This is a 15 week course focusing on the “How To” of multi-camera directing and production, more specifically the Situation Comedy or “Sitcom”, although all skills learned are applicable to all multi camera productions including daytime drama, sport events, game shows, variety shows, talk shows and news. These skills are applicable for multi camera set ups on “single camera” shoots as well. We will cover the process of producing/directing multi camera scenes from pre-production through the live shooting of the scenes. All aspects of production will be covered including emphasis on the roles of the stage manager and associate director. This is not a “technical course”. Although students are expected to operate cameras, work in the control booth, and be involved in other technical aspects of production, the primary emphasis in this course is on the work of directors, their collaboration with crew and actors, and what is expected of them from the producers, the writers, and the network. We cover how directors transition from single camera prep to multi camera prep. There are two projects to be shot. The first, a two person scene three pages long of your choosing, with a cast of your choosing. Each student will have an end of semester final project shooting a scene from a sitcom or drama. The scene must be no more than 5 minutes long, and with 4-6 characters. A field trip to observe a current show “in action” will be planned.

### **LEARNING GOALS and OBJECTIVES**

Though this course is modeled after a typical week of a sitcom production, using sitcom scheduling, sitcom scripts, sets, and shooting techniques, the over-arching purpose of this course is to prepare directors for the process of telling a story in multi camera, and how it differs from single camera. There will be an emphasis on considerations in staging actors for multi camera and actual shooting technique. You are required to cast actors for your project. Each student, in their role as director, learns to hone their communication and leadership skills in a collaborative way on set, leading a creative team consisting of actors, assistant directors, associate directors, script supervisors, cameramen, lighting directors, control booth personnel. We will learn how to mark a script and cut a live show from the control room. At the end of this course, each student should be able to watch a sitcom with a whole new appreciation of just how much effort and skill goes in to producing one episode of television.

### Instructors Statement

The multi camera production/format is alive and well in MOST aspects of TV programming without us even realizing it. Though the emphasis and course work will focus primarily on the Situation Comedy, news, sports, gameshows, daytime dramas and more specifically scripted live action, are enjoying a resurgence due mainly in part to Netflix, Apple TV and Amazon entering the original scripted series marketplace. There also continues to be a robust job market providing young adult content by studios such as Disney and Nickelodeon.

It is the goal of this course to teach student directors the skills required in this genre of production, adapting your story telling skills to multi camera, and in this huge job market not only of the director, but the other positions directly responsible for turning the “page” to the “screen”. The principals learned in this course will assist you in multi camera setups/coverage in the single camera world, where it would be RARE if you did not use at least two cameras in set ups to save production time under tight budgets.

### Class Philosophy

Hands on learning by doing, in a collaborative professional atmosphere. Learn how it takes a team and not an auteur, to make a production successful. High level of enthusiasm and participation is required.

### **Required Readings**

“Directors Tell The Story” by Bethany Rooney and Mary Lou Belli at the USC bookstore. Or <https://a.co/5iew1hD>

### **Participation**

Crewing for each other’s projects is paramount to the success of this class. Attendance and participation are required every week for this reason. Your participation grade will **start** at 15% and grade down if/when you are late or absent from your responsibility to your fellow classmate’s projects.

## Description of Assignments

There will be out of class preparation of marked scripts.

## Grading Breakdown

Assignment	Poin ts	% of Grade
Project 1:Script prep: Actor Blocking (5) Camera Blocking (5) Shooting (5)	15	
Camera Blocking execution	10	
Shooting Execution	10	
Mid term	10	
Project 2: All Script Prep	15	
Camera Blocking execution	10	
Shooting execution	10	
Production Value/Creativity	5	
In Class Participation	15	
<b>TOTAL</b>	100	

PARTICIPATION is the engine of Group Learning. It is a crucial element in your grade. It includes commitment to the class, involvement with other students' projects, helping them in its realization, exercising collaboration, engagement with the material and contribution to class discussion.

## 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

### **School of Dramatic Arts Actors:**

You are strongly advised to cast students from USC School of Dramatic Arts when possible and appropriate. Students who have done so have found them to be well-trained professionals and reliable collaborators. Students may also find other sources of casting their projects.

### **Production Division Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for each class. One absence may result in a student's grade being lowered by one notch (IE: A becomes A-). Two absences may result in a student's grade being lowered by two notches (IE: A- becomes B). A third absence may result in a student's grade being lowered another full point (IE: B becomes C). Grades can be lowered by one full point for every additional absence.

**Tardiness:** A student is deemed late 7 minutes (number can be adjusted as desired) after the class is scheduled to start. One late arrival may not affect your grade. Two late arrivals equate to one full unexcused absence. (IE: A becomes A-). Three late arrivals may result in your grade being dropped by two portions (IE: A- becomes B). Four late arrivals may result in your grade being dropped three portions (one full point: B becomes C). Lateness of more than 30 minutes will count as an absence.

Timely attendance is mandatory and failure to attend all class sections from beginning to end may affect grades.

- Exemptions will be allowed on a case-by-case basis, and must be supported by a written accommodation request from the USC Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS).
- Students who become ill and need to self-isolate will be supported in their efforts to stay current with classwork and assignments. Faculty are no longer required to provide an option for students to zoom into class. However, Faculty may choose to use zoom at their discretion in an effort to help students stay current in their course work.

**Students must contact the professor or SA 24 hours prior to class start time if they need to miss class for any reason.**

### **Cell phones, tablets, lap tops:**

**I do not permit the use of cell phones on my professional sets**, except in emergencies or usage directly related to the production or permissible promotion of the product.

I hold that same standard in my classroom. Cell phone usage during class is disrespectful to me, your fellow classmates, and the professional standards you are all striving for. If you use any of your devices for note taking or taking video of scenes, please inform me ahead of time. ***Violation of this policy is subject to a discretionary 5 point grade deduction.***

### **Deadlines:**

Missing deadlines is generally regarded as unacceptable in the Industry, and so it will be in this class. If you know ahead of time that unavoidable circumstances will the timely delivery of your work you must notify me immediately, and the circumstances must be documented. Only genuine “emergencies” beyond your control will be accepted.

Unexcused missed due dates will result in reduction of 2.5 point grade deduction.

### **Unforeseen Circumstances:**

If you have life problems or circumstances that might affect your work, please let me know in advance. I want to be understanding and helpful if I can. See me to make arrangements for deadline extensions.

### **Grading Feedback:**

You may ask me for feedback about how you are doing at any time. If I notice that a student is at risk of falling below a B, I will reach out and bring this to the student’s attention.

Be aware, however, that the majority of grade value is earned after mid-semester. This can make it difficult for me to give precise warnings early on. I urge you to take responsibility for your work and your grade and stay on top of things.

### **Safety:**

All students are expected to abide by USC School of Cinematic Arts Safety Guidelines. Violations of any of the safety guidelines may result in disciplinary action ranging from confiscation of footage to expulsion from the University.

### **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).

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
8/26	Intro to Multi Camera- Review Syllabus. Lecture: The Stage/The Cameras The Control Room Show /crew Personnel Anatomy of a Sitcom schedule Production Mtg/Table Read Single Cam V Multi cam-prep	Directors Tell The Story Chapter 11- <i>Below The Line</i> Chapter 12- <i>All The Other Stuff</i>  <i>Glossary of Terms</i> <i>Handout- OVER</i> <b>FOUR WEEKS</b>	<b>2 person scene approval due 9/1@5pm</b>
9/2	The Action Line The A B C and X's of multi camera The Quad Split Staging for Multi camera Marking a script for: Actor Blocking Camera Blocking View/Dissect Sitcom Review Glossary of terms Slating Control Room Cutting AD- Prepare the shooting script	Block/mark 2 person script  Directors Tell The Story Chapter 6- <i>Org The Shoot.....</i> Chapter 13- <i>Running The Set</i>	<b>Prep script: Actor Blocking Lined camera blocking due 9/8 @ 5pm Provide 3 copies of script.  Casting scene</b>
9/9	Directors <b>Group A</b> Rehearse/Camera Block (AD in control room) Record quad split	Directors Tell The Story Chapter 7- <i>Share the Vision</i> Chapter 4- <i>Production Design</i>	
9/16	Directors <b>Group B</b> Rehearse/Camera Block (AD in control room) Record Quad split	Directors Tell The Story Chapter 10- <i>Directing the Actor</i>	<b>Look for 5 person 3 page scene for final project</b>
9/23	Directors <b>Group C</b> Rehearse/Camera Block (AD in control room) Record quad split	Directors Tell The Story Chapter 16- <i>Being a Director</i>	<b><i>Final Project Directors Group A submit scene for approval 9/29</i></b>
9/30	<b>Group A</b> Shoot 2 person Scene	<b>Casting for 5 person scenes</b>	<b><i>Final Project Directors Group B submit scene for approval 10/6</i></b>
10/7	<b>Group B</b> Shoot 2-person scene	<b>Casting</b>	<b><i>Final Project Directors Group C submit scene for approval 10/13</i></b>
10/14	<b>Group C</b> Shoot 2-person scene	<b>Casting</b>	<b>Prep script: Actor Blocking Lined camera blocking due 10/20</b>

10/21	<b>STUDENT PROJECTS</b> Directors Group A Rehearse/Camera Block		
10/28	<b>STUDENT PROJECTS</b> Directors Group B Rehearse/Camera Block		
11/11	<b>No Class Veterans Day</b>		
11/18	<b>STUDENT PROJECTS</b> Directors Group C Rehearse/Camera Block		
11/25	<b>SHOOT STUDENT PROJECTS</b> Directors Group A		
12/2	<b>SHOOT STUDENT PROJECTS</b> Directors Group B		
4/23	<b>SHOOT STUDENT PROJECTS</b> Directors Group C		

## The School of Cinematic Arts Support Systems and Statements

SCA is committed to fostering a welcoming and supportive environment where students of all identities and backgrounds can flourish. The classroom should be a space for open discussion of ideas and self-expression; however, SCA will not tolerate verbal or written abuse, threats, harassment, intimidation, or violence against persons or property. If you have concerns about the content of this class or behavior exhibited in the classroom, please share them with any of the [SCA Community Liaisons](#), or email the SCA Community Impact Council at [impact@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:impact@cinema.usc.edu). You may also provide feedback to the SCA Feedback Forum: <https://scacommunity.usc.edu/secure/feedback/>. You can also read more about how to report discrimination based on a protected class here: <https://eeotix.usc.edu/get-help/what-are-my-choices-text/>

### SCA Office of Student Services

213-740-8358 or [StudentAffairs@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:StudentAffairs@cinema.usc.edu)

### SCA Embedded Therapists

Students enrolled in an SCA major program can schedule an appointment with an embedded therapist for the School of Cinematic Arts through the student health portal [MySHR](#).

### SCA Community

For additional SCA resources please visit [scacommunity.usc.edu](https://scacommunity.usc.edu)

### [Creative Technology and Support](#)

(213) 821-4571

[creativetech@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:creativetech@cinema.usc.edu)

Location: SCA 128



Support Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 8:30 PM

<https://knowledgebase.sca.usc.edu/>

<https://workstations.sca.usc.edu/>

### **Physical Production Office**

The Physical Production Office assists students and faculty with production-related matters including production numbers, locations, permits, insurance, gear and equipment vendors, safety issues, and crew and actor policies. More information can be found by visiting the online [Production Procedures and Safety Handbook](#). The Physical Production Office is located at SCA 304 and is open every weekday from 9am-5pm (Fridays 9am-1pm). You can also reach the Office by calling 213-740-1298 or by email at [spo@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:spo@cinema.usc.edu).

### **Office of Industry Relations**

School of Cinematic Arts - SCA 235

(213) 740-4432

[ir@cinema.usc.edu](mailto:ir@cinema.usc.edu)

### **Cinematic Arts Library Research Guide**

<https://libguides.usc.edu/cinema>

## **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, compromises 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 accommodation is 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).

### **Support Systems:**

*COVID-19 Resource Center* - <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/what-should-i-do/>

[\*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.

[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.

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
FOOD AND DRINKS (OTHER THAN WATER) ARE NOT PERMITTED IN ANY  
INSTRUCTIONAL  
SPACES IN THE CINEMATIC ARTS COMPLEX