PRODUCING A COMEDY SHOW

Complete Teaching Sheet • 8-Class Course

A consolidated instructor-facing teaching sheet built from the course summary, detailed producing beats, and unique Class 1–3 notes in the supplied Drive folder. Repeated material has been merged so each teaching point appears in one primary place.

COURSE SPINE

CLASS 1 Foundations of Producing a Comedy Show	**CLASS 2** Booking Comedians & Creating a Lineup
CLASS 3 Marketing, Promotion & Professional Confidence	**CLASS 4** Tech, Venue Logistics & Show Flow
CLASS 5 Hosting & Showrunning Like a Pro	**CLASS 6** Monetization & Long-Term Growth
CLASS 7 Building a Comedy Community & Keeping Your Show Alive	**CLASS 8** Expanding Beyond a Single Show

THE PRODUCER CODE

- The producer is the reason the show runs smoothly.
- You are the answer to the problems. In the room, you set the rules and make the calls.
- You create and maintain the vibe of the show.
- Be clear about what you need from the venue, performers, and tech.
- Work with people who genuinely want to be there, unless someone will make the show dramatically better or more memorable.
- Core producer responsibilities: scheduling, booking, show order, payment, and venue setup.
- Core people to account for: tech, door person, host, and comedians/performers.

Source note: The supplied materials contain both a course-wide 8-class outline and more detailed notes for Classes 1–3. The detailed notes repeat many of the same bullets, so repeated material has been merged. Greetings, sign-offs, spelling slips, and an old ticket plug were not treated as teaching content. The original notes also reference a separate producer checklist and press-contact attachment; those separate attachments were not present in the supplied source set, so no missing contact data was invented.

CLASS 1 Foundations of Producing a Comedy Show

TEACHING OUTCOME Build a show from the ground up: define the format, audience, venue, people, money, and producer responsibilities.

Producer role & responsibilities

- The producer is the reason the show runs smoothly.
- You are the answer to the problems. In the room, you set the rules and make the calls.
- You create and maintain the vibe of the show.
- Be clear about what you need from the venue, performers, and tech.
- Work with people who genuinely want to be there, unless someone will make the show dramatically better or more memorable.
- Core producer responsibilities: scheduling, booking, show order, payment, and venue setup.
- Core people to account for: tech, door person, host, and comedians/performers.

Different show types, different setups

- Stand-up, improv, sketch, and variety all have different room and backstage needs.
- Sketch: needs a green room.
- Stand-up: can work almost anywhere.
- Improv: the original notes call it “50/50” — assess the format and venue case by case.
- Variety: needs a green room.

Choosing a venue

- Consider size, location, available tech, vibe, the owner/venue relationship, and any venue politics or dynamics that could affect the show.

Audience & market

- Ask: Who is this show for?
- Know the audience and market before you make decisions about venue, lineup, pricing, or promotion.

Money, transparency & budgeting

- Be transparent about money.
- Know how comedians, tech, door staff, the producer, and/or charity are being paid.
- Course rule from the original notes: restaurants do not get a cut of ticket sales unless they are hiring you as a contractor or there is another unusual arrangement.
- Cover costs, revenue streams, break-even thinking, branding, merchandising, and other possible income.

Class resources

- Suggested payment structure / Canadian stand-up pricing guidelines
- How to make a successful comedy show
- How to Produce Your Own Stand-Up Comedy Show
- How to start your own indie stand-up show
- “Do It Yourself Wherever!” video

Homework / between-class work

1. Invent a show, or use a show you are already working on.
2. Plan it from scratch: Where will it happen? What type of show is it? Who will you book? How will you ask them?
3. Build as much of the plan as you can with what you know now. Bring the gaps to class so the group can strengthen the idea together.

CLASS 2 Booking Comedians & Creating a Lineup

TEACHING OUTCOME Find performers, approach them professionally, build a strong show order, set fair expectations, and protect the room's vibe.

Where & how to find comedians

- Local open mics.
- Comedy community Facebook groups and Discords.
- Instagram reels and TikTok clips.
- Comedy schools and workshops.
- Word of mouth: ask other producers and comics you trust.

Approaching & communicating with performers

- Be clear, direct, and respectful.
- Include all relevant information in the first contact: date, location, time, pay, and set length.
- Avoid vague asks such as "Let me know if you're down for something soon."
- Keep follow-ups short and friendly.

Creating a strong lineup

- Think of the lineup like a setlist.
- Opener: friendly, crowd-warming, light.
- Middle: higher energy and unique voices.
- Feature: a polished act that brings the energy up.
- Headliner: the most experienced act and/or the longest set.
- Build tonal variety; for example, do not stack three one-liner comics in a row.
- Make room for different points of view rather than treating representation as a checkbox.

Pay structures: what's fair?

- Free spots: only for new comics or special events.
- Drink tickets: common at bar shows, but they can feel cheap.
- Flat fees: best for professional comics, especially headliners.
- Door splits: use them only when you clearly explain exactly how the split works.
- Combo models: for example, a base fee plus a portion of the door or drinks.

Managing egos & keeping a professional vibe

- Set expectations upfront: call time, set length, and payment.
- Do not book toxic energy just because someone gets big laughs.
- Keep backstage and the green room positive.
- Lead by example: do not gossip; keep it professional and calm.

Homework / between-class work

1. Watch an episode of MR. SHOW as an example of how a live sketch show can be structured.
2. Watch an episode of Pee-wee's Playhouse as an example of how art and imagination can make a room feel alive.
3. Start deciding what the class show could be: stand-up, variety, sketch, puppets, or another format.

CLASS 3 Marketing, Promotion & Professional Confidence

TEACHING OUTCOME Present the show professionally, build awareness without spamming, use press strategically, and create promotional materials that feel intentional.

Promotional materials & copy

- Design effective posters and social media graphics.
- Write compelling show descriptions and ad copy.
- Use promotional design and video tools to make the show look intentional and professional.

Social media & audience growth

- Use Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Reddit, and other relevant channels.
- Understand the difference between paid ads and organic growth.
- Work with influencers and press to build audience buzz.
- Grow the audience with guests, incentives, and — most importantly — a great show.
- Teach the difference between social-media spam and promotion.
- Be unique. Try new things.

Getting & using press

- Email news outlets to pursue press.
- Getting press is only the beginning; what you do with it matters.
- Be professional and have a clear angle for the story.
- Make the email subject clear and catchy.
- Think beyond newspapers: podcasts, radio, print news, websites, reviewers, and other media.
- Choose when it is worth pursuing press instead of contacting media constantly.
- Use press as a tool to promote the show and yourself.
- Original class idea: pitch Toronto Guardian on a “Tragedy + Time = Comedy” article.
- The original notes say a press-contact list was attached and should be used sparingly and thoughtfully; that attachment is not present in the supplied source set, so no contact list has been invented here.

Feeling professional & acting confident

- Present yourself as someone who knows what they are doing.
- Organize yourself so you can operate professionally.
- Suggested Google Drive folders: headshots, show posters, show ideas, and a booking page.
- Use Gamma.app to make show pitches look more professional, but always proofread the result and make it your own.
- Perspective from the original notes: if a show goes badly, you do not have to advertise that publicly. Learn from it, present the work positively, and keep moving.

Homework / between-class work

1. Keep developing the class show and make a list of comedians you would like to book, even if you do not know them personally.
2. Create a poster for a fake show using any of the tools discussed (for example TextStudio, Ideogram, Photoshop, Canva, or Placeit). Include all necessary show information.
3. Fake-show brief from the original class: Comedy Bar West; 8:30 p.m.; June 61st, 2030; everything else is up to you.

CLASS 4 Tech, Venue Logistics & Show Flow

TEACHING OUTCOME Run the room smoothly from setup through the end of the show.

Teach

- Understanding sound and lighting basics.
- Venue relationships: working with owners and staff.
- Seating arrangements and maximizing the audience experience.
- Creating a smooth-running show: host duties, timing, and breaks.
- Handling unexpected tech failures.

CLASS 5 Hosting & Showrunning Like a Pro

TEACHING OUTCOME Understand what the host does, what the producer does, and how to keep the room functioning when the unexpected happens.

Teach

- The art of hosting versus producing: know which role you are in.
- How to warm up a crowd effectively.
- Managing hecklers and audience issues.
- Keeping the energy up between acts.
- Adapting on the fly when things go wrong.

CLASS 6 Monetization & Long-Term Growth

TEACHING OUTCOME Build a revenue model that can support a show beyond a single night.

Teach

- Ticket sales: pricing strategies and platforms such as Eventbrite, Dice, and others.
- Sponsorships and partnerships: getting businesses involved.
- Merchandising and additional revenue streams.
- Scaling up: turning a small show into a brand.
- Booking bigger names and growing toward festivals or tours.

CLASS 7 Building a Comedy Community & Keeping Your Show Alive

TEACHING OUTCOME Make the show a place audiences and performers want to return to while keeping the producer sustainable.

Teach

- How to make the show a must-attend event.
- Building relationships with comedians, regulars, and industry people.
- Creating a space where comics want to perform.
- The power of recurring audiences and how to keep them coming back.
- Handling burnout and keeping yourself motivated.

CLASS 8 Expanding Beyond a Single Show

TEACHING OUTCOME Turn the producing skills from the course into a larger, longer-term plan.

Teach

- Turning one show into a series, brand, or festival.
- Partnering with venues or opening your own space.
- Booking bigger acts and reaching national/international comics.
- Expanding into digital: livestreams, clips, and podcasts.
- Long-term vision: What's next for you as a comedy producer?

RESOURCE BANK

TEACHING OUTCOME Keep the practical tools and publishing outlets in one place so they are not repeated throughout the class notes.

Source-based resource list. The sheet preserves the tools and URLs named in the original materials; availability has not been freshly verified.

Finding emails

- Hunter.io
- Apollo.io

Posters & art

- TextStudio.com
- Ideogram.ai — AI poster maker
- Playground.com — AI poster maker
- Canva.com
- PhotoRoom — app
- Phonto — app
- Photoshop — referenced in the poster homework

Video, commercials & animated text

- Placeit.net
- CapCut — app
- iMovie — app

Pitching & organization

- Gamma.app — pitch/presentation tool; proofread and personalize the output
- Google Drive — organize headshots, posters, ideas, and booking materials

Free places to post / list a Toronto event

Outlet	Website	What the notes say
City of Toronto Festivals & Events Calendar	toronto.ca	Submit the event to the City of Toronto calendar.
Eventbrite Toronto	eventbrite.com	Create a free event listing and manage RSVPs.
What's On In Toronto	whatsonintoronto.com	List the event for free; the original notes also mention Facebook promotion.
NOW Toronto	nowtoronto.com	Submit an event listing to reach its readership.
BlogTO	https://www.blogto.com/events/add/	Add the event to BlogTO's listings.
Toronto Events Weekly	torontoeventsweekly.ca	Seek a feature in its weekly newsletter.

Outlet	Website	What the notes say
To Do Canada	https://www.todocanada.ca/Submission/	List the event on the national platform.
Toronto Guardian	https://torontoguardian.com/events/community/add	Submit to the community events section.
Toronto.com	https://www.toronto.com/user/login/?referrer=/user/event	Create an account and list the event.
NEXT Magazine	events.nextmag.ca	Add the event to its calendar.

How the source material was consolidated

- The 8-class “All Classes Summary” is the course spine.
- The detailed “PRODUCING CLASS BEATS” material is the primary source for Class 1–3 talking points, tools, press strategy, and producer rules.
- The Drive folder’s PRODUCING #1, #2, and #3 notes were checked for unique material such as homework, reading/viewing links, NEXT Magazine’s listing address, and the instruction to use press contacts sparingly.
- Repeated bullets were merged rather than copied into multiple sections.
- Administrative greetings/sign-offs and the historical ticket plug were omitted because they are not teaching content.
- A separate press-contact attachment and producer-checklist attachment are referenced in the notes but were not present in the supplied source set; no missing names or contact information were fabricated.