

Strategies for the Career Actor (TPP4221)—Altmeyer

STRATEGIES FOR THE CAREER ACTOR

TPP 4221

Fall 2023

Meeting Times and Location: TR 8:30-10:25, CON G12

Credits: 2

Professor Tim Altmeyer

352.273.0503

taltmeyer@ufl.edu

210 McGuire Pavilion

Office Hours: Tues: 10:30am -11:30am or email for an appointment

STRATEGIES FOR THE CAREER ACTOR: Designed for students with serious intent on pursuing professional careers in the field, the course explores the primary facets of the business of being an actor in the context of a major entertainment market including (but not limited to) relevant philosophical aspects, marketing and promotion, professional representation, auditioning and the development of an effective practical skill set to procure and secure employment and sustain a life-long career in the industry.

OBJECTIVES/GOALS:

- The student acquires a working knowledge of the elements of career building as they pertain to the professional actor.
- The student develops a working knowledge of the audition process as it applies to general auditions, prepared scenes, cold readings, on-camera auditions, self-taping, improvisation and interviews to strengthen performance within specific audition events.
- The student develops a vocabulary and an extensive working knowledge of concepts with which to build and sustain a career as an actor.
- The student develops an understanding of current professional demands and expectations.
- The student demonstrates the capacity to think critically and articulately about the audition process and career development.

REGARDING CONTENT: People learn best when they are encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse opinions on course content which may include images, texts, data, or theories from many fields. This is especially true in courses that deal with (at least indirectly) provocative or contemporary issues. UF offers many such courses, in which students encounter concepts of race, color, sex, and/or national origin. We teach these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we do not limit access to, or classroom discussion of, ideas and opinions, including those that some may find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or even offensive. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. But hostility, disruptive and disrespectful behavior, and provocation for provocation's sake have no place in a classroom; reasonable people disagree reasonably. These guidelines can help instructors and students as they work together to fulfill the mission of the University of Florida, which includes the exploration of intellectual boundaries, the creation of new knowledge and the pursuit of new ideas. In this course, we will cover content and material that some may find difficult. It is important that we do not shy away from engaging with material that may be controversial or challenging. I encourage you to reach out to me if you are struggling with material explored in this course. In class, if you need to step away for a period of time as we are covering particular content, you may do so without penalty, but I ask that you remember that you are responsible for any information covered in your absence. While I wholly support the idea of the classroom being a Safe Space, I also ask you to embrace it as a Brave Space.

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TEXT:

Auditioning (Paperback) by Joanna Merlin (First Vintage Books Edition, 2001, Vintage ISBN: 0-375-723537-7)

PERSONAL STATEMENT: I am committed to becoming more acutely aware of how I can—in my teaching and artistic practices as well as in my daily interactions—promote a climate for diversity, equity, and inclusion at the University of Florida.

WORLD ACCORDING TO TIM (WATT):

“Portrayals of human behavior have a recognizable logic about them.”

“Interpretation is the marriage of story (fiction) with the personal, subjective experience of the actor.”

“As a teacher, I can only espouse and impart what I understand to be true and useful for me as an artist.”

CRITICAL DATES (Subject to Change):

8/24	Onward!
8/29	“Facing Starvation”
9/5	Headshots, Resumes, Reels and the Web
9/12	Quiz #1/Unions
9/14	Agents, Managers and Casting Directors
9/19	EPA/General Auditions
10/3	Under 5 Audition (Film & TV)
10/10	Lead Audition (Film & TV)
10/17	Quiz #2
10/24	Lindsey Weissmueller, Casting Director
11/2	Prepared Scene Audition
11/14	Commercial Auditions
11/28	Zoom Industry Guests
11/30	Quiz #3
12/5	Final & Final Thoughts

COURSE OUTLINE:

WEEK 1-3	CAREER BASICS
WEEK 4-16	AUDITION STRATEGIES AND PRACTICAL CONCERNS OF THE ACTOR

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

Performance	50%
Written Work/Participation	30%
Final	<u>20%</u>
	Total 100%

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	% Equivalency	GPA Equivalency
A	100-94	4.0
A-	93-90	3.67
B+	89-87	3.33
B	86-84	3.00
B-	83-80	2.67
C+	79-77	2.33
C	76-74	2.00
C- *	73-70	1.67
D+	69-67	1.33
D	66-64	1.00

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D-	63-60	.67
E, I, NG, S-U, WF	59-0	0.00

- **Please note that a C- is no longer an acceptable grade for any course in which a 2.0 GPA is required, for example, any course in the major.**

UF grading policy website:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculatinggpa>

EXPECTATIONS REGARDING EFFORT: One goes to a good school to get a good education and, in turn, to get a leg up in her profession. The professional workplace demands disciplined work and behavior. Otherwise, you get fired and create a very bad reputation for yourself. Bad reputations get around. A similar work ethic is required of you in this class, as an advanced-level college student, a responsible citizen and future professional. Assignments will be completed in a timely, thorough fashion. They will meet a level of sophistication fitting for advanced students of the theatre.

Criteria by which performance work will be assessed:

- Energy & Commitment
- Authority (including memorization)
- Devotion to Course Concepts
- Openness to Exploration

Criteria by which written work will be assessed:

- Content (presentation, support, detail, development, and evidence of course concept knowledge)
- Quality of Writing (grammar, spelling, syntax, and punctuation)

Also: **Attendance is mandatory.** To learn to act, you must act. To act, you must be here. Your learning comes in the shared experience. Your participation has as much to do with others' growth as your own. Your absence is costly to everyone. The professional theatre does not make allowances for illness. Actors do not have the luxury of getting sick. Exercise. Eat healthfully. Drink lots of water. Don't smoke. Your body and your breath are your greatest tools as an actor. Protect them. Please note: **Attendance is not the same as participation.** You are expected to be not only physically present, but mentally. You will be expected to demonstrate your understanding of class concepts by the comments and criticisms you make. Speak thoughtfully and often.

Criteria by which participation will be assessed:

- Frequency of Participation
- Quality of Comments
- Listening Skills
- Behavior

ATTENDANCE POLICY: To create a disciplined environment that simulates the demands of the actor's workplace, we enforce an attendance policy that allows little room for you to exert any personal control over the business of being an actor. Students are expected to attend class on time at scheduled meeting times.

Students are only allowed ONE "unexcused" absence without penalty.

Each additional "unexcused" absence will result in a penalty of a half a letter grade (5%) from the final grade.

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To be considered an “excused” absence, it must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation:

- Illness. A doctor's note must be on official letterhead with name, address, phone number, and signature, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted and providing a proposed return-to-class date. Even if a student self-tests positive for COVID, they should get a doctor’s note to authenticate the excused absence.
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions (e.g., hurricane-related events)
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition, or debate
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

Religious observances do not require documentation. To help organize accommodations, students must inform the instructors by the end of the first week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

In the same way, tardiness (lateness) will also be penalized. It has no place in rehearsal, at auditions, at your early morning call on set for a shoot or at half-hour in the theatre, and it has no place in the classroom.

Students are only allowed ONE late show without penalty.

Each additional late show will result in a 2%-point deduction from your final score.

Simply put, do the math, practice healthful habits, show up for class, and develop a discipline that will keep you working in the profession.

POLICIES REGARDING MAKE-UP WORK AND LATE WORK:

Absences do not make one exempt from class obligations. Work must be made up in a timely fashion, at the discretion of the instructors, typically in the week following the student’s return to class. Unexcused late work will be penalized with penalties increasing relative to lateness; anything past deadline is at least 1 day late:

<u>Days</u>	<u>Penalty</u>
1	10 points
2	25 points
3+	40 points

CANVAS AND EMAIL: Much of the administration of this course will be done via Canvas. Course delivery is subject to change as the semester demands. The course Zoom link can be found on Canvas.

The recommended method of communication outside of scheduled class time is email. Electronic mail or "email" is considered an official method for communication because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, cost effective and environmentally aware manner. Students are expected to check their official UF email on a frequent and consistent basis in order to remain informed of university-related communications. The university recommends checking email daily. Students are responsible for the consequences of not reading, in a timely fashion, university-related communications sent to their official student email account. This

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policy ensures that all students have access to this important form of communication. It ensures students can be reached through a standardized channel by faculty and other staff of the university as needed.

EXTRA CREDIT AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR THEATRE: I am offering extra credit for attending a Hippodrome production (10 points on your lowest written work.). Given the season, the only eligible production this fall is *The Uitimate Christmas Show*.

POTUS is a UF co-production and included in your coupons for the fall, so it is not an extra credit option nor is their annual production of *A Christmas Carol*.

Proof must include a ticket stub stapled to a playbill due to me no later than Friday December 8. If one ushers to see a production, a playbill signed by house management (printed name and signature) will be accepted. The UF Honesty Pledge (as follows below) applies here as well.

For info: <https://thehipp.org/>

For your further edification as future professionals, consider also seeing one of the offerings at the Phillips Center this season: <https://performingarts.ufl.edu/events/>

UF HONESTY POLICY: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Click here (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) to read the Conduct Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor of this class.

UNAUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF RECORDINGS: A recording of a class lecture may not be published by a student without the consent of the lecturer. “Publish” is defined as sharing, transmitting, circulating, distributing, or providing access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. A recording, or transcript of the recording, is considered to be published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper or leaflet.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. Click here (<https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>) to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the

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care you need, or [visit the Student Health Care Center website](#).

University Police Department: [Visit UF Police Department website](#) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; [Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website](#).

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the [GatorWell website](#) or call 352-273-4450.

COURSE FEES: \$98.84

Please refer to ONE.UFL.EDU regarding course fees.

COURSE EVALUATIONS: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.