

THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA – SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND DANCE
TPP 6237 SEC 9065 MFA COMPANY ACTING WORKSHOP
THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE III
CREDIT HOURS: 2 HRS.
FALL 2011/ WED/PERIOD/6&7/12:50 –2:45
INSTRUCTOR: KATHY SARRA, PH 352 226 8550, ksarra1@cox.net
OFFICE: 3RD FLOOR MCCARTY C; OFFICE HOURS: BY APPOINTMENT;
T/TH 10:30 –12:00; WED 11:30 – 12:30

Required Texts: Andrea Olsen in collab. w/Caryn McHose. BodyStories

Kelly McEvenue. The Actor and the Alexander Technique

Recommended Text: Frank Pierce Jones. Freedom to Change

Course Description: This course is designed for 3rd year MFA candidates providing the opportunity to revisit the Alexander Technique principles in greater depth with an emphasis on applying those AT principles to acting challenges arising in the students' thesis production. The course will also provide experimental integration of the AT principles with selected acting techniques, voice and movement with consideration not only for the MFA candidates' thesis roles, but their teaching assignments and Acting for Film and TV course.

Objectives: To clarify through practical application and experience the principles of the Alexander Technique with consideration for the integration of other related voice/movement and acting techniques. Students should feel not only competent to continue their practice of the AT in their acting/performance work, but in their daily activities as well, as they enter the professional theatrical world. The course will address deeper questions arising out of the regular practice of the Technique based on individual and specific student need. Also there will be time set aside to discuss ongoing AT study in the larger world including the potential for teacher training in the field with appropriate information shared.

Attendance is Mandatory: This is a class of practical exploration, experience, and application. You are expected to be in class daily and on time. "The University recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors may prohibit further attendance and then assign a failing grade for excessive absences." (See graduate catalog, page 30, section on attendance policies.) I am certain that this will never have to be activated for any of you because Grad students just do not miss classes.

Dress: Work clothes required – wear comfortable, casual, non-binding clothes in which you can move, loose fitting, easy to move in clothes; no skirts, tight pants, or fragile clothing, no bare midriffs, no tee shirts with cut-off sleeves, no hats, no pajamas or clothing that is excessively baggy. If shoes are to be worn, they should permit active

movement – no boots, sandals, flip flops, clogs, high heels, backless styles, etc. Of course, bare feet will often be required and/or appropriate.

Nevertheless, there may be days when you will need to bring and wear costume pieces appropriate to the exercise you are assigned to explore in class. Keep that in mind and be prepared to bring what you need.

Maintain a quiet time from the time you enter the workspace: Take any personal conversations outside the workspace. **TURN OFF ALL CELLULAR AND/OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES** (before entering the classroom is advised)!!! Use the quiet time on the floor to begin releasing outside distractions; to stretch and release the body; to record last minute observations in your journal; to Come Home to Yourself.

Students with disabilities: I will make every attempt to accommodate students with disabilities. At the same time, anyone requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide you with the necessary documentation, which you must then provide to me when requesting accommodation.

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.”

Please make sure that you understand the University’s Academic Guidelines and policies regarding Academic Honesty and Ethical Conduct.

Re: STUDENT HONOR CODE

(3) Violations of the Student Honor Code

(i) Unauthorized Recordings. A student shall not without express authorization from the faculty member and, if required by law, from other participants, make or receive any recording, including but not limited to audio and video recordings, of any class, co-curricular meeting, organizational meeting, or meeting with a faculty member.

*from: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

University Counseling Services: Contact Information

Counseling Center

3190 Radio Rd.

P.O. Box 112662

University of Florida

Gainesville, FL 32611-2662

Ph: 352 392 1575

Web: www.counsel.ufl.edu

Respect the workspace: We are not the only ones using this space. Before class everyone should prepare the space for work, removing unnecessary items, picking up trash, moving furniture out of the way, etc.

You are required to keep a Daily Observation Journal! You remember how this works. As before I will also be feeding you articles of pertinent interest to which you may respond in your journal as you dialogue also with the required textbooks. Always bring your journal to class. Date all entries.

Be Prepared: All assignments MUST be handed in on the scheduled due date. If you are going to miss class when an assignment is due, be sure to make arrangements to turn it in BEFORE the due date. Lateness will affect the grade negatively. Final projects and journals WILL NOT be accepted after their due date. No Exceptions! All assignments should be typed except for journals, which can be handwritten as long as they are legible to me. As always, artwork and images can be useful for your journals if you are so inclined.

Grading: As per University policy final grades will be A, A-, B+, B,B-,C+, C, etc. Throughout the semester you will be given either letter grades (journals, formal papers, etc.) or checks, check pluses or minuses that represent satisfactory or less than satisfactory for quick/ short assignments. You will note that 30% of your grade is Participation. Participation is required in all class exercises unless excused by the professor. Further you are continuing to develop your skill at communicating constructive feedback to your colleagues in class which is part of how your participation grade is evaluated.

Short Assignments:	=15%
Participation:	=30%
Journals:	=40%
Final:	=15%

100%

Assignments are due on the date given in the schedule unless announced otherwise. Turning in assignments late will result in an automatic 10-point deduction from your score. No papers accepted more than one week after due date. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED FOR FINAL AND FINAL JOURNAL COLLECTION.

Critical Dates:

Aug. 31 – “Body Story” paper

Sep 7 – Journals

Oct. 5 – Journals

Nov. 2 – Journals

Nov. 30 – Journals, Evaluation Questions, Final Project Papers

I thought it might be of some value to revisit a few of the quotes I included in my syllabus to you in your first year of MFA work. I think they still apply and actually will always apply to our journeys as artists and as human beings.

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing
There is a field. I'll meet you there.

-Rumi

Aim for success, not perfection. Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life.

Remember that fear always lurks behind perfectionism. Confronting your fears and allowing yourself the right to be human can, paradoxically, make you a far happier and more productive person.

-Dr. David Burns

“The body is your clay home, your only home in the universe. The body is in the soul; this recognition confers a sacred and mystical dignity on the body. The senses are divine thresholds...When you cease to fear your solitude, a new creativity awakens in you. Your forgotten or neglected inner wealth begins to reveal itself. You come home to yourself and learn to rest within. Thoughts are our inner senses. Infused with silence and solitude, they bring out the mystery of the inner landscape...The invisible hungers to become visible, to express itself in our actions. This is the inner desire of work. When our inner life can befriend the outer world of work, new imagination is awakened and great changes take place...We will secretly explore memory as the place where our vanished days secretly gather and acknowledge that the passionate heart never ages. Time is veiled eternity.” – from Anam Cara by John O'Donohue

For me, the Alexander Technique continues to be about coming home, coming home to yourself. Does learning how to come home to yourself serve the actor/artist in the practice of his/her craft, in the practice of his/her life? I believe the answer is a resounding ‘Yes.’ At this stage of your journey and more or less the close of our journey together, what do you think?