

GRAD ACTING IV: CONTEMPORARY ACTING

TPP 6149

Spring 2020

Meeting Times and Location: MWF 12:50-2:45 pm, CON G14

Credits: 2

Professor Tim Altmeyer

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232 McGuire Pavilion

Office Hours: By appointment

MFA ACTING IV: Over a series of progressive exercises, students begin to discover an effective, dependable, repeatable set of working tools for the 21st century contemporary actor, derived from the teachings of 20th century acting theorists, to enhance their sense of purposefulness, immediacy and truthfulness in their performance work—essential for the actor who aspires to work in contemporary theatre and in front of the camera.

OBJECTIVES/GOALS:

- The student develops a way of working that strengthens and refines performance work in terms of immediacy, moment-to-moment living, purpose, clarity, detail, specificity, use of self and truthfulness
- The student acquires a vocabulary and an extensive working knowledge of concepts with which to develop a readily-accessible, repeatable, effective acting process
- The student demonstrates a competent knowledge of select contemporary acting theories and theorists
- The student develops an understanding of professional demands and expectations
- The student develops bravery in exploration, rehearsal and performance
- The student develops the capacity to think critically and articulately about the acting process
- The student develops a more defined point of view as an artist

TEXTS:

True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor (Paperback) by David Mamet (Vintage Books Edition, 1999, Vintage ISBN: 0-679-77264-2)

A Practical Handbook for the Actor (Paperback) by Melissa Bruder et al (Vintage Original, 1986, ISBN: 0-394-74412-8)

Respect for Acting by Utah Hagen (Wiley, 1973, ISBN: 0-02-547390-5)

CRITICAL DATES:

1/6 Overview
1/13 AS-IF Exercise
1/22 Basic Neutral Scene
2/5 “Styles Revisited”
2/12 Trigger Objects
2/14 Object Exercise
2/28 Scene 1 Final
3/20 Scene 2 Final
4/1 Scene 3 Final
4/8 Scene 4 Final
4/13 Stand Up Final
4/13 Paper due
4/24 Final Sharing (Juries)

**** Possible Business of the Business Seminar on Tuesday and/or Thursday as schedules allow**

COURSE OUTLINE:

WEEK 1	INTRO/ACTION/SCENE ANALYSIS
WEEK 2	EXPLORATION OF “AS-IF”
WEEK 3	TRUE AND FALSE/NEUTRAL SCENE/ACTION IN ACTION
WEEK 5	RESPECT FOR ACTING
WEEK 6	OBJECT EXERCISE
WEEK 7-16	APPLICATION—SCENE/MONOLOGUE WORK

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

Performance	50%
Written Work/Participation	30%
Final (Jury Scenes)	20%
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
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 BEHAVIOR/DEMEANOR: 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. Also: **Attendance is mandatory.** (See *Attendance Policy*.) 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.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: In an attempt to create a disciplined environment that simulates the demands of the actor's work place, I will enforce an attendance policy that allows little room for you to exert any personal control over the business of being an actor. The callback, the shoot, and the evening's performance do not wait for your good health or your good

night's sleep. Sometimes you must work tired or work sick. Sometimes you fake it. Sometimes it is during these times that you do your best work (being too tired to put energy into all your old bad habits.) In that way, I allow just two unexcused absence. You may have numerous excused absences (within university strictures), but they are limited to medical illness documented by a physician, family emergency documented by the appropriate person, religious holidays (please give notice in the first 2 weeks of the semester) and official excuses from school administration. Each additional unexcused absence will result in the lowering of 1.5% points from your final grade. In the same way, tardiness 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. However, having suffered myself at the hands of an inconsistent mass transit system en route to the theater and the casting office, I will excuse two late arrivals to class. Each additional two late shows will result in one absence and another 1.5% deduction from your final score. Simply put: Do the math, show up for class, and develop a discipline that will keep you working.

Should you be fortunate enough to be cast in a production at The Hippodrome, you will be excused for all classes that conflict with rehearsals or performances. (I will be checking with stage management to confirm the conflicts.) Note that these excused absences will count for your allotment of two unexcused absences.

POLICIES REGARDING MAKE-UP WORK AND LATE WORK: Excused absences do not make one exempt from class obligations. Work must be made up in a timely fashion, at the discretion of the instructor, typically in the week follow the student's return to class. Unexcused late work will be penalized at the discretion of the instructor, with penalties increasing relative to lateness.

COURSE EVALUATIONS: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

UF HONESTY POLICY: We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold both ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following pledge is either required or implied: ***On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.***

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.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING SERVICES:

UF Counseling Center

3190 Radio Rd.

P.O. Box 112662, University of Florida

Gainesville, FL 32611-2662

352-392-1575

www.counsel.ufl.edu