

TPP 2110 - Acting 1: Instrument & Discipline
10:40 a.m. – 12:35 p.m. M,W,F*
Spring 2020

Instructor: Ryan Hope Travis

Office Hours: 1:00pm-3:00pm Mon./Wed. @ McCarty C, Room 306

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Course Description:

Acting 1 is an introduction to the craft of acting and the foundation for all performance majors and students seeking entrance into the program. The course consists of group exercises to develop physical awareness, concentration, imagination and trust. Basic physical, vocal and analytical concepts; methods; vocabulary; and discipline required of the beginning actor will also be explored. Students will develop their own creative process through monologues, scene work, and exercises in observation and awareness.

Course Objective:

- A) To establish a common vocabulary that serves as a foundation for the acting process.
- B) To increase observational skills and develop self-awareness through exercise and improvisation.
- C) To develop in the student an understanding of the discipline of the art and to refine concentration skills necessary within that discipline.
- D) To introduce the student to the basic methods of relaxation as well as physical and vocal freedom and control.
- E) To develop in the student a sense of the ensemble nature of the discipline through exercise in trust and communication.

Required Text:

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

Published plays and reference materials, both of which may be obtained from the campus libraries, will be utilized by the student in class. Handouts may be distributed as well.

Course Content:

Through the use of exercises, both structured and unstructured, the student will explore the basic skills of acting, which include: a repertoire of relaxation and warm-up exercises from which to build upon for use in the study of acting, and the development of self-awareness, imagination, the mechanics of staging, character-process, and foundational work in script analysis.

Students will memorize the general vocabulary of acting through the use of the addendum to the syllabus and in-class exercises and explorations. A comprehensive, written exam will be given at the end of the semester.

Execution of the basic acting skills will be demonstrated by the student in the form of in-class performances of monologues and in scene work with partners. Students are expected to be fully memorized for these performances, and will be expected to submit written analysis for each performance, the content of which will vary according to the student's development of skills.

Expectations of Monologue Work

- Thorough analysis/prep-work
- Clear through-line of thought
- Clarity of objective(s)
- Clarity of tactics
- Vocal exploration
- Physicality
- Presentations are fully memorized at the time of first performance

Expectations of Scene Work

- Thorough analysis/prep-work
- Both characters “live” in the same world
- Clear through-line of thought
- Clarity in objective(s)
- Clarity in tactics
- Vocal explorations
- Physicality

Students will maintain a weekly journal detailing their observations regarding class work and the development of their skills. (See handout for due dates and specific journal requirements.)

The course concludes in a final performance utilizing the skills and techniques acquired throughout the semester.

Attendance at UF/Hippodrome State Theatre Productions:

Students are required to see all UF main stage shows and be prepared to discuss them in class. For 2 productions, you will submit a 2-page (double-spaced, 1 inch margin, name & section number in page header) commentary to class (see timetable for due dates). The critique *should not be* a synopsis of the play. Rather, attention should be paid to the use of creative imagination, physical awareness, proper vocal technique, and the overall creative development. Discuss individual performers, for example. The idea is to report your observations. Draw parallels between what you observe and your work in class.

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|-------------------|---|
| *Jan. 24 – Feb. 2 | ...And Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi by Marcus Gardley @ Constans Theatre |
| Feb. 7 – Feb. 16 | Dance 2020 by Elizabeth Johnson & Dante Puleio @ McGuire Black Box Theatre |
| Mar. 19 – Mar. 29 | Eurydice by Sarah Ruhl @ McGuire Black Box Theatre |
| Apr. 1 – Apr. 5 | Spring BFA Dance Showcase @ G-6 Studio |
| *Apr. 9 – Apr. 19 | Macbeth by William Shakespeare @ Constans Theatre |

*Reaction Paper Required

Class Attendance:

This is a performance class, therefore, attendance is MANDATORY. You must be present to perform. If you miss class, the work cannot be made up. We learn from each other—your presence, whether or not a “performance” is involved that day, is important to the collective learning process.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you come in after attendance has been taken, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor after class that you came in late. With that said, **you are allowed 1 unexcused absence and 1 tardy.**

2 tardies = 1 unexcused absence

1 Unexcused absence = 30 points from your final grade

Late Assignment Policy:

1. If your written assignments are late (i.e., after the due date) don’t bother turning it in. You will receive **zero** credit. Keep track of due dates that are outlined on the timetable which accompanies this syllabus.
2. **** THERE ARE NO MAKE UP DAYS FOR WORKSHOPS OR PERFORMANCE DAYS****
If you miss your *assigned* workshop or performance day, you forfeit the points for that day. Only in extreme cases will scenes be rescheduled.

*NOTE: Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/

Grading:

Students may have varying degrees of “talent” and experience in acting. Therefore, students will not be graded solely on the basis of the skills and talents they bring to the class. Consideration will be given to the student’s improvement and effort that are demonstrated.

Participation is a key factor in grading. Criteria for this grade include attentiveness, participation in and/or leadership of exercises, willingness to participate in class discussions, etc... in general, the TIME, EFFORT, and COMMITMENT the student displays toward this class.

Obviously, assignments must be *complete* in order to receive *complete* points. Each assignment will be awarded a specific point value. Points will be tallied at the end of the semester to determine the student’s final grade.

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|---------|----|---------|----|---------------|---|
| 300-270 | A | 225-239 | C+ | 180-194 | D |
| 255-269 | B+ | 210-224 | C | 193 and below | E |
| 240-254 | B | 195-209 | D+ | | |

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| “Acting/Self Analysis” Paper | 10pts |
| Journals | 10 pts ea. (60 pts total) |
| Reaction Paper | 15 pts (30 pts total) |
| Monologue | 25 pts |
| Scene | 25 pts |
| Vocabulary/Terminology Exam | 30 pts |
| Final Scene | 50 pts |
| Participation | 70 pts |
| | TOTAL POINTS = 300 |

For information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points, please visit: catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-gradingpolicies/.

Physical Contact Policy:

Unlike most classes, acting can require a certain amount of physical contact between students or between instructor and student. This contact may be used to aid in releasing tension, promote deeper breathing, or to fuel a deeper emotional connection. If at any time you feel uncomfortable with any physical contact suggested in class, you have the right to refuse it with no repercussion towards any sort of grade.

Academic Honesty Policy:

UF students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in an honest and ethical manner while pursuing their studies. They are expected to abide by the UF Academic Honesty Policy, which defines an academic honesty offense as “the act of lying, cheating, or stealing academic information so that one gains academic advantage.” In the context of this course, this includes conducting original research and properly citing sources for any materials (both printed and online) used in the writing reaction papers, journals, and self-analysis paper. Submitting work that has been plagiarized will result in a failing grade. For more information on the UF Academic Honor Code visit: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

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 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 ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Campus Resources/Health & Wellness:

1. *U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit umatter.ufl.edu/ to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.
2. *Counseling and Wellness Center:* Visit counseling.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
3. *Student Health Care Center:* Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit shcc.ufl.edu/.
4. *University Police Department:* Visit police.ufl.edu/ or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).
5. *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; ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center.

Final Business:

Acting is *ACTION*. Acting is not about attitude, or being clever. It’s not about your ability to conjure up or manufacture a feeling or emotion. Acting is about the *TASK*. To get forgiveness, to get them to love you, etc., etc., etc. Be deliberate. Be direct. Be fearless. Learning how to do the aforementioned is the function of this class.

TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

This timetable is subject to change at the instructor's discretion

WEEK 1:

Orientation, syllabus
Theatre games and explorations
“What is Acting?”
Start working on journals

WEEK 2:

Individual Inventory: Body Awareness and Vocal Awareness
*DUE Wednesday, Jan. 15th: 2-3 page paper – What does Acting mean to me?
Your thoughts regarding what you hope to take away from this class. What are your current perceptions, thoughts/feelings on the term “Acting?” This may include your prior experiences with the craft (if any), or your thoughts in general on the topic. Papers must be typed and stapled.

WEEK 3:

NO CLASS – Monday, January 20th: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

(Ongoing assignment for the semester: Begin *Respect for Acting*. I will be checking-in with your progress on this reading as the semester continues, and applying your knowledge from this text to in-class work and exercises.)

Read Chapter 1 in the Hagen book (Concept)
Goals/Obstacles/Discoveries/Tactics
Exercises in exploring character/text and “finding the answers”
* DUE Wednesday, January 22nd: JOURNAL #1

WEEK 4:

The Acting Space—continuing the actor's awareness
Putting it together—Monologue in class workshops and exercises in exploring the monologue to find meaning and depth.
Introduction to Acting Vocabulary and Terms

WEEK 5:

READ Chapter 3 in the Hagen book (Substitution)
Continuing explorations in “finding the answers”
Putting the Monologue into Action—working with your monologue
*DUE Monday, February 3rd: Response paper for *...And Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi*
*DUE Wednesday, February 5th: JOURNAL #2

WEEK 6:

READ Chapter 28 in the Hagen book (The Rehearsal)
Preparing a Role/Rehearsing/Choices
Stanislavski vs. Other methods: how we can utilize all the tools at our disposal

WEEK 7:

Introduction of Scene Study/Neutral Scenes
*DUE Wednesday, February 19th: JOURNAL #3

WEEK 8:

Scene performances
Feedback on scenes and continuing explorations
READ Chapter 25 in the Hagen book (The Objective)

WEEK 9:

NO CLASS –February 29th – March 7th -- SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10:

Scene Study: continuing exploration and exercises
Raising the stakes: continuing the development of your skills
READ Chapter 26 in Hagen book (The Obstacle)
*DUE Wednesday, March 11th: JOURNAL #4

WEEK 11:

Scene workshops
Feedback and further explorations of the scenes in class
Review of skills and vocabulary up to this point—in class explorations using scenes and/or monologues

WEEK 12:

Showing of scenes and feedback
Review and preparation for Vocabulary/Terms Exam
*DUE Wednesday, March 25th: JOURNAL #5

WEEK 13:

Using the text as a tool
VOCABULARY/TERMINOLOGY EXAM – Wednesday, April 1st

WEEK 14:

In class scene workshops
Feedback and explorations of final scenes
DUE Wednesday, April 8th: FINAL JOURNAL #6

WEEK 15:

Feedback and explorations of final scenes

WEEK 16:

* DUE Monday, April 20th: Response paper for *Macbeth*
Wednesday, April 22nd: Final Scene Presentations – Last Day of Class

This syllabus is a good approximation of what this course will be like this semester. The instructor reserves the right to make reasonable additions or subtractions to the syllabus or to allow more or less time for certain sections based on how the work progresses this semester.
