

Acting 1 Syllabus

TPP 2110 - Acting 1: Instrument & Discipline
3:00 p.m. – 4:55 p.m. M,W,F*
ROOM: **CON G015**
Fall 2020

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“Where do we begin? First, you must learn who *you* are.”

“Your craft will serve you, if you have a craft.”

-Uta Hagen, Respect For Acting

Course Description:

Acting One 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 personalized creative processes through monologues, scene work, and exercises in observational 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.

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- Check out On The Technique of Acting by Michael Chekhov

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 and **preparation** for acting, as well as the development of self-awareness, imagination, the mechanics of staging, character-process, foundational work in script analysis and mindfulness of the ensemble.

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 written 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 written 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 focus attention on the use of creative imagination, physical awareness, proper vocal technique, and the overall creative development, *not be a synopsis of the play*. Discuss individual performers, for example. The idea is to report your observations. **Draw parallels between what you observe and your work in class.**

Oct. 30 – Nov. 1 *Sweat* by Lynn Nottage
@ Zoom

*Nov. 13 – Nov. 15 *Now. Here. This.* Book by Hunter Bell + Susan Blackwell,
Music + Lyrics by Jeff Bowen
@ Zoom

Dec. 4 – Dec. 6 *Agbedidi* Directed by Trent Williams Jr. + Augusto Soledade
@ Zoom

**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, **as an ensemble**— your presence, whether or not a “performance” is involved that day, is important to the collective learning process and overall experience.

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

Hybrid Attendance Policy
(proposed for hybrid performance classes that meet 3 times a week)

Students are expected to stay home and seek medical help for COVID-19 symptoms or exposure (persistent cough, fever 100.4+, new loss of taste or smell, muscle pain/headaches, shortness of breath, sore throat, chills, diarrhea, or feeling generally ill). The culture of hiding illness or the “show must go on” mentality must be avoided. Students who are medically required to quarantine will have documentation from a medical provider. Students who self-quarantine must communicate with the instructor and “attend” courses remotely synchronously, when available, or asynchronously if approved by the instructor.

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Students who elect to enroll in a hybrid course are expected to participate in in-person instruction. If a student is uncomfortable attending in-person, the student should elect courses that are delivered online only and plan to take the hybrid or face-to-face course in a future semester. In the case that the student does not have the option to take the class at a later time (i.e. a graduating senior), the student must make arrangements with the instructor to “attend” all class meetings synchronously, when available, or asynchronously if approved by the instructor.

→ Barring the above circumstances, students are expected to be in attendance (either remotely or in-person, as assigned) daily and to be on time.

- ◆ Students are allowed 1 “unexcused” absence that does not require documentation and does not conform to the UF “acceptable reasons for absence.”
- ◆ The second “unexcused” absence will result in a half letter grade (5%) deduction from the final grade.
- ◆ All additional “unexcused” absences will result in a full letter grade (10%) deduction from the final grade.
 - Opportunities to make up missed material for unexcused absences is up to the instructor’s discretion and will be made available through virtual classes or online assignments.
 - *Religious observances do not require documentation.
 - To help organize accommodations, students should inform the instructor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty:

- ◆ Illness—doctor's note must be on official letterhead with address and phone number, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted, doctor name and signature
- ◆ Serious family emergencies
- ◆ special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- ◆ Military obligation
- ◆ Severe weather conditions
- ◆ Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate
- ◆ Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

Any student that acquires 3 absences (either excused or unexcused) will be required to meet with this course’s instructor and/or area faculty to discuss the student’s continued participation in the course.

- ◆ For Majors: Failure to attend this meeting will result in Artistic Probation.

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Due to the participatory nature of the course that includes in-class collaboration along with partner and ensemble work, if a student acquires more than 2 unexcused absences, the student may be prohibited from participation in partner/group exercises which will affect the student's 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/

While we are a hybrid course, we will have face-to-face instructional sessions to accomplish the student learning objectives of this course.

In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions:

- ◆ You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- ◆ This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
- ◆ Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- ◆ Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.
- ◆ If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>), please use the UF Health screening system (<https://coronavirus.uflhealth.org/screen-test-protect/covid-19-exposure-and-symptoms-who-do-i-call-if/>) and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class.
 - Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>).

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Online:

- ◆ We won't be regularly recording our class meetings, but our class sessions may be audio and visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. I will always give a heads up when recording will be happening, but Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded.
 - *If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, communicate this preference with me ASAP and be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image.
- ◆ Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

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 quality of effort demonstrated in class.

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.

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+		

“Acting/Self Analysis” Paper	15pts
Journals	12 pts ea. (60 pts total)
Reaction Paper	15 pts (30 pts total)
Monologue	25 pts
Scene	25 pts
Vocabulary/Terminology Exam	25 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/.

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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 to do this 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:

- ◆ *DUE Wednesday, Aug. 28th: 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.
- ◆ Individual Inventory: Body Awareness and Vocal Awareness

WEEK 3:

*NO CLASS – Monday, September 2nd: Labor 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, September 4th: JOURNALS

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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 Wednesday, September 18th: JOURNALS

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

*DUE DATE – Wednesday, September 25th: Response paper for *We Are Proud to Present...*

WEEK 7:

- ◆ Introduction of Scene Study/Neutral Scenes

WEEK 8:

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

*DUE Wednesday, October 9th: JOURNALS

WEEK 9:

- ◆ Raising the stakes: continuing the development of your skills
- ◆ Review of skills and vocabulary up to this point—in class explorations using scenes and/or monologues

WEEK 10:

- ◆ Scene Study: continuing exploration and exercises

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- ◆ READ Chapter 26 in Hagen book (The Obstacle)
- ◆ Using the text as a tool

*DUE Wednesday, October 23rd: JOURNALS

WEEK 11:

- ◆ Scene workshops
- ◆ Feedback and further explorations of the scenes in class

* DUE DATE – Wednesday, October 30th: Response paper for *Pippin*

WEEK 12:

- ◆ Showing of scenes and feedback
- ◆ Review and preparation for Vocabulary/Terms Exam

*DUE Wednesday, November 6th: JOURNALS

WEEK 13:

*NO CLASS – Monday, November 11th: Veterans Day

- ◆ VOCABULARY/TERMINOLOGY EXAM – Wednesday, November 13th

WEEK 14:

- ◆ Audition Workshop/ The Business of Acting
- ◆ In class scene workshops
- ◆ Feedback and explorations of final scenes

DUE Wednesday, November 20th: FINAL JOURNALS

WEEK 15:

* DUE DATE – Monday, November 25th: Response paper for *Agbedidi*.

* NO CLASS- Wednesday, November 27th —Thanksgiving Break

WEEK 16:

- ◆ Wednesday, December 4th: 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.

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