

**PROFESSIONAL VOICE SEMINAR
THE6905**

**“Accent & Dialect Training for Actors & Voice Over Practices”
University of Florida Spring 2021**

Time: 3rd Period (10:45-12:30) **Days:** Tues/Thurs **Room:** Flavet Field (indoor space TBA)

Instructor: Susan Schuld **Office:** T211 **Office Hours:** By appointment

Email: sschuld@ufl.edu *The recommended method of communication outside of scheduled class time is email*

Course Description:

Students engage in important discussions of code-switching, stereotypes, and the many sensitive, personal issues that arise when discussing accent and dialect acquisition. Actors build skills of vocal placement, rhythm, inflection, tonality, stress, and phonemic shifts for ten accents/dialects. The work will culminate in each actor’s study, acquisition, and teaching of a real-life character’s idiolect. Lastly, actors develop character voices, and how to safely perform vocal extremes while learning Voice Over techniques for Video Gaming.

Course Outcomes

- Engage intellectually in important discussions of code-switching, stereotypes, and the many sensitive, personal issues that arise when discussing dialect while celebrating cultural and regional diversity
- Learn how to vary speech actions with fluency, flexibility, and accuracy.
- Obtain the tools and resources of how to research and prepare for any dialect and accent pattern.
- Continue to practice using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and develop phonetic transcription skills for future dialect study and script notation.

Course Objectives

- To apply Knight-Thompson, Jim Johnson, and Paul Meier’s methodology for dialect and accent acquisition
- To learn some of the most specifically and frequently encountered dialects and accents in our industry.
- To research, teach, and perform a dialect/accnt

Course Overview:

Our first focus in class will be how to research and practice an accent or dialect - *not mastery*. Our second focus will be application of dialect work to voice over genres of gaming and animation.

The first half of the course focuses the tools needed to successfully act in an accent or dialect. Methodology will include studying the main vowel and consonant positions and accurate speech and intonation patterns of a key target accent. Students learn how to write an accent breakdown sheet and learn how to research audio-visual aids. Classes will dedicate approximately one week to each accent, and students will perform a monologue or scene in that accent. Therefore, it is up to the student to integrate the new skills with their acting

and performance work.

The section ambition is to continue to practice voiceover acting techniques for animation, and video games. Class will continue to provide information on the industry, professional work and studio etiquette. We will be also be investigating vocal health strategies and rehabilitation techniques to aid us in the vocal extremes of VO for Gaming and Characters for Animation.

The dialect resources include, but are not limited to:

Classically Speaking, Patricia Fletcher
Accents and Dialects for Stage and Screen, Paul Meier
Dialect and Accent Materials, David Alan Stern
African Accents: A Workbook for Actors Beth McGuire
Stage Dialects, Jerry Blunt
Accents: A Manual for Actors, Robert Blumenfeld
AccentHelp Materials, Jim Johnson
Dialect and Accent Materials, Gillian Lane Plescia
The International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA) website

(The Voice Over resources are listed on next page)

Course Goals

- Obtain the tools and resources of how to research and prepare for any dialect and accent pattern
- Continue to practice using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and develop phonetic transcription skills for future dialect study and script notation
- Engage intellectually in important discussions of code-switching, stereotypes, and the many sensitive, personal issues that arise when discussing dialect while celebrating cultural and regional diversity
- Build skills of Oral Posture in the study of dialects

Course Outcomes

- Apply the 5 KTS fundamental steps to learning an accent/dialect
- Post in Canvas accent research for each accent studied
- Perform a scored monologue using IPA symbols for each accent/dialect section
- Develop personal process for acquiring a dialect with only a few days' notice
- Create and teach their own abbreviated accent/dialect breakdown in a solo presentation

Required Materials:

Water bottle, pen or pencil, small hand mirror, recording device

Course Schedule (subject to change at the discretion of the instructor)

Tues Jan 12 Syllabus project outlines IPA SCGA
Thurs Jan 14 How to work on accents/dialects IPA SCGA

(Mon 18 No Class Martin Luther King Jr Holiday)

Tues Jan 19 Upper RP
Thurs Jan 21 Upper RP and Modern/London RP

Tues Jan 26 Cockney and Multi-Cultural London English
Thurs Jan 28 Cockney and Multi-Cultural London English

Tues Feb 2 UK Review
Thurs Feb 4 UK Demonstration

Tues Feb 9 Southern Antebellum, Deep South, Standard Southern
Thurs Feb 11 Southern, Hard /r/ Appalachian, West Texas

Tues Feb 16 Southern Demo
Thurs Feb 18 NY Italian Brooklyneese, Jewish Bronx

Tues Feb 23 New Jersey, Queens, Long Island, Manhattan
Thurs Feb 25 NY Presentations, Begin Group Accent/Dialect

Tues March 2 Group
Thurs March 4 Group

March 9 Group Presentations
March 11 Group Presentations

Tues March 16 Animation/Character workshop
Thurs March 18 Animation/Character workshop

Tues March 23 Vocal Health workshop with Character Voices
Thurs March 25 Vocal Health workshop with Character Voices

Tues March 30 Animation/Gaming/Character workshop
Thurs April 1 Animation/Gaming/Character workshop

Tues April 6 solo accent presentations
Thurs April 8 solo accent presentations

Tues April 13 Create Presentation

Thurs April 15 Rehearse Presentation

Tues April 21 Film Presentation

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.

Please Note:

Our work in the studios is designed to be challenging; physically, intellectually, and emotionally. Voice, Movement, and Acting classes often involve touching. Physical contact may range from simple touch, to correcting alignment and/or relaxation massage. If you have a related medical consideration or touch makes you uncomfortable, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor at the start of the semester.

Student Responsibilities:

- Students are expected to participate daily in warm-ups, exercises, and performances
- Students must be dressed in appropriate movement clothing for every class and performance
- Students are expected to hold outside of class rehearsals for all projects
- Students must be supportive and respectful of their fellow classmates
- Students must complete all assignments and performances on their assigned due date
- Students must contribute focused and creative participation in all class exercises, assignments, and discussions

Attendance Policies:

Only a University sanctioned absence or medical absence will be excused (a note from your physician or school nurse). You, personally, **MUST** notify the teacher **BEFORE** class in order for the absence to be excused. No absences of any kind will excuse you from class responsibilities. You, the student, will be held accountable for keeping up with class assignments and projects.

3 unexcused absences = a single letter grade reduction
4 unexcused absences = a two letter grade reduction

6 unexcused absences = a three letter grade reduction

Tardiness:

Tardiness is disruptive to a class of this nature and will not be tolerated. Any tardiness will be recorded along with attendance. Attendance will be taken promptly at the start of class. If you enter the room after the role-call has been completed, you will be considered tardy. If you enter the room anytime after 20 minutes of the official start of the class you will be marked absent for that class day.

2 tardies = 1 absence

My communication policy:

Avoid using words such as "um", "like" or "kinda" when making observations or sharing with the group. This class' focus is on you expressing yourself more clearly and these words will not aid you in that purpose. If you feel a certain way about something, stick by it, don't take the power out of your observations and speech with these weak words.

Grading

Class Participation/Professionalism 20% (*punctuality, communication, attitude*)

Conceptual Information 45% (*homework, quizzes, blogs, papers*)

Midterm 15% (*level of progress in voice skills, application of acting skills, and text skills*)

Final Performance 20% (*level of progress in voice skills, application of acting skills, and text skills*)

General Grade Guidelines

A Exceptional Work (Outstanding Work)

Inspired Work

Imaginative and through solutions to problems

Shows continuous and exceptional (above average) growth

Shows understanding of basic ideas and methods taught through exceptional application in projects

Timely preparation and submission of class work

Regular and constructive classroom participation in critiques and/or discussion as appropriate to class and subject

Perfect attendance

A - Exceptional Work (Noteworthy Work)

B+ Above Average (Well Above Average Work)

B Above Average (Above Average Work)

Good workable solutions to problems

Shows some insight into problem solving

Shows continuous and above average growth

Shows understanding of basic ideas and methods taught through skillful application in projects

Regular attendance

B- Above Average (Narrowly Above Average Work)

C+ Average (Average in all respects)

C Average (Marginally Average in all respects)

Appropriate solutions to problems

Shows understanding of basic and methods taught through application in projects

Most class work is prepared and submitted in a timely manner

Participates in classroom critiques and/or discussions
Regular attendance

C - Average (Narrowly Average in all respects)

D+ Below Average Work (Marginally Acceptable)

D Below Average Work (Narrowly Acceptable)

Inconsistent solutions to problems
Shows little growth
Shows inconsistent understanding of basic idea and methods taught and applied to projects
Class work is often not prepared and submitted in a timely manner
Rarely participates in classroom critiques and/or discussions
Inconsistent and poor attendance

D- Below Average Work (Barely Acceptable)

F Unacceptable Work (Failed to meet requirements of the course)

Incomplete or no solutions to problems
Shows little or no growth
Shows little or no understanding of basic ideas and methods taught and the applications of these ideas are often missing or inconsistently presented in class work
Class work is not prepared and/or presented on time or at all
Participates rarely or not at all in classroom critiques and/or discussions
Poor attendance

Class Participation and Professionalism

20% of your grade for this class is based on your participation and Professionalism in discussion and the physical explorations.

Participating in the physical component of the class, means having a positive and rigorous attitude with exploring new work. In other words, resistance to change or negative attitudes towards the work or feedback from the instructor is not participating. It means arriving early, suited up, and ready to move right when class starts.

Participating in discussion does not necessarily mean talking a lot or showing everyone else that you know or have studied a lot. ‘Good discussion’ participation involves trying to build on, and synthesize, the physical experience that has transpired. It also involves showing, respect and appreciation for others’ comments and contributions and learning how to “agree to disagree”.

If you find yourself talking a lot in the feedback sessions, some of the most helpful things you can do are allow for a quiet interlude. Learning to live with unanswered questions is a valuable skill as an actor/artist.

Skills that define a Professional Attitude are:

1. Demonstrate empathy, integrity, honesty, good interpersonal skills, curiosity, courage, and desire for change.
2. Ability to adapt to a working environment that is both rigorous and demanding.
3. Ability to show flexibility to changes.
4. Ability to function in the face of uncertainties questions and stresses, which are inherent in the training and artistic process, as well as the profession.
5. Ability and willingness to respond physically to appropriate verbal and tactile cues given by their teachers.
6. Acknowledgment that the work is the discipline and self-discipline will lead to the attainment of one's goals.

Mistakes to Avoid:

1. Refusing to Ask for Help
2. Not Being Able to Handle Feedback
3. Gossiping
4. Being Afraid to Make Mistakes
5. Not Admitting You Made a Mistake
6. Having a Bad Attitude
7. Not Learning from Your Classmates
8. Not Being Prepared
9. Comparing your Artistic Journey to Other's Journey's

Email Policy

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 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.

Online course evaluation:

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 semesters, 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>.

University Policy on Accommodating Students with Disabilities (Required): “Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.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. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.”

University Policy on Academic Conduct: 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 honesty 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 Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Class Demeanor or Netiquette: All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. [Describe what is expected and what will occur as a result of improper behavior [See Sample Netiquette Document](#)]

Getting Help:

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu>
- (352) 392-HELP (4357)
- Walk-in: HUB 132

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues **MUST** be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You **MUST** e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

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 Other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and Wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library Help Desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.

Dialects Performance Rubric

	Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
Transcription	Excellent transcription: no errors, nuanced use of IPA to make phrasing and pronunciation choices	Clearly understands the use of IPA for transcribing sounds, consistent accuracy with only minor errors	Demonstrates fluency with IPA transcription, but may have repeated minor errors	Clear effort, but contains major errors in transcription	Missing or written as a rap
Accuracy	Sound substitutions, resonance/focus, pitch are played consistently throughout the scene	Most of the dialect elements are played accurately, with only minor errors	Clear demonstration of the basic elements of the dialect; may have frequent minor errors in pronunciation, pitch or placement	Significant difficulty in applying one or more of the basic elements: pitch pattern, sound substitution, resonance/focus	What <i>is</i> that – Jamaican?
Integration	Dialect choices are fully integrated into acting choices; demonstrates sophisticated use of the dialect to create character	Dialect choices are appropriate for the character and work well in the scene	Dialect and acting choices are integrated on a foundational level, but need polish or detail	Dialect seems “tacked on” or calls attention to itself	Dialect or Acting – which one should I do?
Acting	Creates truthful world; actors are listening/responding, actively pursuing objectives and are compelling to watch	Intelligent, well crafted and active scene, demonstrating most of the hallmarks of an outstanding scene, but a little careful or self-conscious	Overall structure is good, but may lack specificity in choice of objectives or actions	Not fully prepared: significant line problems, didn’t read the play, awkward or inappropriate choices of objective or action	Two potatoes talking to one another would be more exciting

**Group Projects
Lesson Plan**

	Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
Goals and Outcomes	Goals and learning outcomes are clear, specific and connected to each other, sets up an excellent structure for assessment	Goals and outcomes are clearly articulated and specific	Clear effort to connect goals and outcomes, but lacking detail or connection to each other	Goals and/or outcomes are vague, unclear, or so general as to be almost impossible to assess	What's love got to do with it?
Activities	Creative and imaginative solutions to teaching; relate to goals and outcomes; engage students in an active learning process	Appropriate and varied activities that build on each other to achieve goals and outcomes	Good choice of activities, but may be randomly organized or don't clearly connect to stated goals and outcomes	Doesn't use a variety of approaches or doesn't actively engage the class	Why the Hokey-Pokey?
Handouts	Organized, comprehensive, easy to follow, no "filler"; material reprinted from other sources is identified	Generally helpful; may need a little organization or revision; material reprinted from other sources is identified	Good material, but has problems with organization or has some irrelevant material; material reprinted from other sources is identified	Random; handouts don't support activities or provide background; doesn't cite sources for material directly quoted or reprinted	Handwritten on the back of a Shriver napkin

Presentation

	Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
Overall Effectiveness	Organized, fully prepared, effectively uses a variety of elements in an integrated way, polished and effective	Organized and prepared; may be occasionally awkward or unpolished, but is effective as a whole	Good ideas and choices, but goes through them methodically without integrating elements together	Inaccurate content and/or gaps. Peers are lost and cannot grasp basics of dialect instruction	Don't quit your day job....
Collaboration	Both team members contribute significantly to the presentation; and communicate effectively with each other	Both team members share the responsibility for presenting, but may have awkward transitions or minor mis-communication	Balanced contributions to presentation, but team members appear to be working independently	One team member dominates the presentation; or working relationship is tense	Civil War....
Presentation Skills	Engagingly presented, fun, uses time efficiently, covers all the material but doesn't rush, allows time for questions, stays focused	Engaging and fun; may occasionally rush or misjudges time; occasionally gets unfocused	Clear and adequate presentation, but heads off on tangents frequently; or may be rigid and unable to adjust on your feet; doesn't consistently engage peers	Presentation is hard to follow, unfocused and doesn't engage the class	I'd rather be having a root canal...