

TPP 2110 - Acting 1: Instrument & Discipline
10:40 a.m. – 12:35 p.m. M,W,F*
Spring 2021

Instructor: Ryan Hope Travis

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

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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 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 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 Theatre Productions:

Students are required to see all UF main stage shows and be prepared to discuss them in class. For 3 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.

*Mar. 12 – Mar. 14	<i>John Proctor is the Villain</i> by Emily Bellflower @ Zoom
Mar. 26 – Mar. 28	<i>Dance 2021</i> Directed by Elizabeth Johnson @ Zoom
*Apr. 9 – Apr. 11	<i>Three Sisters</i> by Anton Chekhov @ Zoom
Apr. 15 – Apr. 18	<i>BFA Dance Showcase</i> @ Zoom

*Reaction Paper Required

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.

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	10pts
Journals	12 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/.

Late Assignment Policy:

1. Late assignments will not be accepted. I know this is a tough pill to swallow. Professional actors who show up late get fired. Keep track of due dates. Keep the lines of communication open if you are having a challenge.
2. You are allowed one unexcused absence. However...** THERE ARE NO MAKE UP DAYS FOR WORKSHOPS OR PERFORMANCE DAYS** In other words, you cannot elect to take your unexcused absence on your *assigned* workshop or performance day. That is wholly unfair to your scene partner. Only in *extreme* cases will scenes be rescheduled (see attendance policy).

Attendance Policy:

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.

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.” Any other “unexcused” absence will result in a penalty of a full letter grade (10%) from the final grade per “unexcused” absence. To be considered “excused” an absence must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation. Religious observances do not require documentation.

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)

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 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.

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.

*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/

Additional Course Fees:

\$50.00 *included in your course payment

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

COVID Related Practices:

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 ([Click here for guidance from the CDC on symptoms of coronavirus](#)), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. [Click here for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms](#).
- 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. [Find more information in the university attendance policies](#).

Privacy Statement Related to the Online Component of this Course:

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. 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, 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.

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. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). 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 here](#).

Academic Honesty Policy:

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 honor 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 specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Honor Code](#). Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

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.

Academic Resources

1. *E-learning technical support*: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.
2. *Career Connections Center*: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
3. *Library Support*: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
4. *Teaching Center*: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.
5. *Writing Studio*: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
6. *Student Complaints On-Campus*: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information](#).
7. *On-Line Students Complaints*: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process](#).

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:

NO CLASS – Monday, January 18th: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

*DUE Wednesday, Jan. 20th: 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:

(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 27th: JOURNALS

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, February 10th: 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

WEEK 7:

Introduction of Scene Study/Neutral Scenes

*DUE Wednesday, February 24th: JOURNALS

WEEK 8:

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

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

*DUE Wednesday, March 10th: JOURNALS

WEEK 10:

Scene Study: continuing exploration and exercises
READ Chapter 26 in Hagen book (The Obstacle)
Using the text as a tool

*DUE DATE – Wednesday, March 17th: Response paper for *John Proctor is the Villain*

WEEK 11:

NO CLASS – Wednesday, March 24th: COTA Recharge Day

Scene workshops
Feedback and further explorations of the scenes in class

WEEK 12:

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

*DUE Wednesday, March 31st: FINAL JOURNALS

WEEK 13:

Vocabulary/Terminology Exam Review
Scene Workshops cont'd

WEEK 14:

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

*DUE DATE – Wednesday, April 14th: Response paper for *Three Sisters*
VOCABULARY/TERMINOLOGY EXAM Review – Wednesday, April 14th

WEEK 15:

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.
