

THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA – SCHOOL OF THEATRE AND DANCE

SPRING 2015

TPP 6298/SEC 14D9 -- THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE II

CREDIT HOURS: 2 HRS.

TU/THU/Periods 2&3/ 8:30-10:25AM

INSTRUCTOR: KATHY SARRA; Ofc. McCarty C, 3rd Floor

PHONE: Home: 352 226 8550

EMAIL: ksarra1@cox.net

Office hours: 12:45-1:45/Tue/Thu; Wed 10-11:30: BY APPOINTMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A graduate level course that further investigates the fundamental principles of the Alexander Technique (AT) introduced in Alexander Technique I. The course includes basic anatomy, developmental movement, breathing and relaxation techniques, and presentations.

Continued explorations in the Alexander Technique begun in the graduate intro class, Alexander Technique I. You will continue to deepen your self-awareness, working to further expand your ease and freedom of thinking and moving and “active being.” We will begin the semester with in class, individual hands on Alexander lessons in order to “come home” to ourselves, each other, and the Technique. We will continue our exploration of the various movement techniques already introduced and I will introduce a new one or two as well. As the semester progresses we will incorporate your work in your Shakespeare acting class with the Alexander Technique and Contact Improvisation in this class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES/GOALS: We will be deepening our knowledge and application of the principles of the Alexander Technique this semester. You will be further honing your skills at using AT principles and movement processes to enhance your acting work and in your daily life. By the end of the semester you should have a working knowledge of how to apply AT principles, etc. towards “working on yourself,” “coming home,” to yourself in acting and everyday activity. Your clearer understanding of AT principles should bring a heightened awareness of your personal responsibility for your own growth and skill re: the key principles of awareness, inhibition, and direction to activate your Primary Control through the use of constructive thinking as defined by F.M. Alexander.

COURSE TOPICS/OUTLINE:

- Principles of Awareness
- Inhibition
- Primary Control
- AT and Meisner
- Developmental Movement
- AT and Tai Chi
- AT and Greek Theatre Performance
- AT and Shakespeare Performance
- AT and Elizabethan Scenes

EVALUATIONS and GRADING PER CENTAGES:

Journals:	40%
Participation:	20%
Short Assignments:	15%
Shakespeare related work:	15%
Final Project:	10%
Total:	100%

GRADING: I assign grades on a 10pt scale.

A= 100%-90%, B= 89%-80%, C=79%-70%, D=69%-60%, E=59%-0%.

I may assign –'s or +'s for individual assignments, your final grade will follow University policy.

Letter Grade	GPA Equivalency
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
D-	.67
E, I, NG, S-U, WF	0.00

You will be given letter grades for each assignment to include each time you turn your journals in, and all other assignments, as well as the wonderful catchall, The Participation Grade. However, the short accompanying documentation you turn in regularly for your Shakespeare text assignments will receive satisfactory or unsatisfactory marks for these documents.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. This is a class of practical exploration, experience, and application. You are expected to be in class daily and on time. "The University recognizes the right of the individual professor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, professors may prohibit further attendance and then assign a failing grade for excessive absences." (See graduate catalogue, page 30, section on attendance policies.) I am certain that this will never have to be activated for any of you because Grad students just do not miss classes.

You have 2 absences for this class during the semester, to be used with the utmost judiciousness, if at all. (Note: all absences with the exception of jury duty and military service are considered unexcused. See policy above.) If there are emergencies or unexpected problems, please contact me ahead of time (ph 352 226 8550) or see me before or after class. If you have a medical absence due to sickness, please follow the University policy regarding documentation. Please do everything in your power to attend class. Each class builds on the one before and cannot be repeated. You will miss what you are not there to witness and participate in.

*** After 2 absences I will deduct 5points from your grade per absence.

REGARDING LATE ARRIVALS: DO NOT BE LATE! It is disruptive, rude, and unprofessional. 2 tardies = 1 absence. Be aware of this. 'Nuff said.

LATE WORK/MAKE UP EXAMS: Assignments are due on the date given in the schedule unless announced otherwise. Turning assignments in late will result in 5points taken off your score for ½ wk late; 10pts deducted for 1 wk late. No papers accepted after 1 wk. NO LATE PAPERS ACCEPTED FOR YOUR FINAL TAKE HOME EXAM OR YOUR FINAL JOURNALS!

As you are aware by now, this is very much a participatory class and you are expected to participate in all class activities with your whole self. For some assignments your presence is imperative. Without your presence you cannot do the activity or assignment and it cannot be made up. Be there. You must be present to win. Since the exams for this class are take home exams dealing with your process in this class and your application of the Alexander Technique, there should be no reason for you to have to make up the exam, unless for reasons of extended illness, in which case you would probably take an INCOMPLETE in the course and take it again next time.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Barbara Conable. *How to Learn the Alexander Technique*. Andover Press, Third Edition, 1995.

Michael J. Gelb. *Body Learning*. Owl Books, Henry Holt and Company, Second Edition, 1995.

SUGGESTED TEXT:

Robert Beverly Hale and Terence Coyle. *Albinus on Anatomy*. Watson Guptill Publications, 1979.

CRITICAL DATES:

Jan 29 – Journals & Response papers

Feb 26 – Journals

Mar 26 – Journals

Apr 14 & 16 – Final Project Presentations

Apr 16 – Journals & Final Project Papers

*** Short Response papers: Due dates – at the discretion of the professor

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

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

The university's policies regarding academic honesty, the honor code, and student conduct related to the honor code will be strictly enforced. Full information regarding these policies is available at the following links:

- Academic Honesty:
- <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html#honesty>
- Honor Code: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>
- Student Conduct: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>

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. Please make sure that you understand the University's Academic Guidelines and policies regarding Academic Honesty and Ethical Conduct.

RE: STUDENT HONOR CODE:

(3) Violations of the Student Honor Code

(i) 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.

*from: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING SERVICES: CONTACT INFORMATION

Counseling Center

3190 Radio Rd.

P.O. Box 112662

University of Florida

Gainesville, FL 32611-2662

Ph: 352 392 1575

Web: www.counsel.ufl.edu

By decision of the faculty in the School of Theatre and Dance, the following statement is included on all school syllabi: Since production is the laboratory for all theatre courses, attendance at all mainstage School of Theatre and Dance productions is required of students enrolled in classes with the following prefix designations: THE, TPA, TPP, ORI. Critiques and/or responses to these productions may be required. Attendance at all events is encouraged.

INTRODUCTION:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
T. S. Eliot from "Little Giddings"

In the introduction I wrote for last semester for this class in The Alexander Technique for Actors I talked about a favorite saying we have in the acting world – "It's always ever only Acting I." By that I mean that we are always deepening our explorations, that the principles we learn we continue to learn as we grow and develop our instruments, ourselves.

My friend and colleague, Marsha Paludan says she likes "to think of performing as 'active being'." In my mind the craft of acting involves learning how to be awake, to be fully present. And this isn't something to 'get' or 'check off your list.' We are not here to acquire a bunch of acting tricks, in an "a-b-c-d" linear progression. We are here to explore, to uncover and reveal, to be surprised and delighted. Each of you will find your own particular path along the way."

With that said, you can expect to continue the explorations you began last semester. You will continue to deepen your self-awareness, working to further expand your ease and freedom of thinking and moving and 'active being.' The laboratory remains open and you are your own subject of study.

You will be expected to continue your explorations in your DAILY OBSERVATION JOURNAL articulating your discoveries relating to your daily life and your acting, both in this class and your other work as well. Continue to deepen your skill at observation, of yourself, your colleagues, as well as your environment as you apply The Alexander Technique and the other processes we are exploring in this class to your life and work. You will be expected to continue your study of the required texts as well as all handouts and to record your comments, thoughts, and questions in your journal. You will be expected to develop questions regarding the application of the Alexander Technique and its fundamental ideas, terminology, and use; submit them on a regular basis for discussion and hands on experimentation in class. Your journal needs to be your ever present, ever faithful friend. It continues to be a large part of your grade, as is the "participation" component.

We will begin the semester with in class, individual hands on Alexander lessons in order to "come home" to ourselves, each other, and the Technique. We will continue our exploration of the various movement techniques already introduced and I will introduce a new one or two as well. As the semester progresses we will incorporate your work in your Shakespeare acting class with the Alexander Technique and Contact Improvisation in this class.

THERE WILL BE WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: Keep your handouts handy as they may be sources for short required written responses. There will be a Final Project which we will schedule earlier than the last day of class. We will be working in conjunction with your Verse Drama and Heightened Style class, exploring your assignments from that class utilizing the Alexander Technique, Contact Improvisation, and other techniques we've been working on in this class. **You will provide a paraphrase and a Packing Document/Given Circumstances sheet for your monologues and scenes on the dates specified in your Tentative Schedule. ***Please make it part of your personal discipline to memorize those monologues and scenes as quickly as possible. That will make the work in our class more productive as well as in Dr. Pinkney's class.

MAINTAIN A QUIET TIME FROM THE TIME YOU ENTER THE WORKSPACE:

I expect you to continue to develop your own "coming home" rituals and to use the time at the beginning of class to address your own needs, to leave off socializing, maintaining a quiet time from the time you enter the working space. Remember: daily discipline is your responsibility and your friend. Wear appropriate work clothes. We use the floor a lot. *(See last semester's syllabus) **TURN OFF ALL CELLULAR AND/OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES** (before entering the classroom is advised)!!!

I have been thinking about your needs and requests for this semester's work and want to incorporate some private as well as in class individual Alexander work during the semester as we did at the end of last semester. Meanwhile, please review your syllabus from last semester to remind yourself of the philosophy, expectations, and objectives for the class.

"The Alexander Technique offers the actor a very specific psychophysical process, a means of guiding a performance toward a deep sense of attunement with each moment as it unfolds. The study of the Alexander Technique is a gradual, in-depth process of re-education, requiring time and repetition. As the actor rebuilds a more reliable kinesthetic feedback system, he or she grows to be a more consistent, mature and dynamic performer, vividly contributing to the magic of the overall theatrical event."

From "The Alexander Technique and the Actor" – Meade Andrews and Saura Bartner

Finally, WELCOME BACK! I have missed you and look forward to our ongoing work together this semester. I feel honored to be a part of your development as actors. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or issues that may arise for you during the semester.