

Acting for Majors I/II
THEA 3304/THEA3313
M/W10:30-11:50, Room D180
SPRING 2019

Professor: Kim McKean
Email: kamckean@utep.edu

Office: Worrell 114
Office Hours: M/W 12:00-1:00pm
(or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course builds on the techniques and principles introduced in Acting Fundamentals, applying them to the interpretation of contemporary dramatic literature in collaboration with a scene partner. We will focus on using Stanislavsky's system (specifically employing the Meisner Technique) to begin practicing connecting authentically to a scene partner, the scene's given circumstances, the character's objective, and the actor's impulses.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To further develop facility with the core elements of acting technique in scenework: circumstances, character, text analysis, behavior, action, obstacle, intention, improvisation.
- To instill a habit of practicing unguarded/spontaneous communication with a scene partner.
- To enhance the ability to work with a scene partner.
- To practice these skills with contemporary drama until they become second nature, laying the groundwork for the interpretation of more challenging texts in Scene Study II/III, Acting Genres, and Shakespeare.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course you should begin to practice and demonstrate "living truthfully under imaginary circumstances" while acting. This will include:

- Rehearsing, Memorizing, and Performing two contemporary scenes with a partner, exercising effective give-and-take in scenework (i.e. challenging your partner without bossing them around).
- Demonstrating an ability to connect a scene partner both authentically and spontaneously in the final performance of the scene.
- Demonstrating a specific sense of stakes and commitment to the character's goals/tasks/intentions and given circumstances in the final performance of the scene.
- Articulating a thorough knowledge of the scene's given circumstances.
- Exhibiting full preparation and polish that is expected in theatrical production when performing final scenes for class.
- Demonstrating an ability to effectively critique peer's work with discipline specific vocabulary.

Recommended Texts

The Actor's Wheel of Connection by Richard Brestoff
Sanford Meisner on Acting by Sanford Meisner and Dennis Longwell
True Acting Tips by Larry Silverberg
The Great Acting Teachers and Their Methods by Richard Brestoff
The Intent to Live by Larry Moss
An Actor Prepares by Stanislavsky
Respect for Acting by Uta Hagen

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Complete assigned reading on time. Take notes and be prepared to discuss the text.
- **Prepare** and memorize all assigned texts.
- Attend performances of *The Humans*, WDA, and *Oedipus El Ray*. (Extra Credit available for Dinner Theatre shows).
- Perform two scenes that demonstrate a thorough application of Learning Goals.
- Come to class ON TIME and ready to work. **Work with positivity and respect.**
- Meet scheduled deadlines and turn in assigned work on time. Late assignments will not be accepted.
- Be prepared to participate in all classroom discussions and exercises.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Due to the nature of this course, attendance at every session is mandatory. You will be allowed **TWO** “unexcused” absences during the semester. **Each absence after TWO lowers your overall grade a whole letter grade. For example, a ‘B’ becomes a ‘C.’ Three tardies are equivalent to one absence.** If there is an emergency or illness, I will review options for making up the work, but you must document the reason for the absences prior to the review. **SAVE YOUR ABSENCES FOR WHEN YOU REALLY NEED IT.**

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All paperwork must be typed, double spaced, and printed.

1. UTEP Show Attendance.....	10%
2. UTEP Show Observational Paper.....	10%
3. Work Responses	10%
4. Class Exercises.....	20%
5. Scene 1.....	20%
6. Scene 2.....	30%

EVALUATION CRITERIA BREAKDOWN

1. UTEP SHOW ATTENDANCE

You must see all productions produced by the Department of Theatre and Dance this spring, including *Humans*, WDA Dance Show, and *Oedipus El Rey*. There are ushering opportunities for every show (ushers see the show for free) and specific discounted nights for every production. You are required to upload a picture of your ticket stub attached to your program to Blackboard the week after the show closes. If you are in the show or working on the show email me in advance to make other arrangements.

A NOTE ON SUBJECT MATTER FOR REQUIRED SHOWS

The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or possibly touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable seeing on stage. If you have concerns about viewing or discussing specific subjects, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations.

2. UTEP Show Observational Paper

A written critical response that observes the acting of one actor in a UTEP department of Theatre and Dance show is required. Responses should relate to course concepts. Papers are due the Tuesday after the show closes. Responses should be uploaded to blackboard by the due date listed. No late work will be accepted unless pre-determined with me.

3. WORK RESPONSES

Over the course of the semester you will turn in two short papers or “Work Responses.” Responses can include questions/discoveries/responses to reading and in-class exercises, or something you noticed when working or watching your classmates work that is related to course concepts. Specific due dates are listed below. Responses should be uploaded to blackboard by the due date listed. No late work will be accepted unless pre-determined with me.

4. CLASS EXERCISES

Includes all work done in class and turned in for class. You will be evaluated on preparation, work ethic, professional standards, and ability to apply course concepts. Active participation is vital to your growth as artists and to your success in this class. You will be expected to come to class on-time and fully prepared, actively engage in class discussions, and give your all to class exercises. Share your voice! We only get better by asking questions and taking risk

5. Scene 1 and 2

Upon the final performance of Scene 1 and 2, an evaluation rubric will be provided and growth over the course of the semester will be taken into consideration, along with application of course concepts. Scene 2 will serve as your final for the class. **For all work done outside of class, if a student misses a scene rehearsal or group meeting with another student or students, that student’s grade drops by 25% for the first missed meeting or rehearsal; and receives a 0 (zero) on the assignment for a second missed meeting or rehearsal.**

CLASSROOM ATTIRE

Please wear clothing that is appropriate for movement. Your clothing must allow you to participate in class fully, with ease and without inhibition. We will be moving in this class.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

No electronic devices allowed in class unless permission is given beforehand. Students using electronic devices in class will be asked to leave and marked absent for the day.

SUBJECT MATTER

The scripts and scenes studied in this course deal with mature subject matters. Consequently, some of the discussion in class will require discussion of adult subject matter and language. If you have concerns, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. All classroom discussions must be held in a respectful and professional matter.

RESPECT

The work in this class may elicit a strong emotional response. In order for this work to be done respectfully, it is crucial that the classroom be a SAFE PLACE. Absolutely no bullying, gossiping, or judgement will be tolerated. Any student who is not contributing to a safe, creative, work environment will be asked to leave class and receive an absence for that class period. *Any student who engages in conduct that is harassment of any University community member, including sexual harassment as defined in Section VI. in the UTEP Handbook may be subject to discipline.*

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any incident of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero on the assignment. This includes cheating and plagiarism. Please visit <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/> for more information.

ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at UTEP provides students with disabilities, accommodations and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Disabled Student Services. For more information, visit <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>.

Grading Scale

A = 90%-100%

B = 80% - 89%

C = 70% - 79%

D = 60% - 69%

F = 0% - 59%

“**A**”—indicates exceedingly high quality work. Masters all assigned work, completes work on time, shows originality and initiative, does more than required, and makes quality contributions in class.

“**B**” —indicates good progress, above the average, masters portions of the work, is alert and shows an interest in the work, completes work on time, and offers good discussion points in class.

“**C**” —indicates a quality of work acceptable at this level. Satisfactorily completes most assigned work under normal conditions and direction, shows interest in work, and completes work on time.

“**D**” —indicates that although most assignments may be completed there is a need for greater effort to meet the expected level of work for this course, student is hesitant to engage in the work or at times shows little interest, and seldom responds in class.

“**F**” —indicates failure to produce an accepted quality of work for this course.

Schedule of Classes & Assignments

(subject to change)

**the reading and assignments are due the day they are listed*

Week	Date	IN CLASS	Assignment(s) Due
1	M 1/21	NO CLASS, MLK DAY	
	W 1/23	Intro to Scene Study—Story Exercises Introduce Mechanical Repetition	HAND OUT: <i>WE DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE</i>
2	M 1/28	Connecting to Other: Meisner Work Continue Mechanical Repetition and Begin Repetition Into Language Read <i>We Don't Live Here</i> with partner	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Larry Silverberg 'Point of View' and 'Reality of Doing' article
	W 1/30	Connecting to Other: Meisner Work with <i>We Don't Live Here Anymore</i> 3 Moment Exercise Pinch and Ouch What do you see in front of you?	<i>WE DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE</i> MEMORIZED Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brestoff article, <i>First Impulses</i> HAND OUT SCENE 1
3	M 2/4	Connecting to Other: Meisner Work with <i>We Don't Live Here Anymore</i> , Continued	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Pinch and Ouch" article
	W 2/6	WE DON'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE ROUND ROBIN PRESENTATION Prep Work with Partner Scene 1	

4	M 2/11	SCENE 1: Connecting to Circumstances Read Thru; Circumstance Presentation Groups 1-3	SCENE 1 REHEARSED with PARTNER Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moss, <i>Given Circumstances</i> article in Blackboard
	W 2/13	NO CLASS—WDA CONFERENCE	ATTEND WDA SHOW OVER WEEKEND
5	M 2/18	SCENE 1: Connecting to Circumstances Read Thru; Circumstance Presentation Groups 4-7 Ball Throw with Scene all Groups	
	W 2/20	SCENE 1: Connecting to Circumstances Improv of circumstances/scene into Scenework, Groups 1-3	SCENE 1 OFF BOOK Have personal “as if” prepared.
6	M 2/25	SCENE 1: Connecting to Circumstances Improv of circumstances/scene into Scenework, Groups 4-7	
	W 2/27	SCENE 1: Connecting to Circumstances- Scene work 1-3	
7	M 3/4	SCENE 1: Connecting to Circumstances- Scene work 4-6	
	W 3/6	SCENE 1: Connecting to Circumstances- Scene work 7 and Exercises	
8	M 3/11	MIDTERM SCENE 1 FINAL PERFORMANCE	Hand out Scene 2 WORK RESPONSE 1 DUE

	W 3/13	OBJECTIVE and DOING EXERCISES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moss, <i>Super Objective and Objective</i> article in Blackboard • Moss, <i>Obstacle and Intention</i> in Blackboard
9	M 3/18	NO CLASS SPRING BREAK	
	W 3/20	NO CLASS SPRING BREAK	
10	M 3/25	Connecting to TEXT- Objective and doing exercises, Repetition Review Prep work with Partner Scene 1	
	W 3/27	SCENE 2: Connecting to Text—Doing and Objective Work Read Thru; Circumstance and Objective Presentation Groups 1-3	SCENE 2 REHEARSED WITH PARTNER SEE <i>HUMANS</i> THIS WEEKEND
11	M 4/1	SCENE 2: Connecting to Doing and Objective Read Thru; Circumstance and Objective Presentation Groups 4-7	
	W 4/3	SCENE 2: Connecting to DOING And OBJECTIVE Scene Improv, Objective Repetition Into Scenework, Groups 1-3	SCENE 2 Fully Memorized WORK RESPONSE 2 DUE Prepare Objective “As If”
12	M 4/8	SCENE 2: Connecting to DOING and OBJECTIVE Scene Improv, Objective repetition into Scenework, Groups 4-7	SCENE 2 MEMORIZED & REHEARSED with PARTNER
	W 4/10	Continue Doing/Objective Work Introduce Subtext/Imagery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moss, <i>Inner Imagery</i> in Blackboard

13	M 4/15	Subtext/Obstacle/Imagery Groups 1-3	
	W 4/17	Subtext/Obstacle/Imagery Groups 4-7	
14	M 4/22	SCENE 2: Raising the Stakes and Connecting to Audience Groups 1-3	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brestoff, 131-136 <p>Prepare “AS IF” with Big Stakes</p>
	W 4/24	SCENE 2: Raising the Stakes and Connecting to Audience Groups 4-7	Hand Out Uta Hagen’s 9 Questions Oedipus Opens
15	M 4/29	Uta Hagen’s 9 Questions; Putting it all Together Scenework groups 1 and 2	Uta Hagan’s Nine Questions Prepared When you work
	W 5/1	SCENE 2: Putting it all Together, UTA HAGEN’s 9 QUESTIONS Groups 3 and 4	Oedipus Closes
16	M 5/6	SCENE 2: Putting it all Together, UTA HAGEN’s 9 QUESTIONS Groups 5-7	
	W 5/7	FINAL SCENE PERFORMANCE	WORK RESPONSE 2 DUE