

The University of Texas at El Paso
THEA 1304
Syllabus

COURSE INFORMATION

THEA 1304: Movement I

CRN: 14077

Term: Fall 2023

Delivery Method: In-person

Meeting Day and Time: Mondays, Wednesdays, 09:00-10:20

Location: Fox Fine Arts, Room M404

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Rebecca Frost Mayer, MFA (she/her); Assistant Professor of Instruction

Written Communication: Send email to rfmayer@utep.edu; allow 48 hours for response and please check your email before asking for verbal confirmation of receipt.

Phone Number: (915)747-5502

Office Location: Prospect Hall, Room 307

Office Hours:

- Face-to-Face: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 by drop-in
- Virtual: Same as above; please log into Microsoft Teams and dial me.
- Office hours also available by appointment; please email to request appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Instruction introduces physical warm-up strategies and exercises designed to improve tension release and free movement. The process of the individual student is emphasized as students begin to develop flexibility, balance and overall efficient body use for the stage.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND UNIVERSITY LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Student Learning Objective	Outcome
Employ breathing techniques that strengthen onstage presence, integrate vocal technique with physical movement, and prepare the student for adjacent and advanced skills such as dance, singing, stage combat, stylized acting (children's theatre, Shakespeare, etc.). Breathing techniques also serve to promote the physical and mental health of the student actor or theatre practitioner.	Critical Thinking Skills Confidence
Draw on knowledge and understanding of the student's specific body as grounded in basic anatomy and physiology. Build skills that facilitate strength of the core muscles (abdominal wall and breathing apparatus) as well flexibility of the full body. By building muscle strength and improving flexibility, the student actor or theatre practitioner expands potential, which promotes versatility and consistency in the professional context.	Critical Thinking Skills Problem solving Confidence
Apply knowledge of basic anatomy and physiology in order to devise personalized strategies for injury prevention. In student and professional theatre, all personnel are expected to implement safety protocols; basic injury prevention skills are necessary for successful work as a stage manager, production manager, stagehand, electrician, costume designer, scenic designer, shop employee, choreographer, fight director, intimacy coordinator, or actor.	Critical Thinking Skills Problem Solving Communication Skills Social Responsibility
Integrate various somatic techniques to rehearse and perform in an actively relaxed state. Active relaxation is essential to the vocal, physical, and mental health of performers and the professionals who work with them.	Critical Thinking Skills Confidence

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Appropriate attire (see dress code)
- Dedicated notebook and pencil (phones, tablets, and computers are **not** allowed in the studio)
- Yoga mat, exercise mat, or heavy blanket (ask instructor for suggestions)
- Water bottle

Students are required to attend two UTEP productions (see below and on Blackboard for details) and should budget for tickets. While it's possible to purchase these tickets at the student rate, it's also possible to receive complimentary tickets by working as an usher or crew member. It's your responsibility to actively seek these opportunities; some information is provided on Blackboard.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Assignments for this course are assessed according to rubrics. You can find these rubrics by clicking on the appropriate assignment link in Blackboard and choosing to “View Rubric” from the button beneath the Points Possible for the assignment.

Students' competence with the above learning objectives will be informally assessed during and immediately following in-class activities.

Each assignment will be graded according to the rubric; when the composite of these grades is totaled, grades will be distributed as follows (total percentage will be rounded to the *nearest* tenth of a percent):

- 89.5% and above: A
- 79.5% - 89.4%: B
- 69.5% - 79.4%: C
- 59.5% - 69.4%: D
- 0 - 59.4%: F

Competence will be formally assessed through written assignments (see below) and through three major in-class projects:

1. **Composition: Wordless Monologue**
2. **Animal Project Monologue**
3. **Actor's Workout**

Grading:

Assignment or activity	Maximum points possible
Attendance	Up to 170 (subject to actual number of class meetings)
Written/online assignments	Up to 100 total (10-20 points per assignment)
Attendance at or participation in UTEP production of <i>posdata: Or, What I wish I Would Have Said</i>	25
In-class discussion of UTEP production of <i>posdata</i> <i>If student chooses not to attend class on the designated discussion day, they may email a five-paragraph reaction paper to the instructor within 24 hours of the discussion. It will only be accepted if the student notifies the instructor of the absence prior to class and will only be worth 15 points.</i>	25
Attendance at or participation in UTEP production of <i>Metamorphoses</i>	25
In-class discussion of UTEP production of <i>Metamorphoses</i> <i>If student chooses not to attend class on the designated discussion day, they may email a five-paragraph reaction</i>	25

<i>paper to the instructor within 24 hours of the discussion. It will only be accepted if the student notifies the instructor of the absence prior to class and will only be worth 15 points.</i>	
Wordless Monologue: In-studio showing <i>Serves as "Mid-Term Exam"</i>	50
Wordless Monologue: Write-up	50
Animal Project Monologue: In-studio showing	50
Animal Project Monologue: Write-up	50
Actor's Workout: In-studio showing <i>Serves as "Final Exam"</i>	50
Actor's Workout: Write-up	50

Extra credit is not offered in this course.

Projected schedule of class activities and assignment due dates:

Schedule is subject to revision at the discretion of the instructor.

Day and date range	In-class activities	In-class showing or discussion dates	Written assignment due dates
M 8/28	Introductions Syllabus Studio expectations		Syllabus acceptance due T 8/29 23:59
W 8/30	Begin skills development Department of Theatre and Dance Town Hall at 10:30 am (following class)		See Blackboard for written assignment due dates
September	Continue skills development		See Blackboard for written assignment due dates
M 10/2	Begin Wordless Monologue		See Blackboard for written assignment due dates
M 10/9		Share draft of Wordless Monologue	
W 10/11		Graded showing of Wordless Monologue	Wordless Monologue write-up due F 10/13 23:59
M 10/23		In-class discussion: <i>posdata</i>	
October - November	Skills development: Animal Project Monologue		See Blackboard for written assignment due dates
M 10/30	Evening: Auditions for <i>Los empeños de una casa</i>		
M 11/13		Share draft of Animal Project Monologue	

W 11/15		Graded showing of Animal Project Monologue	Animal Project Monologue Write-up due F 11/17 23:59
November - December	Actor's workout		See Blackboard for written assignment due dates
M 12/4		In-class discussion: <i>Metamorphoses</i>	
FINAL EXAM: Date and time per UTEP Final Exam calendar		In-class showing of Actor's Workout	Actor's Workout: Write-up due 12/15 23:59. If student submits writeup before 12/13 at 23:59, the calculated grade on the write-up and in-class showing will be increased by ten percent.

Attendance Policy (Revised Effective Fall 2023):

At each class meeting, sign into the attendance log *when you are ready to remain in the studio, have put away electronic devices, and are prepared to work*. If you sign in and then leave, your name will be crossed out and you will have to sign in again.

A line will be drawn after class starts. If you arrive late, sign in below the line.

Sign in for yourself only.

Attendance Grading (Class Meetings):

A point value between -2 and 5 will be assigned for each class meeting.

5 points: Arrive on time (before class starts) and ready to work at the start of class, stay in class throughout (subject to instructor discretion), keep phone put away.

5 points: Use one of two personal days by emailing instructor prior to the start of class.

4 points: Arrive one to ten minutes late, stay in class throughout, keep phone put away.

3 points: Arrive eleven to twenty minutes late, stay in class throughout, keep phone put away.

2 points: Arrive twenty minutes late or more, stay in class throughout, keep phone put away.

1 point: No attendance after both personal days are utilized; email instructor prior to the start of class.

1 point: Attend class but do not observe dress code.

1 point: Asked to leave class at instructor discretion.

-2 points: No attendance; no email to instructor prior to start of class.

Additional personal days may be granted at instructor discretion and may include days when students are required by the University or the Department to attend events or work elsewhere.

Effective Fall 2023, students will only be permitted to attend class virtually if it is included in an accommodation by CASS.

If a student has a CASS accommodation that includes exceptions for attendance, it is still incumbent on the student to communicate with the instructor regarding missed classes. The student cannot assume that the CASS accommodation is automatic permission to disregard the attendance policy. If a student does not attend class and does not send an email, it will still be accounted for as a no-attendance-no-email regardless of CASS accommodations.

Exceptions to Attendance Policy:

Exceptions to the attendance policy are subject to instructor discretion and are not guaranteed. In the event that exceptions are granted, they will be based on student's track record and ability to communicate clearly and ahead of or during unusual circumstances. Remember: You have two personal days, and in order to use them you must email the instructor prior to the start of class.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Some course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about [Microsoft Office 365](#) and follow the instructions.

IMPORTANT: If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP [Help Desk](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

ILLNESS PRECAUTIONS

Please stay home if you have symptoms of a communicable illness. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations.

EXCUSED ABSENCES AND/OR COURSE DROP POLICY

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the [Registrar's Office](#) to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

DEADLINES, LATE WORK, AND ABSENCE POLICY

Requests for leniency on due dates and late work are subject to instructor discretion. In order for a due date extension to be granted, the student must contact the instructor via email *before* the day and time that the assignment is due. Please remember to allow 48 hours for instructor response excluding weekends. In most cases, an assignment submitted late with an extension granted before the due date will be graded according to the rubric and then multiplied by 70 percent; in other words, an extension means that you will be penalized by 30 percent.

If a student has a CASS accommodation that includes leniency on or revision of deadlines, it is still incumbent on the student to communicate with the instructor regarding deadlines and due dates. The student cannot assume that the CASS accommodation is a free pass to disregard deadlines.

MAKE-UP WORK

This course is experiential; your participation cannot be duplicated by doing other assignments. In rare, *documented* cases of emergency, the decision to assign make-up work is at the discretion of the instructor.

INCOMPLETE GRADE POLICY

Incomplete grades may be requested only in exceptional circumstances after you have completed at least half of the course requirements. Talk to me immediately if you believe an incomplete is warranted. If granted, we will establish a contract of work to be completed with deadlines.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at cass@utep.edu, or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as one's own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution \(OSCCR\)](#) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more, please visit [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

GUIDANCE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The use of generative AI tools such as Chat GPT will not be necessary or helpful in this course. Your written assignments will require you to speak candidly and from personal experience, citing specific examples of the work you have done in class.

AI tools can be helpful in assisting with grammar and sentence structure; however, **using AI tools to edit your tone or style is not recommended for the purposes of this course.** Today's technology is not advanced enough to make you sound more like yourself.

Students must cite any borrowed content sources to comply with all applicable citation guidelines, copyright law, and avoid plagiarism. Instances that violate these guidelines will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

COURSE RESOURCES: Where you can go for assistance

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support:

Technology Resources

- [Help Desk](#): Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.

Academic Resources

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- [Math Tutoring Center \(MaRCS\)](#): Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- [History Tutoring Center \(HTC\)](#): Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.

- [RefWorks](#): A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.
- [The Miner Learning Center](#): Join peer-led study sessions in person or online to review content and discover study strategies in core curriculum courses.
- [UTEP Edge](#): UTEP's cross-campus framework for student success and empowerment – develops students' assets through high-impact experiences made possible by the expertise and dedication of faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners.

Individual Resources

- [Student Success Help Desk \(SSHD\)](#): Students experiencing challenges or obstacles to academic success including registration, financial, food, housing, and transportation resources may submit a ticket request assistance to studentsuccess@utep.edu
- [Military Student Success Center](#): Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#): Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#): Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.
- [UTEP Food Pantry](#): Non-perishable food items are available to students who are currently enrolled in classes. Bring a Miner Gold Card to Memorial Gym, Room 105, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

COURSE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Dress Code:

Acceptable: Athletic, dance, or athleisure attire.

Unacceptable: Jeans, dress pants, dresses, skirts. Skirts with shorts attached underneath may be allowed but are not recommended as the excess fabric creates bulk and a potential safety hazard.

Wear clean, comfortable clothes that allow for movement and stretching.

Avoid bulky clothing that could cause trip hazards or impede movement.

No hate speech.

Avoid printed text and pictures.

Bare feet will be required for some activities. Prepare to wear athletic or dance shoes at other times. Working in socks alone will rarely be permitted.

Please no large accessories such as hats or jewelry. Instructor reserves the right to ask students to remove accessories.

Instructor reserves the right to ask students to adjust their hair if it impedes movement or causes a safety hazard.

Large nails and piercings may cause safety hazards. Instructor reserves the right to ask students to remove piercings or shorten nails.

Hygiene and Fragrance-Free Policy:

Please shower or bathe and brush your teeth within twelve hours of arriving at class.

Use unscented deodorants, lotions, and hair products.

Do not wear fragrances, perfumes, colognes to class. Instructor reserves the right to ask students to leave class if they are wearing fragrances.

Wear clean clothes to each class.

Personal Boundaries and Consent - Rights and Responsibilities:

Activities and assignments may include physical contact with other class members. You will be given adequate time and space during instruction to discuss your boundaries with partners and grant consent or decline to consent each time before working together. You will not be penalized for asking for alternative instructions, activities, or partners.

Theatre is a physically, intellectually, and emotionally demanding art form. If you need to take a moment to look out for yourself or be alone, you may do so in the studio or briefly step out.

Studio Policies:

Bring a water bottle. Please no other beverages.

Phones are not allowed in the studio during instructional time. Turn smartwatches to airplane mode. A pencil and paper or notebook are required at each class. Students will not be permitted to use a phone, tablet, or computer in place of pencil and paper. When working with text, hard copies of the text are required. Students will not be permitted to use a phone, tablet, or computer in place of hard copy of text.

Daily tasks and assignments are subject to change at instructor discretion.

A note on subject matter (Department of Theatre and Dance):

The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or possibly touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable discussing. If you have concerns about viewing or discussing specific subjects, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. I expect all discussions—including any that may occur outside of class—to be conducted in a respectful and professional matter.

Syllabus Acceptance:

This syllabus resides on Blackboard. In order to continue participation in this course, you must complete the **Syllabus Acceptance** assignment on Blackboard by the due date. This assignment includes a digital signature indicating that you have asked the *instructor* any questions you may have about the course and your acceptance of the terms of this syllabus.

Failure to complete the Syllabus Acceptance assignment by the due date may result in dismissal from the course.