

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
DRAM 2010
INTRODUCTION TO ACTING (Non-Majors)

Instructor: Norman Ferguson
Office: Fine Arts, 356
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Office Hours: TBD

Textbook: *Acting One* by Robert Cohen (required)
Various plays as decided on by instructor.
Various handouts provided by instructor.

Attendance:

Attendance in class is mandatory. Your absence will negatively impact the learning process of the group as a whole. Therefore, any unexcused absences will negatively impact your grade. **Three unexcused absences will lower your final grade by one full letter. Three tardies will count as an unexcused absence.** Never miss a class when a performance assignment is due; you will receive a “zero” for that assignment and will not be allowed to make it up. Absences for religious holidays are excused, but must be cleared in advance.

Academic Honesty Policy:

Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University of Georgia’s Academic Honesty Policy. The policy can be found at www.uga.edu/~vpaa/polproc/ahpol/main.html

Appropriate attire, conduct:

Please come to class in clothes that you are comfortable moving in. Flip-flops, high heels/platforms, and any type of sandal are not considered appropriate footwear. Students are expected to turn their cell phones off or to a silent

mode at the beginning of class, as well. Inappropriate physical contact, comments or conduct will not be tolerated.

Assignments:

Presentation of two “open, contentless” scenes, one with accompanying analysis. Performance of two scripted scenes with accompanying analysis. Reading of text and plays as assigned. Two quizzes and a final exam. Completion of an Actor’s Journal (2 entries per week, minimum) and one essay relating to a University Theatre production. All written work for the class, with the exception of the journal, must be typed. **No late work will be accepted.**

General:

Plays written for the theatre sometimes contain strong language that might be considered offensive to some: profanities, violence, sexual terms or religious references may be included. Please see me privately as soon as possible if this is a problem for you. Should you need to reserve rehearsal space in the building, please see Steven in the Fine Arts Office.

1. Course Description:

An introduction to acting, this course will emphasize developing the actor’s instrument, introducing the student to the fundamentals of acting and

making the student a more informed observer of the acting experience. The course will also introduce the student to the fundamental rehearsal process culminating in a final performed scene.

2. Course Objectives:

To develop the student's observational skills towards life, its experiences towards artistic sensibility and towards becoming a more informed audience member. To introduce the student to the basic imaginative, physical and vocal skills necessary for acting. To develop in the student a beginning rehearsal approach to scripted scenes. To develop in the student an understanding of the cooperative nature of acting.

3. Units

A. The Actor's Instrument

1. Relaxation
2. Sensory awareness
3. Concentration
4. Imagination

B. Actor's Process

1. Goals
2. Obstacles
3. Tactics
4. Physical score
5. Partner Awareness

C. Beginning Text Analysis

1. Given circumstances
2. Dramatic Action
 - a. units
 - b. beats
 - c. scoring
 - d. choices, objectives, activities, inner monologue, etc.
 - e. super-objective
3. Character analysis
 - a. biography
 - b. research
 - c. observation

d. intrinsic information

e. extrinsic input

D. Rehearsal Process

1. Discipline
2. Homework
3. Preparation
4. Moment to moment playing
5. Animal, PG, Body Centers, etc.

E. Actor critique skills

1. University Productions
2. Classroom performances
3. Off-campus productions

4. Methodology:

- A. Performance of contentless (open/improvised) and scripted scenes
- B. Written and verbal critiques of performances
- C. Participation in developmental exercises
- D. Voice and body work
- E. Testing on text and playscripts
- F. Actor's journal

5. Competencies:

- A. Ability to define fundamental acting terms and principles
- B. Ability to apply the fundamental acting process to performance
- C. Ability to demonstrate a structured rehearsal process
- D. Ability to identify and utilize imaginative and unique choices in performance

Grading criteria:

*** A- Excellent.** Always well-prepared; extensive outside preparation. Actively pursues improvement and highly self-motivated. Student makes significant growth in skills and knowledge during semester. Active, positive contributor to class. Punctual, always present.

*** B- Good to Excellent.** Always prepared; notable outside preparations. Pursues improvement and is self motivated. Notable growth in skills and knowledge during semester. Positive contributor to class. Punctual, always present.

*** C- Acceptable to Good.** Generally prepared; acceptable outside preparation. Interested in improvement and often self-motivated. Shows some growth in skills and knowledge during semester. Often contributes to class. Punctual, always present.

*** D-Unacceptable to Acceptable.** Often not prepared; shows little outside preparation. Shows little interest in improvement and is rarely self-motivated. Very little skill and knowledge growth during semester. Seldom contributes to class and has negative attitude. Sometimes late; some absences.

*** F- Largely unacceptable.** Rarely prepared and lacks adequate outside preparation. Virtually no interest in self-improvement and not motivated. Virtually no growth in skills and knowledge. Does not contribute to class; negative attitude. Not punctual; several absences.

Grading Breakdown:

Open (improvised) scene 1: 5pts.
Open scene 2 w/analysis: 10pts.
Actor's journal: 10pts.
Scripted Scene 1 w/analysis: 10pts.
Scripted Scene 2 w/analysis: 15 pts.
Quiz 1: 5pts
Quiz 2: 5 pts.
Response paper: 10pts.

Participation, attendance, etc.: 25pts.
Final exam: 5pts.

Total: 100pts.

THIS SYLLABUS IS A GENERAL PLAN. ANY DEVIATIONS FROM THIS PLAN WILL BE ANNOUNCED TO THE CLASS IN A TIMELY MANNER.

Week 1: Introduction;
Relaxation, awareness, concentration
Week 2: Open Scenes 1;
Relaxation, awareness, concentration
Week 3: G;
Text Analysis
Week 4: O;
Text Analysis
Week 5: T;

Text Analysis

Week 6:

E;
Text Analysis

Week 7:

Open Scenes 2

Week 8:

Quiz 1;
Character Analysis

Week 9:

Character Analysis;
Journals due

Week 10: SPRING BREAK

Week 11

Scripted Scenes 1;
Rehearsal Process

Week 12

Rehearsal Process

Week 13

Quiz 2;
Rehearsal Process

Week 14

Scripted Scenes 2

Week 15

Scripted Scenes 2
Response Papers due;

Week 16

Scripted Scenes 2;
Journals due

Week 17

Last Week of Class
Final Exam