

"We respond to a drama to that extent to which it corresponds to our dreamlife."
-David Mamet

DRAM 2010: Introduction to Acting

Spring, 2006, Section 97-940/ 37-917

MWF: 8 – 8:50 a.m. FAB 115

MWF: 12:20 – 1:10 p.m. FAB 115

Instructor: David Limbach

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Phone: 706-476-3258

Office Hours: FAB 356, MWF 11 a.m. – noon

Course Description:

An introduction to acting, this course will serve as an introduction to the development of the actor's instrument and to the fundamentals of acting, while 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 performances of selected scenes.

Course Objectives:

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

Required Texts & Materials:

All My Sons by Arthur Miller

Curse of the Starving Class by Sam Shepard

Fifth of July by Lanford Wilson

One composition notebook

Suggested Texts:

Acting One by Robert Cohen (Fourth Edition)

A Practical Handbook for the Actor by Bruder, Cohn, Olnek...

Major Assignments:

1. Presentation of several improvised scenes: Open, content-less, silent, etc.
2. Presentation of two scripted scenes and accompanying character analysis.
3. Participation in class exercises, discussions, performance assignments and group work.
4. Reading of texts and plays as assigned.

5. One written exam (mid-term) and one final performance (final exam).
6. Attendance and analysis of two productions of the UGA Department of Theatre and Film Studies: *Polaroid Stories* (March 23-25, 29- April 1, 2) and *King Lear* (April 20-22, 25-30).
7. Extra credit can be given. Talk to me outside of class for more information.

General Notes:

1. Acting is a discipline!
2. NEVER miss class when a performance assignment is due; you will receive a "zero" for that assignment and will not be allowed to make it up.
3. Make up work is allowed only under extraordinary circumstances and through the student's initiative.
4. All assigned written work must be typed, or it will not be accepted.
5. Do not miss rehearsals with your partner; be respectful of each other's time. Be available, and be prepared.
6. Wear clothing suitable for movement and floor work. You will not be allowed to participate and will receive a zero if not dressed suitably for work. (*Make a trip to Old Navy or target if you need sweatpants.*)
7. Assignments are due at the beginning of class; otherwise they are late and will lose one full letter grade.
8. Extra credit is given for acting in scenes of directing students; however, this is not considered a substitute for class assignments.
9. You may bring a water bottle to class. ALL OTHER FOODS AND DRINKS ARE PROHIBITED WITHIN THE CLASSROOM!!
10. The nature of acting and this course requires that physical contact occur from time to time with fellow students. On occasion I may have to adjust parts of your body for proper alignment and to release tension. Please see me privately as soon as possible if this presents a problem.
11. Plays written for the theatre sometimes contain strong language that might be considered offensive to some: Profanities, violence, sexual terms or references to religious deities. Please see me privately as soon as possible if this is a problem for you.
12. If you have a disability or physical injury that hinders you from participating in class activities, please see me privately so we can make arrangements to accommodate you.
13. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Each student is responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.
14. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. If there are changes in the course, a revised copy may follow.

Grading Criteria:

A--Excellent: Student is always well prepared, showing extensive outside preparation; actively pursues improvement and highly self motivated. Shows great growth in the skills learned from the class and research done outside. Active contributor to the class. Punctual, always present.

B--Good to excellent: Always prepared for class. Notable improvement in skills and knowledge of subject. Pursues improvement and is self motivated. Positive contributor to class. Punctual, always present.

C--Acceptable to good: Mostly prepared; acceptable outside preparation. Interested in improvement and often self motivated. Punctual, always present.

D--Unacceptable to acceptable: Often not prepared; shows little outside preparation. Shows little interest in improvement and is rarely self motivated.

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:

*In-Class assignments	10%
*Prepared scripted scene 1	10%
*Prepared scripted scene 2	10%
Mid-term exam	15%
Participation	30%
Performance Responses	5%
*Final exam (scene 3)	20%

* *Scenes will be graded on an A-F; plus or minus, according to the following criteria:*

- 1. Level of preparation and rehearsal*
- 2. Ability to determine and play a Goal/Intention/Objective*
- 3. Ability to work off, connect and cooperate with scene partner*
- 4. Ability to develop clean and specific physical "score"*
- 5. Use of body*
- 6. Use of voice*
- 7. Ability to understand and utilize "given circumstances"*
- 8. Overall growth and improvement*

Regardless of what response the class gives (or your friends give), the instructor is solely responsible for assigning your grade, and using the above criteria will assess your work and grad accordingly. Your own subjective feelings about your performance are not germane to the grade you will receive from the instructor.

Class Participation:

Students will be awarded a letter grade based on their attendance, attitude in class, oral participation, punctuality, preparation, commitment to class exercises, positive contributions and your ability to work with the ensemble.