

Drama 3500: Foundations of Acting (for majors)    Fall 2007    T, TH 11:00 – 1:45

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Phone: 542-4235

Office: 305 Fine Arts

Office Hours: MW 1:30 – 3:00

Course Objectives:

1. To introduce students to the fundamental skills and theories of acting through exploratory exercises, demonstrations, and observations.
2. To assist students in developing an actor's basic tools of imagination, physical expression and creativity.
3. To explore the basic philosophy and practice of realistic acting.
4. To develop the student's skills in relaxation, adaptation, cooperation, concentration, characterization, and improvisation.
5. To learn to critically analyze and observe the basic elements of dramatic actions, objectives, obstacles and tactics in performance and readings.
6. To teach students to analyze and articulate constructive criticism of self and others.
7. To reinforce theories and techniques through exercises, performance assignments, attending performances, and supporting a constructive and supportive classroom environment.

Required Text:

McGraw and Clark. **Acting is Believing**. 8th edition

Required Play scripts:

**Death of a Salesman**, Arthur Miller

**A Streetcar Named Desire**, Tennessee Williams

**A Raisin in the Sun**, Lorraine Hansberry

**Topdog/Underdog**, Suzi Lori Parks

**How I Learned to Drive**, Paula Vogel

**Fences**, August Wilson

**You Can't Take It With You**, Kaufmann & Hart

Grading:

Open Scene 1	15 points
Open Scene 1 Analysis	15 points
Open Scene 2	15 points
Open Scene 2 Analysis	15 points
Monologue	15 points
Monologue Analysis	15 points
Production Critiques	30 points (3 @ 10 points each)
Final Written exam	30 points
Quizzes and 3 lines	25 points



**miss a day when you are to present or rehearse a scene or exercise you will receive a 50% deduction in the final grade for the scene.**

Dress:

This class requires freedom of movement, unrestricted breathing and often requires that students lie on the floor for relaxation exercises. Students must dress appropriately for such activity. It would be best if students dressed as if going for a workout or gym class and it is best to dress in layers. Students should wear loose fitting clothing, flexible shoes, and casual clothing that can get dusty. Students should not wear skirts, hats, loose jewelry, hard soled shoes or clothing that cannot get dirty or would restrict movement. Gum chewing and eating in class is not allowed. Bring a water bottle.

Major Assignments:

1. Presentation of two open scenes and one monologue
2. One written final exam
3. Participation in class exercises, discussions, performance assignments and group work.
4. Attendance at all three University Theatre Productions this semester and three short one page performance evaluations - one for each production.
5. Three written character analyses.
6. Read text and plays as assigned. Periodic quizzes over material.

Scenes and Analyses:

Over the course of the semester you will present two scenes and one monologue. Your grade on the performances will be based on your progress and rehearsal as well as the final presentation. I will give you a written critique of your work on the written analysis that you will hand on the day of the final presentation. The written analysis will be different for each event and I will give you more exact notes at a later date. **If you miss a day when you are to present a scene or exercise you will receive a 50% deduction in the final grade for the scene.**

Production Critiques:

You will write three short critiques (one for each major department production) of the work of a particular performer. These critiques must be typed and handed in on time. For each day late I receive the critique you will lose a letter grade on the assignment.

Production and dates are:

Balm in Gilead Sept 21 – 22, 24, 27 – 30 and Oct 1 Cellar Theatre

The Exonerated Oct 11 – 13, 15 S.S. Chapel

The Man Who Came to Dinner Nov 9 – 11, 15 – 19 Fine Arts

Quizzes:

I will give you periodic, unannounced quizzes covering the reading of the text and plays scripts throughout the semester

Final:

You will have a written final, largely essay covering the class lecture, text and play scripts demonstrating your knowledge of the material and your ability to synthesize academic understanding and practical application.

**Prepared Class Exercises:**

Regularly you will have a brief exercise to prepare for presentation at the next class period. These are brief exercises but will require thought and rehearsal time. Make sure you call me if you miss class so you know what to do.

**Syllabus:** This may be altered at any moment in time. We need to progress at the speed of the class, depending on its size and make-up. I will always give you notice when changes occur.

TH	8/17	Greetings	
T	8/22	Fun and Games	
TH	8/24	Physical Awareness	Read Chpt 1 and 4
T	8/29	Vocal Awareness	
TH	8/31	Action	Read Chpt 2
T	9/5	Objectives	Read Chpt 3
TH	9/7	Open Scene Work	Read Chpt 9
T	9/12	Script Analysis	Read Death of a Salesman
TH	9/14	Open Scene One	First Presentation
T	9/19	Work Open Scenes	
TH	9/21	Work Open Scenes	
T	9/26	Final Open Scene 1 Presentation	<b>Open Scene 1 Analysis Due</b> Read Streetcar Named Desire
TH	9/28	Uta Hagan	Present Minute of Life Read Raisin in the Sun
T	10/3	Repetition	Read Chpt 5 through p. 86 & Chpt 7
TH	10/5	Repetition	<b>Gilead Critique Due</b> Read You Can't Take It
T	10/10	Externals	Read Chpt 6
TH	10/12	Externals Presentations	Read Topdog/Underdog

T	10/17	Comedy Improv	<b>Exonerated Critique Due</b>
TH	10/19	Character Work	Read How I Learned to Drive Monologue Selection Due
T	10/24	Alter Ego Day	
TH	10/26	Fall Break	
T	10/31	2nd Scene	1 <sup>st</sup> Presentation Read Fences
TH	11/2	Work 2 <sup>nd</sup> Scene	
T	11/7	Work 2 <sup>nd</sup> Scene	
TH	11/9	Work 2 <sup>nd</sup> Scene	
T	11/14	Final 2 <sup>nd</sup> Scene	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Scene Analysis Due</b>
TH	11/16	Auditions	Read Chpt 13
T	11/21	Monologues Presented	<b>Dinner Critique Due</b>
TH	11/23	Thanksgiving	
T	11/28	Work Monologues	
TH	11/30	Work Monologues	
T	12/5	Final Monologue Presentation	<b>Monologue Analysis Due</b>

Final: Tuesday, Dec 12<sup>th</sup> 12:00 – 3:00