

Drama 3500: Foundations of Acting (for majors) Fall 2009 MWF 9:05 – 11:00

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Phone: 542-4235 Office: 305 Fine Arts

Office Hours: MWF 11:00 – 12:00

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 Texts:

McGraw and Clark. **Acting is Believing**. 9th edition

**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

**Life and Times of Tulsa Lovechild**, Greg Owens

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	30 points
Prepared Class Exercises, Class participation, attitude, And commitment	<u>20 points</u> 200 points

180 – 200 points = A

160 – 179 points = B

140 – 159 points = C

120 – 139 points = D

below 120 points = F

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

B – Good to excellent. Always prepared; notable outside preparation. Pursues improvement and 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 – (Failing for majors) 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.

#### Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy:

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty” which can be found at [www.uga.edu/ovpi](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi). Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. Students are expected to adhere to the University Honor Code and Honesty Policy.

#### Attendance:

This is a studio class so of course attendance is mandatory. There are no excused absences. You have **THREE ABSENCES** to do with what you will. ( I would save them for illness if I were you.) **After THREE absences, your grade drops a letter grade for each absence. Also you must be here on time. For every three times that you are late you will receive one absence.** If a student misses a class, the student is to call the instructor to obtain any handouts or missed notes. It is inappropriate to approach the instructor directly before a class begins and ask. “What did I miss?” You will not be able to prepare for class that quickly. **If you 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 four University Theatre Productions this semester and four 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. I do not accept these via email!

Production and dates are:

“Our Lady of 121<sup>st</sup> Street”: Sept 24- 25, 29 - 30 and Oct 1 – 2 @ 8:00 & Sept 27, Oct 4 @ 2:30, Cellar Theatre

“Grapes of Wrath”: Oct 13 - 18 @ 8:00 & Oct 18 @ 2:30, Sceney Stoval Theatre

“Eurydice”: Nov 5-6, 10 -13 @ 8:00 & Nov 8 & 15 @ 2:30, Cellar Theatre

### 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.

M	8/17	Greetings	
W	8/19	Fun and Games	
F	8/21	The Creative State	Read Chpt 1 and 2
M	8/24	Vocal and Physical Awareness	
W	8/26	Physical Actions	Read Chpt 3
F	8/28	Simple Objectives	Read Chpt 4
M	8/31		
W	9/2	Objectives	
F	9/4	Open Scene Work	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Open scene presentation</b>
M	9/7	Work Open Scene	
W	9/9	Work Open Scene	
F	9/11	Work Open Scene	
M	9/14	Final Open Scene Presentation	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Open Scene Analysis Due</b>
W	9/16	Powers of Observation	Read Death of a Salesman
F	9/18	Circles of Attention	Read Chpt 5 Read Chpt 6
M	9/21	Meisner and the Repeat	Read Streetcar Named Desire
W	9/23	Meisner and the Repeat	
F	9/25	Meisner and Repeat	
M	9/28	Subconscious	Read Chpt 7
W	9/30	Uta Hagen exercises	
F	10/2	Uta Hagen Exercises	

M	10/5	Creating a Character	<b>Our Lady Critique Due</b> Read Chpt 8
W	10/7	Scoring a Role	Read Raisin in the Sun
F	10/9	Super Objective	Read Chpt 9
M	10/12	Catch Up	Read You Can't Take It
W	10/14	Comedy Improv	
F	10/16	Comedy Improv	
M	10/19	Discussion	<b>Grapes Critique Due</b> Read TopDog/Underdog
W	10/21	Subtext	Read Chpt 10
F	10/23	Improv	
M	10/26	TBA	Read How I Learned to Drive
W	10/28	Alter Ego Day	
F	10/30	Fall Break	
M	11/2	Auditions	Read Chapter 13
W	11/4	Rehearsing	Read Chpt 11 and 12
F	11/6	Rehearsal Time	
M	11/9	Rehearsal Time	Read Life and Times of Tulsa
W	11/11	2 <sup>nd</sup> Open Scene Presentation	
F	11/13	Work 2 <sup>nd</sup> Open Scene	
M	11/16	Work 2 <sup>nd</sup> Open Scene	<b>Eurydice Critique Due</b>
W	11/18	Work 2 <sup>nd</sup> Open Scene	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Open Scene Analysis Due</b>
F	11/20	2 <sup>nd</sup> Open Scene Final Presentation	Read Fences
M – F	11/23 – 11/27	Thanksgiving Break	
M	11/30	1 <sup>st</sup> Monologue Presentation	
W	12/2	Work Monologues	
F	12/4	Work Monologues	
M	12/7	Work Monologues	
T	12/8	Final Monologue Presentation	<b>Monologue Analysis Due</b>

Final: Monday, Dec 14<sup>th</sup> @ 8 - 11