

THEATRE 131: Introduction to Acting

University of South Dakota, Department of Theatre

Fall 2015

Monday & Wednesday -12:30pm – 1:50pm
UFA 183 (Arena Theatre)

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Office Hours: M, W, 2:00pm – 4:00pm & by Appt.

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Theatre Department's Statement of Mission:

The Department of Theatre prepares the student for a career in the theatre and encourages personal and creative growth. We do this by providing a comprehensive, liberal arts education, supplemented by intensive craft training, in which classroom study and practical experience are of equal and complementary value. The department promotes excellence in education, research, and service; fosters student engagement and leadership; develops creative and pragmatic problem-solving skills; explores new questions, techniques, and practices in the theatre; and inspires students to become life-long learners who contribute to their respective discipline and profession while enhancing the cultural lives of the university and their community.

Course Description:

This is a beginning level acting course. We will therefore be working on fundamental aspects of the art and craft of acting. We will spend roughly half of the semester in intensive exercise work devoted to developing emotional availability and authenticity, as well as physical and vocal freedom and connection. In the second half of the semester we will work on applying the above, along with rigorous analytical specificity, to work on a scene.

Course Outcome Objectives:

- An increase in the actor's ability to usefully and clearly analyze text
- An increase in the actor's emotional availability and authenticity
- An increase in the actor's physical freedom and access
- An increase in the actor's vocal freedom and access
- A comprehension of the basic Stanislavsky-based approach to acting in realism
- The development of a familiarity with contemporary dramatic literature

Required Text:

There are no required textbooks for this course.

Grades:

These will be the graded items.

1. Personal object show and tell – 10pts
2. Basic Object Exercise – 10pts
3. Affective Memory Exercise (Stepping Stones) – 10pts
4. Private Moment – 10pts
5. Scene Analysis (handed in) – 20pts
6. In-class Rehearsal #1 – 5pts
7. In-class Rehearsal #2 – 5pts
8. Final Performance – 20pts
9. Class Participation – 10pts

90-100% = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 65-69% = D; <65% = F

*** Work that is handed in or performed late will be reduced by 10% per day late.**

Schedule:

We will progress in the order of the graded items listed above. Our progression through these exercises and the final scene will be flexible. Exactly what we do class-to-class will depend on our rate of progress through these items. The attached schedule is a general outline and is subject to change. Most classes will begin with a group warm-up and/or group exercise.

Clothing:

This class is partially movement based. You will need to make sure that you are in clothing that allows you to move freely. Please note that we will also be doing movements that will take place on the floor or potentially up higher than others in the room, this means that you should not wear skirts or dresses to class. If you are not properly clothed for the class, you will be asked to leave and counted absent for the day.

A Note on Attendance:

Due to the performance/laboratory based nature of this class it is vitally important that you attend class regularly. You are allowed 1 unexcused absence without penalty. **Each unexcused absence after 1 will result in the loss of 2 percentage points from your final grade.** Excused absences include official university events (such as a trip you undertake as a member of a university sports team), death in the family, and serious illness (such illnesses must be documented with a note or letter from a healthcare professional). If you miss classes, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to learn the material you missed. It is not my responsibility to seek you out, or to make sure you are caught up on material that you have missed.

Students with Special Needs:

Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester. For information contact:

Ernetta L. Fox, Director Disability Services
Room 119
Service Center
605-677-6389
<http://www.usd.edu/ds>
dservices@usd.edu

Academic Honesty:

Very important: students are expected to do their own work. Though it is encouraged to research topics before writing papers, the student should give credit to those sources. Never use a passage from a published or unpublished article or web page within your paper without stating where the source of that information originated. Students who attempt to pass someone else's work as their own or attempt to benefit scholastically through illicit means will be in violation of academic honesty. Below is the USD official policy on academic dishonesty:

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. At the discretion of the instructor, a student caught engaging in any form of academic dishonesty may be:

- a. Given a zero for that assignment.*
- b. Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.*
- c. Assigned a reduced grade for the course.*
- d. Dropped from the course.*
- e. Fail the course.*

Freedom in learning:

Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study in which they are enrolled. Under Board of Regents and university policy, student academic performance shall be evaluated solely on an academic basis and students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study. Students who believe that an academic evaluation is unrelated to academic standards but is related instead to judgment of their personal opinion or conduct should contact the dean of the college which offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

Schedule Outline:

Week 1: Introductions & Personal Object Show and Tell

Week 2: Personal object Show And Tell cont.

Week 3: Basic Object Exercise

Week 4: Affective Memory Exercise (Stepping Stones)

Week 5: Affective Memory Exercise (Stepping Stones) cont.

Week 6: Private Moments

Week 7: Private Moments cont.

Week 8: Script Analysis Lecture & Assign Scenes and Partners

Week 9: Open Scenes & In-Class Rehearsals #1

Week 10: In-Class Rehearsals #1 cont.

Week 11: In-Class Rehearsals #1 cont.

Week 12: In-Class Rehearsals #1 cont.

Week 13: In-Class Rehearsals #2

Week 14: In-Class Rehearsals #2 cont.

Week 15: In-Class Rehearsals #2 cont.

Week 16: In-Class Rehearsals #2 cont.

FINAL EXAM – MONDAY DEC. 14th @ 12:30pm – 2:30 in ARENA THEATRE