

**MASTERY DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR
THE6905
University of Florida Fall 2023**

Time: TBD and Arranged with Instructors

Hybrid: Zoom and Room TBA

Credits: 1

Instructors: Susan Schuld, Tim Altmeyer, Jashodhara Sen

Office Hours: by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Mastery is defined as “comprehensive knowledge in a subject.” Artistic mastery is demonstrated not only in the work of the artist, but in the artist’s ability to critically think about their work and clearly communicate those thoughts and those related to the details of their artistic process. This course will focus on honing the skills of a Master of Fine Arts in Acting: critical thinking, discipline in preparation for and execution of performance work, and cogent communication about the work and the discipline itself. Through a series of focused assignments, the student will bolster their artistic skill set in terms of their abilities to critically think about the disciplines of theatre and acting, clearly communicate their thinking (oral and written) using the prescribed vocabulary of the actor and/or theatrician, and effectively prepare and execute work (analytical and artistic) by reasonable deadlines—all essential strengths of the master scholar-actor.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student will exhibit greater confidence and ownership of their budding mastery in theatre and acting through achieving the following outcomes:

- The student will demonstrate critical thinking about theatre and allied disciplines, prescribed acting craft concepts and techniques, and their own acting process through clear, focused, detailed communication (oral and written).
- The student will competently exercise discipline-specific vocabulary in discussions about theatre and the acting craft.
- The student will competently apply craft-specific concepts and techniques in performance work.
- The student will develop time-management practices to deliver well-written assignments (using outlines and thoughtful drafting) and fully realized performance projects (using memorization techniques and focused rehearsal) by appropriate (often professional-grade) deadlines.

COURSE ADMINISTRATION

Given instructor and student constraints, the course will be delivered in *hybrid* format with a mix of both in-person and virtual meetings throughout the semester. In the event of Zoom meetings, the instructor(s) will share a meeting link with the student prior to the scheduled meeting time.

TEXTBOOK

There are no required textbooks; however, free readings and viewings will be assigned by the instructors as needed.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1	LAUNCH
WEEKS 2-4	SEN
WEEKS 5-6	ALTMAYER
WEEKS 7-8	SCHULD
WEEKS 9-10	ALTMAYER
WEEKS 11-12	SCHULD
WEEKS 13-14	ALTMAYER/SCHULD
WEEK 15-16	LANDING

GRADING BREAKDOWN

Performance	50%
Written Work/Discussions	50%
Total	100%

EXPECTATIONS REGARDING EFFORT

One goes to a good school to get a good education and, in turn, to get a leg up in her profession. The professional workplace demands disciplined work and behavior. Otherwise, you get fired and create a very bad reputation for yourself. Bad reputations get around. A similar work ethic is required of you in this class, as an advanced-level college student, a responsible citizen and future professional.

Assignments will be completed in a timely, thorough fashion. They will meet a level of sophistication fitting for advanced students of the theatre.

Criteria by which performance work will be assessed:

- Energy & Commitment
- Authority (including memorization)
- Devotion to Course Concepts
- Openness to Exploration

Criteria by which written work will be assessed:

- Content (presentation, support, detail, development, and evidence of course concept knowledge)
- Quality of Writing (cleanliness, clarity, grammar, spelling, syntax, and punctuation)

Also: Attendance is mandatory. To learn to act, you must act. To act, you must be here. Your learning comes in the shared experience. Your participation has as much to do with others' growth as your own. Your absence is costly to everyone. The professional theatre does not make allowances for illness. Actors do not have the luxury of getting sick. Exercise. Eat healthfully. Drink lots of water. Don't smoke. Your body and your breath are your greatest tools as an actor. Protect them. Please note: Attendance is not the same as participation. You are expected to be not only physically present, but mentally. You will be expected to demonstrate your understanding of class concepts by the comments and criticisms you make. Speak thoughtfully and often.

Criteria by which participation will be assessed:

- Frequency of Participation
- Quality of Comments
- Listening Skills
- Behavior

ATTENDANCE POLICY

To create a disciplined environment that simulates the demands of the actor's workplace, we enforce an attendance policy that allows little room for you to exert any personal control over the business of being an actor. Students are expected to attend class on time at every scheduled meeting. Students are only allowed "excused" absences without penalty.

Each "unexcused" absence will result in a penalty of a half a letter grade (5%) from the final grade.

To be considered an "excused" absence, it must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation:

- Illness. A doctor's note must be on official letterhead with name, address, phone number, and signature, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted and providing a proposed return-to-class date. Even if a student self-tests positive for COVID, they should get a doctor's note to authenticate the excused absence.
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions (e.g., hurricane-related events)
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition, or debate
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

Religious observances do not require documentation. To help organize accommodations, students must inform the instructors by the end of the first week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

In the same way, tardiness (lateness) will also be penalized. It has no place in rehearsal, at auditions, at your early morning call on set for a shoot or at half-hour in the theatre, and it has no place in the classroom.

Each late show will result in a 2%-point deduction from your final score.

Simply put, do the math, practice healthful habits, show up for class, and develop a discipline that will keep you working in the profession.

POLICIES REGARDING MAKE-UP WORK AND LATE WORK

Absences do not make one exempt from class obligations. Work must be made up in a timely fashion, at the discretion of the instructors, typically in the week follow the student's return to class. Unexcused late work will be penalized with penalties increasing relative to lateness; anything past deadline is at least 1 day late:

<u>Days</u>	<u>Penalty</u>
1	10 points
2	25 points
3+	40 points

EMAIL POLICY

The recommended method of communication outside of scheduled class time is email. Electronic mail or "email" is considered an official method for communication because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, cost effective and environmentally aware manner. Students are expected to check their official UF email on a frequent and consistent basis in order to remain informed of university-related communications. The university recommends checking email daily. Students are responsible for the consequences of not reading, in a timely fashion, university-related communications sent to their official student email account. This policy ensures that all students have access to this important form of communication. It ensures students can be reached through a standardized channel by faculty and other staff of the university as needed.

GRADING SCALE

Letter Grade	% Equivalency	GPA Equivalency
A	100-94	4.0
A-	93-90	3.67
B+	89-87	3.33
B	86-84	3.00
B-	83-80	2.67
C+	79-77	2.33
C	76-74	2.00
C- *	73-70	1.67
D+	69-67	1.33
D	66-64	1.00
D-	63-60	.67
E, I, NG, S-U, WF	59-0	0.00

- Please note that a C- is not an acceptable grade for any course in which a 2.0 GPA is required, for example, any course in the major.

UF grading policy website:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculatinggpa>

GENERAL GRADING GUIDELINES

- A Exceptional/Outstanding Work
- Inspired Work
 - Imaginative and thorough solutions to problems
 - Shows continuous and exceptional growth
 - Shows understanding of core prescribed ideas and methods through exceptional application in projects
 - Thorough preparation and timely submission of class work
 - Regular and constructive participation in critiques and/or discussion as appropriate to class and subject
 - Perfect attendance
- A - Noteworthy Work
- Typified by most of the following:
 - Inspired Work
 - Imaginative and thorough solutions to problems
 - Shows continuous and exceptional growth
 - Shows understanding of core prescribed ideas and methods through exceptional application in projects
 - Thorough preparation and timely submission of class work
 - Regular and constructive participation in critiques and/or discussion as appropriate to class and subject
 - Perfect attendance
- B+ Well Above Average Work
- Typified by half of the following:
 - Inspired Work
 - Imaginative and thorough solutions to problems
 - Shows continuous and exceptional growth
 - Shows understanding of core prescribed ideas and methods through exceptional application in projects
 - Thorough preparation and timely submission of class work
 - Regular and constructive participation in critiques and/or discussion as appropriate to class and subject
 - Perfect attendance
- B Above Average Work
- Good workable solutions to problems
 - Shows some insight into problem solving
 - Shows continuous and above average growth
 - Shows understanding of core prescribed ideas and methods through skillful application in projects
 - Regular attendance

- B- Narrowly Above Average Work
 - Typified by most of the following:
 - Good workable solutions to problems
 - Shows some insight into problem solving
 - Shows continuous and above average growth
 - Shows understanding of core prescribed ideas and methods through skillful application in projects
 - Regular attendance

- C+ Less than Above Average Work
 - Typified by some of the following:
 - Good workable solutions to problems
 - Shows some insight into problem solving
 - Shows continuous and above average growth
 - Shows understanding of core prescribed ideas and methods through skillful application in projects
 - Regular attendance

- C Average Work
 - Appropriate solutions to problems
 - Shows understanding of basic and methods taught through application in projects
 - Most class work is prepared and submitted in a timely manner
 - Participates in classroom critiques and/or discussions
 - Regular attendance

- C - Less than Average Work
 - Typified by most of the following:
 - Appropriate solutions to problems
 - Shows understanding of basic and methods taught through application in projects
 - Most class work is prepared and submitted in a timely manner
 - Participates in classroom critiques and/or discussions
 - Regular attendance

- D+ Insufficient Work
 - Typified by only some of the following:
 - Appropriate solutions to problems
 - Shows understanding of fundamental and methods taught through application in projects
 - Most class work is prepared and submitted in a timely manner
 - Participates in classroom critiques and/or discussions
 - Regular attendance

- D Below Average Work (Narrowly Acceptable)
- Inconsistent solutions to problems
 - Shows little growth
 - Shows inconsistent understanding of basic idea and methods taught and applied to projects
 - Class work is often not prepared and submitted in a timely manner
 - Rarely participates in classroom critiques and/or discussions
 - Inconsistent and poor attendance
- D- Below Below-Average Work (Almost Unacceptable)
- Typified by only some of the following:
 - Appropriate solutions to problems
 - Shows understanding of basic and methods taught through application in projects
 - Most class work is prepared and submitted in a timely manner
 - Participates in classroom critiques and/or discussions
 - Regular attendance
- F Unacceptable Work
- Incomplete or no solutions to problems
 - Shows little or no growth
 - Shows little or no understanding of basic ideas and methods taught and the applications of these ideas are often missing or inconsistently presented in class work
 - Class work is not prepared and/or presented on time or at all
 - Participates rarely or not at all in classroom critiques and/or discussions
 - Poor attendance

UF HONESTY POLICY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructors of this class.

UNAUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF RECORDINGS

A recording of a class lecture may not be published by a student without the consent of the lecturer. “Publish” is defined as sharing, transmitting, circulating, distributing, or providing access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. A recording, or transcript of the recording, is considered to be published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper or leaflet.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. Click here (<https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>) to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu, 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room/Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-273-4450.