

TPP 2110: Acting 1
Spring 2025
T,TH 3-4:55pm
LOCATION: Constans G-13

Professor: Kaitlin Henderson
Pronouns: She/Her
Email: kaitlinhenderson@ufl.edu
Phone: 508-294-3667 (text only)

Course Description

This course is designed as an introduction to the basic principles, theories, and techniques of acting. Students will learn to effectively translate literature into production through performance. We will explore the acting process through character study, improvisation, physical/vocal awareness, ensemble relationship, and developing a personal connection to audience and text.

Course Objectives

1. To develop an understanding of the discipline of the art of acting and to refine concentration skills necessary within that discipline.
2. To develop the ability to work as a supportive, courageous, and accountable member of an ensemble through improving discipline, building trust, and strengthening communication skills.
3. To establish a common vocabulary that serves as a foundation for the acting process.
4. To increase observational skills and develop self-awareness through exercises and improvisation.
5. To practice basic methods of relaxation as well as exercises towards physical and vocal freedom and control.
6. To apply the methods and techniques of the actor's process to one's own work through exercises and monologue and scene work.
7. To demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the building blocks of working on a monologue and a scene.

Recommended Text:

Audition by Michael Shurtleff, copyright 1978

(I will be posting PDFs of the chapters on Canvas for you to read. However, I suggest you get your own copy of this book if you can).

Grading Details

You will not be graded according to your acting “ability”. You will, however, be graded on your development in the class and your commitment to the work. This includes fully participating in all exercises and supporting your classmates in their learning process. It also includes coming to class and being prepared to perform daily. A willingness to try new things and stretch your comfort zone (whatever that might be) will get you far in this class.

Assignments

Attendance and Participation: (15%)

Rehearsal Logs/Journals: (15%)

Each student will be required to do (at least) 2 30 minute rehearsals/explorations outside of class each week (after starting scene work).

Journal entries can/should include:

What (if any) discoveries or observations did you make?

What surprised or delighted you?

What roadblocks did you hit?

The entry should also include:

*Time of rehearsal

*Date

*Where you worked

Journal Entries/Logs will be due on Sunday at 10pm for the previous week. If you have your sessions done before the deadline please send them early.

Shakespeare Monologues (15%)

Actors choose a short Shakespeare monologue (more details in class) to workshop in class. We will explore the ideas of being seen, meaning what you say, relationship (to both audience and partner). It may seem odd to begin with this kind of text. However, in my experience, this is one of the best ways to create trust, honesty, and vulnerability in the space. There will be a final sharing of these monologues.

A/B Scenes: (15%)

Students will workshop the guideposts and improvised created of given circumstances using A/B scenes in and out of class. Final sharings will be presented.

Scene Work/Final Process paper (20%)

Actors will be assigned partners and scenes from published plays or screenplays. Scenes will be workshopped in class 2 times and the “Guideposts” will be implemented. Rehearsal outside of class is expected.

Production Response Papers: 20%

Students are expected to attend Macbeth and The Importance of Being Earnest during this term. Ticket vouchers will be provided for shows. If the voucher is lost or stolen, it CANNOT be replaced. Tickets must be purchased well in advance. SHOWS SELL OUT. A sold out show is not an excuse and you will be held accountable for the assignment regardless. More details on this paper TBA.

INSTRUCTOR PERSONAL STATEMENT:

I renew my commitment each day to hearing the voices of those around me, and working to create an equitable, kind, affirming place for all students and colleagues. I commit to

being responsive to conversations, and accountable for my actions and the spaces that I hold for students in the SOTD.

ON CONTENT:

Being an actor is rigorous. It requires us to be a master of our bodies, our voices, our powers of observation, of language and more. But perhaps most importantly (and most challengingly) it requires the actor to be vulnerable and to be SEEN. It can be (and often is) emotionally and intellectually exhausting. .

There is no right or wrong in Acting. There is only what we experience and bring alive in the space both as actors and observers. As more truthful work is exposed, this can lead to discomfort. Please embrace the discomfort. Push against it. Roll around in it. Live in it.

However, there is a difference between experiencing discomfort and being unsafe. **Please be judicious in learning the difference for yourself.** You are the owner of your educational experience, your own emotional experience, and your own physical safety. If at any point you are *unsafe*, please notify the instructor and take care of yourself.

As actors, our job is to “hold the mirror up to nature” (Hamlet), and to be students and communicators of the human experience in all of its complexities. This often means confronting topics that are controversial, challenging, ugly, and frightening. Let us all approach those conversations with equal parts tenacity and grace!

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance:

Students are expected to be in attendance daily and to be on time. Students are allowed one “unexcused” absence that does not require documentation and does not conform to the UF “acceptable reasons for absence.”.

Any other “unexcused” absence will result in a penalty of a partial letter grade (5%) from the final grade per “unexcused” absence. To be considered “excused” an absence must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation. Religious observances do not require documentation.

Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty:

- Illness—doctors note must be on official letterhead with address and phone number, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted, doctor name and signature
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions

- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition, or debate
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

*To help organize accommodations, students should inform the instructor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

Any student that acquires 3 absences (either excused or unexcused) will be required to meet with this course's instructor and/or area faculty to discuss the student's continued participation in the course.

For Majors: Failure to attend this meeting will result in Artistic Probation.

Tardiness:

Tardiness is disruptive to a class of this nature and will not be tolerated...**it is also one of my greatest pet-peeves.** Any tardiness will be recorded along with attendance. Attendance will be taken promptly at the start of class. If you enter the room after the check-in has been started, you will be considered tardy.

That being said, I am a reasonable human being who has my own set of access needs. As such, please communicate with me if something comes up.

2 tardies = 1 absence

Clothing/Dress:

Please wear clothes you can move in without adjustment. Practice this at home and see if you have the impulse to pull at or adjust your clothes.

Be prepared to be barefoot or wear rehearsal/movement shoes.

No Hats, Jewelry, or Jeans

*You may dress for your scene if you so desire!

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Academic Honesty

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. Honor Code:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor

*Plagiarism is an act of Academic Misconduct. Any act of plagiarism may result in failing the course.

Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic

accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with the instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/Links to an external site.>

Campus Resources

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 (<https://umatter.ufl.edu/>) 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 (nsceling.ufl.edu) 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 (<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>).
- University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website (<https://police.ufl.edu/>) 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

(<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>).

- GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website (<https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-273-4450.

Academic Resources

- Writing Studio: <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> --2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. For help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

- Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.
- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Course Evaluations:

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/Links to an external site.>.

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

UF Graduate Catalog

Grades and Grading Policies

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculatinggp>
[Links to an external site.](#)

FINAL NOTES FROM INSTRUCTOR:

This kind of specialized education (really any education) is a serious privilege. Please honor that. Honor those people who don't have this opportunity. Honor those who are not allowed any education. Honor the people who have supported and cared for you to make this possible, by always bringing your best, your most curious, your most eager, your most dedicated selves to our work.

You are the owners of your experience.

On a more personal note...

I am a very kind, reasonable person and instructor. I expect rigor AND I understand that life happens (and our access needs are all different). Communicating with me will go a long way. Please keep the lines open if you need extra help, support/accommodations or simply want to chat about the work.

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class.

