
CREDIT HOURS: 3

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: “Preparing the actor’s instrument through basic acting technique; concentration/relaxation exercises; improvisation. The course objective is the discovery and development of the actor’s inner resources. Contemporary American plays are studied from the actor’s point of view.”

PREREQUISITES: N/A


Assigned Plays:

Other scripts as needed for individual scenes and monologues.

NOTE: When available, all scripts used for class must be acting editions.

TIME/LOCATION: Class Time:
217-001/004 - T/R-11am-12:15pm

Class Location:
Comm 1045 (Moe Lab Theater)

INSTRUCTOR: J. Thomas Kidd
Office: Comm 1033C
Phone: 618-521-5005 (cell) or 618-453-7583 (office)
Email: tkidd@siu.edu

OFFICE HOURS: T/R – 10-11 AM AND 1-2:30 PM; W- 10-11:30 AM & BY APPOINTMENT

COURSE OBJECTIVE
To promote the discovery and development of the actor’s skills in analysis, imagination and performance.

COURSE CONTENT
Course will consist of readings, discussions, exercises, supervised rehearsals and performances utilizing and exploring Constantine Stanislavski’s Method of Physical Action.

COURSE OUTCOMES
Students successfully completing this course must be able to:

- **Demonstrate**, through preparation and performance, the ability to effectively analyze, prepare and perform scenes from contemporary plays, creating believable and fully realized characters utilizing strong, playable objectives, actions and tactics.

- **Demonstrate** through a written midterm exam, written character objective analysis, and through application in preparation and performance, an understanding of the key terms, skills/tools and basic concepts of a Stanislavski-based, realistic acting method.
• **Demonstrate** through a written mid-term exam and through application in preparation and performance, an understanding of the principles of theatrical staging including the use of stage direction, stage pictures, focus, blocking and gesture.

• **Demonstrate** through work in exercises, improvisations, and partnered scenes a clear understanding of the collaborative nature of theatre and an ability to work as a part of an acting ensemble

• **Demonstrate**, through the writing of a performance critique, the ability to apply the terms and concepts of the class in evaluating a performance.

**CLASS REQUIREMENTS**

Students successfully completing Beginning Acting must:

1. **Attend all class meetings.** This is a participatory class and your presence at every class meeting is required. Each unexcused absence from class will result in a 1.5 point deduction from the final grade. Each late arrival to class will result in a .75 point deduction from the final grade. In addition, grades for partnered performances will be greatly affected by a student’s lack of responsibility to their partner during class time and during rehearsals set for time outside of the class.

   **Note:** An excused absence is an illness or personal emergency for which the student can provide official documented proof, or the student has reported through the university’s Transition Services program.

2. **Actively participate in class discussions, exercises, activities and projects.**

3. **Successfully complete a written mid-term exam** covering the terms and concepts presented in class.

4. **Attend at least one SIU Department of Theater productions and write a concise critique of an actor’s performance** demonstrating an ability to apply the terms and concepts studied in the class.

5. **Perform six (6) acting scenes,** one of which will be considered a midterm and one a final performance exam. See “Final Grade Breakdown” below for more information.

6. **Maintain acting practice and/or rehearsal logs** for all performance assignments.

**FINAL GRADE BREAKDOWN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams/Quizzes (Terms and Concepts)</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique(s)</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performances:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audition monologue</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennedetti Ex. 6.2 – and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennedetti Ex.6.3 –</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Scene #1</td>
<td>20 % (Midterm Performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner Scene #2</td>
<td>20 % (re-working of Midterm scene)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Partner Scene</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Performance projects will be graded on the following criteria:

- **F** = failure to attend class on date performance project is evaluated; complete lack of preparation: lines unlearned, scene not staged, analyzed or rehearsed; failure of responsibility to partner.
Performance projects will be graded on the following criteria (cont.):

- **D** = inadequate preparation; incomplete rehearsal logs (if required) and analysis form; non-specific staging, physical, vocal or tactic choices; inadequate memorization of lines; lack of responsibility to partner.

- **C** = evidence of preparation: scene analyzed, forms completed adequately, memorized and basically staged; sporadic attendance to rehearsals; complete, but non-specific rehearsal logs.

- **B** = complete and specific rehearsal logs (if required) detailing a progression of development; intelligent and appropriate (in terms of the play) character and scene analysis; believable, honest, characterization; clear actions, objectives and tactic changes; effective vocal and physical choices; clear application of learned skills/tools; commitment to partner and to the scene performance.

- **A** = same work as “B” plus unobvious character choices (risk taking); clear and varied vocal choices; solid command of physical movement; varied and interesting tactic changes; facile application of learned skills/tools; outstanding commitment to partner and to the scene.

To avoid penalties, all assignments and performances MUST be presented on the scheduled dates. Written assignments will be lowered one letter grade for every calendar day late. Make-up dates for performances will only be allowed for documented, excused absences.

**Final Grades** will be awarded based on total points earned: A=90-100% of total points; B=89-80% of total points, etc. For more information on grading see pages 37-41 of the SIUC 2004-05 Undergraduate Catalogue.

**SYLLABUS ADDENDUM: STATEMENT ON PHYSICAL CONTACT IN PERFORMANCE CLASSES**

“In performance oriented classroom situations, it may sometimes be necessary for the instructor to interact physically with students or for students to interact physically with one another. This is part of the learning process, and any contact is intended to be professional and clinical in nature. If at any time a student is uncomfortable with the idea or the practice of that physical contact, the student should voice his/her concern and the need for privacy will be immediately respected.”

For further information regarding university policies regarding appropriate/inappropriate physical contact please consult the brochure, “Sexual Harassment Policy and Overview of Compliance Procedure” – available from Human Resources or contact a Human Resources advisor at 536-3369 or 453-6671.
TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: Part I – Intro to Acting: The Audition/Understanding the Actor’s Job

T- 1/19  
Introductions and Syllabi  
Audition Monologue Workshop  
Assignment of Audition Monologue Project

R- 1/21  
Continuation of Audition Monologue Workshop  
*Graded Performance: Audition Project  
(for extra credit at one of the auditions below)*

W-1/20  
Department of Theater Spring Welcome Back Meeting-5:00pm McLeod

R-1/21  
*Auditions: Wife Worker Whore – 7:00 pm, Moe Lab Theater

F-1/22  
*Auditions: Tartuffe – 7:00 pm, Moe Lab Theater

SU-1/23  
Auditions: Callbacks for shows above - TBA

SU-1/24 – LAST DAY TO ADD, CHANGE SECTION OR REGISTER FOR A CLASS *without a Dean’s signature

WEEK 2: Part I – Preparing Yourself: Relaxing, Centering, Voice/Speech and Collaboration

T- 1/26  
Graded Performance: Audition Project (All Students)  
Assignment Due: Written Materials for Audition Assignment  
Syllabus and Schedule  
Intro to the Stanislavsky Method of Physical Action

R-1/28  
Working with Steps 1-4  
Assignment: Read AIY Part II, Step 5 & 6 and Step 10 pp. 109-115 for 2/02  
Assignment: Exercise 6.2 for 2/02  
Assignment: Read Hooters by Ted Talley for 2/4

SU-1/31 – LAST DAY TO DROP A FULL TERM COURSE/WITHDRAW FROM UNIVERSITY TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR A CREDIT/REFUND

WEEK 3: Part II – Action and Character: Exploring Actions, Obstacles, Text and Given Circumstances

T- 2/2  
Assignment: Read Hooters by Ted Talley for 2/4

R- 2/4  
Continuation of Assignment Due: 6-3 (if Needed)  
Assigning of scene partners for Hooters  
Brief discussion/work with Step 10 – Early rehearsals (this discussion continues throughout the semester)  
Discussion and work on Hooters using Steps 5 & 6 – Exploring The Text and Discovering Given Circumstances  
First Table Read of Hooters scene  
Assignment Due: Hooters read and ready to discuss  
Assignment: Given Circumstances List for Hooters character for 2/9  
Assignment: Rehearsal Plan for 2/9  
Assignment: Read AIY Part II, Step 7 for 2/9  
Assignment: Off Book for Hooters Scene by 2/11  
Assignment: First Graded Scene Performance for 3/10

2/05-6  
Michael Wilson's Senior Capstone Performance: THE WAY WE GET BY by Neil LaBute
*WEEK 4: Part II-Action and Character: Hierarchy of Objectives; Actions and Obstacles
T- 2/9 Work with Hierarchy of Objectives
Developing Super-objectives, Scene Objectives and Actions; Defining Obstacles
Assignment Due: Given Circumstances List for Hooters character

R- 2/11 Continued work defining and experimenting with Objectives, Action and Obstacles
Assignment Due: Rehearsal Plan for Scene
Assignment Due: Off Book for Hooters Scene
Assignment: Complete Objective form for your scene for 02/18

R-2/11 BIG MUDDY SHORTS – 8:00pm, Moe Lab Theater
F-S-2/12-13 Staged Reading: A Nightingale for W.E.B. DuBois – 7:30 pm – Moe Lab Theater
S-2/13 McLeod Summer Playhouse Auditions – 9:30 am sign in

WEEK 5: Part II – Action and Character: Actions, Tactics and Beats
T- 2/16 Continued work with Steps 6 and 7
Assignment: Read AIY Part II, Steps 8 &9 for 02/23

R- 2/18 Continued work with Steps 6 and 7
Assignment: Completed Objective form for your scene

R-SU2/18-21 – Mid-West Theater Auditions, St. Louis

WEEK 6: Part II – Character and Personalization
T- 2/23 Working with Steps 8 and 9
Trial Runs of Beats and work with Scenes

R- 2/25 Continued work with Steps 8 and 9
Trial Runs of Beats and work with Scenes
Assignment: Midterm Written Exam Hierarchy of Objectives Form for Hooters Scene for 3/1

F-Su-2/26-28 – SoM/DoT Opera Production: Hansel and Gretel

WEEK 7: Part IV - Rehearsal
T- 3/1 Working Scenes: TBA
Assignment Due: Midterm Written Exam Hierarchy of Objectives Form for Hooters Scene

R- 3/3 Written Midterm Exam: Terms and Concept

R-3/3 Big Muddy Shorts – 8:00 pm - Moe Lab Theater
R-Sa-3/3-6 Southeastern Theatre Conference, Greensboro, NC

WEEK 8: Part IV – Back into Rehearsal - Rehearsing and Improving the Scene
T- 3/8 Previews and Rehearsals

R- 3/10 Graded Performance/Mid-term: First Performance of Hooters scenes
3/12-20 – SPRING BREAK
W-Sa-3/16-20  USITT
W-Sa-3/18-20  Mid-American Theater Association Convention

WEEK 9: Back into Rehearsal - Rehearsing and Improving the Scene/Coaching
T- 3/22  Evaluations of Midterm performances
       Addressing Common weaknesses
R- 3/24  Lecture/Demo and Exercises on Staging and Composition
       Assignment: Pictures for scene to incorporate into Hooters scene

*WEEK 10:  
T- 3/29  Continued work in Composition
       Additional work on Movement and Gesture
       Assignment: Critique of Wife, Worker, Whore performance
R- 3/31  Working Scenes**
       Assignment Due: Performances of beats using each partner's pictures

R-Su-3/31-4/3 - DoT Production: Wife, Worker, Whore and THE BIG MUDDY FESTIVAL OF NEW PLAYS

4/3 – LAST DAY TO DROP A FULL TERM COURSE

WEEK 11: Second Performance and Beginning Final Scene
T- 4/5  Working Scenes**
       Assignment Due: Critique of Wife, Worker, Whore performance
       Assignment: Read Script for Final Scene for 4/5
       Assignment: Given Circumstances List and Objectives for 4/9

***IMPORTANT NOTE: DO NOT READ OR REHEARSE YOUR FINAL SCENE WITH YOUR PARTNER UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.***

R- 4/7  Graded Performance: Rework of Hooters Scene
       Assignment: Off Book for Final Scene by 4/9

*WEEK 12: Final Scene: Analyzing The Script
T- 4/12  Determining Floor plan (Composition)
       Analysis work of final scenes and the plays they come from
       Developing GC Lists and Objectives
       Knowing the Character not just the Role
       Assignment: Cold run of Final Scene for 4/9

R- 4/14  Assignment Due: Cold run of final scene – OFF BOOK
       Assignment Due: Given Circumstances List and Objectives

WEEK 13: Final Scene: Rehearsals
T- 4/19  Working Final Scenes**
Assignment: Critique of The Children's Hour performance

R-4/21 Working Final Scenes**

**WEEK 14: Final Scene: Rehearsal and Coaching**
T- 4/26 Coaching Final Scenes**
Assignment Due: Critique of The Children's Hour performance

R-4/28 Coaching Final Scenes**

R-Su-4/27-5/1-26 DoT production of Tartuffe – McLeod Theater

**WEEK 15: Coaching and Working Final Projects**
T- 5/3 Final Rehearsals and/or Previews
Course Evaluation

R- 5/5 Final Rehearsals and/or Previews

**WEEK 16 – Finals Week**
(217-001/004) - Thursday, 5/14
FINAL EXAM 10:15am-12:15 pm