

Course Syllabus

Acting I / Summer II 2008
THR 164.02 / MTWThF 10:00-11:50am
UTC-151

Tom Prior, Instructor
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs. 12:15-1:30pm
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THIS SYLLABUS, SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GRADES CAN BE FOUND ON THE BLACKBOARD WEBSITE-PLEASE CHECK IT FREQUENTLY!

<http://blackboard.shsu.edu>

Textbooks: *No text required. Please see list below for some helpful recommended reading texts.*

Class objective: To learn basic techniques in body, voice, characterization, and play analysis as they are applied to the performance of stage tasks by the actor. We will be delving into improvisation exercises, vocal exercises, breaking scenes into beats, intentions/motivation of character, talking and listening on-stage and making strong and creative choices.

Attendance: Please be here on time ready to work. If you are absent more than two classes your grade will begin to be adversely affected. **Five (5) points** will be deducted from your FINAL grade for each absence. Also, it is important that you come to class on time, ready to work. **Three tardies = 1 absence.** Excessive tardiness will result in a reduction of your final grade.

Classroom Attire: Please wear clothes that you feel comfortable moving in. Loose fitting clothing such as sweatpants and T-shirts are best.

Classroom Etiquette: This class is a CELL PHONE AND PAGER FREE ZONE!! Turn them **OFF** before you walk through the door!!

Course Requirements:

Participation: ALL STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL ACTIVITIES AND EXERCISES AND DISCUSSIONS. This is very important to your grade. Participation (and I mean active participation) is **vital** in this class.

Exciting, breathing, vibrant theatre is not possible without *everyone* contributing artistically: giving his or her own 'creative' input. Evaluations will be made on all exercises and scene work. This evaluation also expands to the day-to-day involvement of each student.

This is not a lecture class. We will be 'discussing' different viewpoints of important teachers and actors (Stanislavski, Meisner, etc.) These discussions, requiring active participation of each student, are not constructed towards a test, but towards student implementation.

Alone in your Room: We will begin by looking at a glossed-over subject in acting classes today: text analysis. We will discuss David Ball's book Backwards and Forwards (not a required textbook) while concurrently delving into Stanislavski's teachings and examining an exercise called *Alone in your room*.

Monologue work: Each student will choose one monologue from any contemporary published play and workshop it once in class with the instructor and other students. (This will be explained further in the initial classes.)

Scene work. This is vitally important to this *performance based* class. You will be expected to work with your classmates in and out of class over the next four weeks. You must be available to work with your scene partner outside of class. If you are not, your grade will be adversely affected. Various exercises will be used throughout the four weeks to lead the student to understand basic concepts and techniques. These exercises will be the stepping-stone for scene work. Each student will be required to perform in one (1)--two person scene (see the course calendar). Students will be given an evaluation after each time the scene is "workshopped" in class. Each scene will be workshopped twice and will be performed one last time as your final.

****All performance assignments will be scheduled in a particular order, if you are ABSENT on a performance day, YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MAKE UP THIS PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENT and will receive a ZERO for the scene. Your partner will NOT be penalized.**

Department Production Critique: Learn by viewing: Students will be required to attend one (1) Department of Theatre & Dance production this summer and write a critique of it. These papers should be a critique on the acting: what worked, what didn't and support your opinions with classroom experience. The critiques should be typed, minimum three pages in length, double-spaced, 12 point font. Critiques are due the Monday class after the show closes, at the *beginning of class*. **NO CRITIQUES WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS TIME.**

If you need to contact me, you can email me or leave me a voice message at the above number. *Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding questions on class activities or scenes throughout the summer session.*

Grade Breakdown:

Participation	20 (1 point/ class)	20 Total
Alone in Room Exercise		20
Monologue Work		20
Scene 1 st workshop	Scene 40 / **Materials 15	55
Scene 2 nd workshop	Scene 50 / Materials 20	70
Critique		15
<hr/> Total		<hr/> 200

****Materials:** Rehearsal information sheet for each rehearsal, character analysis sheet, and a character word or image diary entry for an important day of their life. (More information on these forthcoming)

Explanation of grading scale:

- 200-180 = A
- 179-159 = B
- 158-138 = C
- 137-117 = D
- Below 117 = F

Academic Honesty: The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. Please consult the following link for a full description of the university's academic honesty policy:

http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf_www/aps/documents/810213.pdf

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy A student desiring to miss a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) should present a written statement concerning the religious holiday to me by the seventh calendar day of the Summer II session.

Americans with Disabilities Act SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk to me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center by calling (936) 294-1720.

RECOMMENDED READING

<u>Practical Handbook for the Actor</u>	Melissa Bruder et al
<u>An Actor Prepares</u>	Constantin Stanislavski
<u>On Acting</u>	Sanford Meisner
<u>Respect for Acting</u>	Uta Hagen
<u>Backwards and Forwards</u>	David Ball
<u>Method-Or Madness</u>	Robert Lewis
<u>The Actor's Ways and Means</u>	Michael Redgrave
<u>True and False</u>	David Mamet
<u>A Dream of Passion</u>	Lee Strasberg
<u>Acting One</u>	Robert Cohen
<u>Audition</u>	Michael Shurtleff