

COURSE #: ENG 175 CRN TBA TITLE: Acting Techniques

Course Description: This course serves as an introduction to, and exploration of the acting process for the stage, developing the fundamental skills students need to approach a text from a performer's standpoint and to create character. The course takes as its basic premise that the actor's instrument is the self—with all of the physical, psychological, intellectual, social, moral and spiritual implications of that term. Students will be encouraged in both the expression and the expansion of the self and of the imagination. The class will also help the student develop an overall appreciation for the role of the theatre in today's society.

Credits: 4

Semester/Year: Spring 2019

Class Day/Time/s: Tuesday 2:00 – 4:4

Location: Sloan Studio (107 Todd Union)

First Class: January 22, 2019

Last Class: April 30, 2019

Does this course use Blackboard Learning Management? NO

Instructor: Alexa Scott-Flaherty

Contact Email: alexa.scottflaherty@gmail.com

Contact Telephone: 347-451-8795

Office Hours: by appointment

Office Location:

Entrance Prerequisites : No previous experience required

Course Aims & Objectives:

- Begin the process of developing a strong sense of mental concentration and focus; performance is an act of sustained mental power.
- Explore and experience moment-to-moment work: freeing yourself from self-consciousness, responding to impulses, practicing deep listening and accepting what is naturally occurring in the moment.
- Gain the tools necessary to prepare for a rehearsal process and the development of a character—substitution, imagined circumstances, observation, expression, etc. Solid preparation supports spontaneity; an idea articulated by Martha Graham when she wrote, “I work eight hours a day, every day, so that in the evenings I can improvise.”
- Learn how to dig for a character: given circumstances, high stakes, needs, wants, obstacles, etc. Question everything and make specific choices.
- Understand and use *Actions*; make compelling choices and affect each other.
- Explore “psycho-physical” techniques and discover how to create behavior for different characters.
- Nurture a love and respect for the collaborative process that is theater, and for working as an ensemble.

General Course Requirements:

Journal entries: You will be keeping a journal that will be turned in that will include:

1. Responses to assigned videos and reading
2. Your responses to your in-class work

3. Text analysis and character studies and character lists
4. Responses to your rehearsals with scene partner
5. Response to 2 performance at the Todd Theatre (U of R International Theatre Program)
6. Response to 2 arts experiences***see note at bottom of syllabus **ARTS**

EXPLORER INITIATIVE

All written work must be delivered to class on the due date without fail.

Scene & Monologue Work: This is an acting class. You are required to memorize texts and rehearse them outside of class – you will be assigned 1 scene and 1 monologue to be memorized and performed over the course of the semester. There will be text analysis/character analysis paperwork to accompany your scene work.

Required preparation and participation for all aspects of class exercises and assignments. Please come prepared to exhibit the courage to share yourself and your work in class.

You are required to see TWO Todd Productions during the semester, and journal about it. This will need to be in your journal that I collect. Visit Todd Theatre Box Office for more information and please **RESERVE YOUR TICKETS EARLY**. Planning to see the final performance and finding it sold out at the last minute does not count as a legitimate excuse.

NO CELL PHONES EXCEPT WHILE ON BREAK

PHYSICALITY REQUIREMENTS: The nature of this course is such that physical contact will sometimes be required between participants in order to clarify an exercise or perform a scene. Every effort will be made to respect the individual in this process. If you are uncomfortable with this aspect of the course or if you have any physical injuries or disabilities, which might interfere with the physical nature of the course, please discuss this with your professor at the beginning of the course, and continue to discuss whenever you feel there is something you need to address.

Required Texts & Readings:

Readings and videos will be assigned by the professor. Readings will either be given to you in class or will be available through the library. Videos will either be available on line or will be provided by the professor. You will need to purchase one script for our scene work, which will be assigned once we are further into the semester.

Other Recommended Reading:

Building a Character & An Actor Prepares by Constantin Stanislavski
Respect for Acting by Uta Hagan
The Art of Acting and The Technique of Acting by Stella Adler
Sanford Meisner on Acting by Sanford Meisner & Dennis Longwell
Audition by Michael Shurtleff
Actions: The Actor's Thesaurus by Marina Calderone
The Stanislavski System by Sonia Moore

The Method Acting Exercise Handbook by Lola Cohen

Recommended Attire: The physical nature of this course requires that you come to class dressed appropriately for on your feet work. You should wear light, easy, comfortable clothing. No tight jeans, belts, hats, and heavy jewelry. Women should avoid skirts and heeled shoes. Proper footwear consists of closed toed shoes or sneakers. One exception: when presenting a scene or monologue you are encouraged to dress appropriately for the character.

Attendance Policy: Since this class meets only once a week, attendance is critical. Three or more absences will result in a failing grade.

When working in pairs, there is an A/F policy applied to a missed final performance. If a partner does not show up for an assigned performance, the partner that does attend will get an automatic A – the partner that is absent will receive an F and there will be no opportunity for another performance date. If both partners miss the date, they will both receive an F. Other make-up work is at the discretion of the instructor.

All absences are considered unexcused unless official written documentation of the absence is promptly (within one week of absence) given to the instructor. If you will be absent from class due to religious holidays you must notify the instructor in advance. Extra credit opportunities may be used to raise a student's grade, but they cannot erase absences.

NOTE: If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to find out what was covered in class, make up missed work, and be prepared for what is expected from you at the next class.

Grading:

Class Participation & Preparation* 40%
Journal Entries and written assignments 20%
Scene Study I 30%
Monologue 10%
Total 100%

All written work must be delivered to class on the due date without fail.

*Participation Grade: This is the instructor's subjective determination of your ACTIVE participation in class, both in exercises/games/scene work and as an audience member. This means no texting or spacing out while others are performing or working. Sometimes the best learning can happen by watching closely and observing your fellow actors scene work. This grade is linked directly to your attendance in the class. If you have concerns about your participation in class please see the instructor immediately.

Academic Support Services:

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: www.rochester.edu/college/cetl/
Writing, Speaking and Argument Program: <http://writing.rochester.edu/>

Academic Honesty:

Please see: www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/undergraduates.html

Disability Resources:

Please visit: www.rochester.edu/college/disability/

Content/Weekly Outline or Schedule:

Tuesday, January 22 Class one	Intro. to class and responsibilities, actor’s task Exercises– moment to moment work	Fill out survey about what you want from class Assign: Write your aim in acting journal. Watch video assigned by professor (Prof. will email link) and respond in your journal, read The Stanislavski System by Sonia Moore, and the sheets <i>Moment to Moment Work</i> and <i>What are you working with</i> .
Tuesday, January 29 Class 2	Exercises–The Stanislavski System & “what are you working with.” Sensory work.	Assign: Watch Video, Prof. will email link, and respond in your journal. Prepare PRIVATE MOMENT. Read The Stanislavski System by Sonia Moore handout.
Tuesday, February 5 Class 3	Exercises– Sensory work & Private Moments Exercise	MY SYSTEM OF WANTS & HOW DO I DO WHAT I DO exercises/journaling
Tuesday, February 12 Class 4	Intentions, physical sensation exercises, exploration work and review your wants and how you do what you do	Assign: Watch videos (Prof will email link) and respond in at least a full-page journal entry as to what you learned, what you admire, etc. Read the Action sheets.
Tuesday, February 19 Class 5	Exercises– “digging” Objectives & Actions	Assign: Read Uta Hagan packet. Begin work on the Uta Hagan exercise.
Tuesday, February 26 Class 6	1 st half class Uta Hagan Exercise due, Assign scene partners for scene study I. Read scenes, discuss, apply work.	Uta Hagan Exercise due. Do Uta Hagan 9 questions and character backstory for your scene. See Show and write performance review (Feb.28 - March 9).
Tuesday, March 5 Class 7	Table work skills. Discuss your character studies.	JOURNAL DUE (must include all assignments up to this date) See Show and write performance review (Feb.28 - March 9).
Tuesday, March 12	OFF SPRING BREAK	Assign: Rehearse, journal on rehearsals Character lists in journal
Tuesday, March 19 Class 8	1 st half class exercises to support scene-work, 2 nd half rehearse & work scenes in front of class* .	Assign: Rehearse, Journal of rehearsals
Tuesday, March 26 Class 9	1 st half class exercises to support scene-work, 2 nd half rehearse & work scenes in	Assign: Rehearse, Journal of rehearsals

	front of class*.	
Tuesday, April 2 Class 10	1st half class exercises to support scene-work, 2nd half rehearse & work scenes in front of class*.	Assign: Rehearse, Journal of rehearsals
Tuesday, April 9 Class 11	Perform scene study I	Assign: Monologues Prepare and memorize monologue.
Tuesday, April 16 Class 12	Give monologues Monologue work: exercises to support Monologue work	Assign: Prepare and memorize monologue.
Tuesday, April 23 Class 13	More exercises to support monologue work	Assign: Journal response to work in class. Prepare Uta Hagan Exercise 2. See Show and write performance review (April 25 - May 4).
Tuesday, April 30 Class 14	Perform monologue Wrap it all up	JOURNAL DUE (must include all work due up to this point and the performance and art reviews)

*When people work/rehearse and perform their scenes in class, it is the whole group's responsibility to watch closely. This is a chance to gain skills for everyone involved.

***Other Information: ARTS EXPLORER INITIATIVE

General: The idea behind the Theatre Program's Arts Explorer Initiative is to broaden students' experience with the Arts and their engagement with the Theatre Program. To that end, it requires students, as part of their participation in Theatre Program classes, not only to see the theatrical work that the Program produces, but to get them out into the broader arts community and partake in diverse offerings that they might find interesting, engaging, or even—at best—illuminating and life-changing.

How it works:

- All students in all Theatre Program classes should be required—as part of their mandatory class requirements—to attend BOTH mainstage Theatre Program productions in the semester they are enrolled.
- Because students frequently are strapped for money, they may see mainstage Theatre Program shows for free on IPA Night (usually the first Friday of the run; students should check the box office for confirmation) or on English Night (usually the Wednesday evening performance; students should check the box office for confirmation).
- All students in all Theatre Program classes should be required to attend TWO outside arts events in the semester they are enrolled as part of their mandatory class requirements.
- There is no funding for students to attend specific events. That being said, many (if not most) of the events that would be applicable to fulfilling this requirement are free.
- A list of applicable/authorized outside events will be provided to the students on an ongoing basis throughout the semester and will be posted and clearly identified on the Todd Theatre Facebook Group (see below; www.facebook.com/groups/ToddTheatre). Events might include readings, workshops, lectures, performances, etc. For example:
 - o Annual events that would fulfill the requirement:
 - A performance at the Rochester Fringe

UR International Theatre Program

- A performance at Geva Theatre Center
- A performance by the RPO
- A performance in Kilburn Hall (ESM)
- A visit to the Memorial Art Gallery
- A visit to see an exhibition at the George Eastman Museum
- A performance by Rochester City Ballet or Garth Fagan Dance or Other events that would fulfill the requirement:
- Readings presented as part of the Plutzik Reading Series
- Lectures presented by the Humanities Center, specifically if they pertain to the Arts or the Performing or Visual Arts
- Guest Workshops hosted by the Program of Dance and Movement, the Theatre Program, the Department of Art and Art History, etc.