Theatre Speech
(THR 223-002)
Instructor: Stephanie Murphy
Spring 2018
T/R 2-3:15
GNFA 100
Email: murphysa3@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 12:30-1:30

Credit Hours: 3

Course Description: Study of voice and diction for the actor.

Course Objective:
This class will provide the student with a conceptual and physical understanding and experience of
voice and speech dynamics in performance. Topics covered include (but are not limited to) anatomy,
vocal health and recovery techniques and myths, cultural influences on vocal habits and stereotypes,
and vocal variables (pitch, volume, rate, etc.). Physical practices will include (but are not limited to)
relaxation, voice and diction warm-ups, channel opening, articulator dexterity exercises, guided
imagery vocalization, use of myths about Standard American dialect, and mind-body awareness.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO's) Supported in this Course:
4. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the component areas of theatrical creation,
   process, production, performance, and study, and their interrelationships. (All degree plans)
6. The student will demonstrate intermediate to advanced competence in one or more theatre
   specialization(s). (BA)
8. The student will be able to complete and document a major project as a stage manager, as a
   designer or technician, or as an actor or director, demonstrating advanced competence in the
   student’s specialty. (BFA)
9. The student will be able to present an effective presentation appropriate to the student’s
   specialization. (BFA)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) for this course (and supported PLO’s):
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:
1. Perform an effective and thorough vocal warm-up (PLO’s 4 and 6)
2. Perform utilizing skills learned in class (PLO’s 4, 6, 8, 9)
3. Execute basic techniques of articulation and voice production (PLO’s 4, 6, 8, and 9)
4. Identify and properly apply techniques that support the mechanics and anatomy of the vocal
   instrument (PLO’s 4 and 6)
5. Expand range and vocal options while divesting inhibitions and minimizing habits that can
   limit vocal expressiveness (PLO’s 4, 8, and 9)

Required Materials:
The Right to Speak by Patsy Rodenburg
Water bottle
Blanket and yoga mat for floor work

School of Theatre Attendance Policy:
A career in the fine arts demands dedication and discipline; preparation for this career requires
conscientious development of effective work habits. To this end, regular and punctual attendance is
expected for all classes, laboratories, and other activities for which a student is registered or
assigned.
I. It is University policy to excuse students from class attendance for certain reasons related to health, family emergencies, student working the University Series, and other situations of similar importance.

Excused absences from theatre classes will only be granted upon presentation of written documentation from the teacher, sponsor, or physician involved upon the first day of the student’s return. In the case of absences caused by university-sponsored events, inclusion in the university’s public listing of such absences will constitute an official excuse. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor that he/she has scheduled the planned official absence.

II. A total of seven excused and/or unexcused absences in Tuesday-Thursday classes or 10 excused and/or unexcused absences in Monday-Wednesday-Friday classes will result in the student receiving a failing grade. Excessive unexcused absences will affect a student's grade.

III. The student will be allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences in Tuesday-Thursday classes or three unexcused absences in Monday-Wednesday-Friday classes.

IV. In the case of missed classes, the student will be held responsible for the successful completion of assigned work and/or projects.

**MY Attendance Policy:**
Each absence in addition to the two allotted by the School of Theatre will result in a loss of 50% or a letter grade (50 points) from your final grade. Emergencies or serious illness will be handled on a case by case basis at the discretion of the instructor. It is strongly recommended that you save your three absences for illness or emergencies.

**Tardiness**
Three tardies are the equivalent of one unexcused absence. Please be on time and ready to work at the top of class.

**University Attendance Policy (excerpt):**
“…students are responsible for notifying their instructors in advance, when possible, for excusable absences...Students with acceptable excuses may be permitted to make up work for a maximum of three weeks’ worth of absences during a semester...depending on the nature of the missed work. Make up work must be completed as soon as possible after returning from an absence in accordance with the course syllabus.”

**Classroom Policies:**
1. There will be dates outside of the listed class time when you will need to be available for rehearsals and performances. Please let me know before the second week of class if this will be a problem.
2. The theatre is a collaborative art form, and maintaining a safe environment for experimentation is essential. There may be choices made, or exercises performed by your classmates that seem strange or silly. You as an ensemble have a responsibility to be respectful of one another’s process. I reserve the right to remove you from class for the day if you create a physically or emotionally unsafe environment for your classmates.
3. This class engages material covering a diverse range of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, and disability. While I encourage you to formulate and express your thoughts and opinions throughout the semester, discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated and may constitute disruptive behavior under the student code of conduct.
4. While Texas state law allows for the concealed carry of a firearm with a Concealed Handgun License (CHL), open display of a firearm in class will result in a call to campus police, immediate dismissal, and failure of the course. Referring to a concealed firearm (real or fabricated) in an attempt to create a threatening or hostile environment will result in a call to campus police, immediate dismissal and failure of the course. There will be no exceptions to this policy. If you...
have strong opinions about whether firearms belong in your classroom, feel free to contact your representative:  [http://www.house.state.tx.us/members/find-your-representative/](http://www.house.state.tx.us/members/find-your-representative/)

5. All Acting, Movement, and Theatre Speech classes at SFA require the wearing of black movement clothing. This is a common practice in many Theatre training programs. It is intended to create a sense of neutrality across the performers, make it easier to step in and out of character, and help the performance classroom feel like a space where art is made. Your clothing should be solid black and not include designs, images or words. Small brand logos are acceptable. Your clothes should effectively cover your body through a range of movement possibilities. Further, no hats may be worn. If you must cover your hair, skullcaps are acceptable. If you are not wearing class appropriate clothing, you will be asked to leave, and receive an absence for the day, as well as, a zero engagement score for the day.

**Technology:**
1. No texting or cell phones allowed during class.
2. No texting or cell phones allowed during class.
3. **NO TEXTING OR CELL PHONES ALLOWED DURING CLASS.** Bring a notebook to class so you can take notes. If you forgot a notebook, borrow a piece of paper from somebody. If your monologue is on your phone you must print it out or transcribe it on to a piece of paper. Being vulnerable onstage is hard enough without looking up to a sea of classmates who are more into writing a facebook status about eating a grilled cheese for lunch than observing and giving feedback. Put them away. If I see you texting in class you will lose participation points for the day. This is non-negotiable.
4. Do not, under any circumstances, even with your classmates' permission, take a video in class. If I see this, I will dismiss you and you will be marked absent for the day.
5. A missing or late assignment due to a technology failure is unacceptable. Please back up your written work and take advantage of the library’s computer and printing services. One of the unpleasant truths of adulthood (and the theatre) is that something will inevitably go wrong. Plan for it ahead of time.

**General Notes:**
1. Assignments are due on the date listed. If absent and emailing a written assignment, it must be sent by the start time of class in order to receive credit.
2. Theatrical scripts may contain strong language that might be considered offensive to some: profanities, violence, sexual terms or references to religious deities. Please see me privately by the end of the first week of class if this is a problem for you.
3. Physical contact may occur from time to time with fellow students in class. I may also have to adjust parts of your body for proper alignment and to release tension while working. Please see me privately as soon as possible if this presents a problem or if you feel uncomfortable.
4. If you have a disability or physical injury that hinders you from participating in class activities please see me privately as soon as possible so we can make arrangements to accommodate you.
5. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

**Grading Criteria:**
- **A—Excellent.** Always well prepared. Actively pursues improvement and highly self motivated. Active, positive contributor to class.
- **B—Good.** Always prepared. Pursues improvement and self motivated. contributor to class.
- **C---Fair.** Generally prepared. Interested in improvement and often self motivated. Often contributes to class.
- **D---Poor.** Often not prepared. Shows little interest in improvement and is rarely self motivated. Seldom contributes to class and has negative attitude.
- **F---Unacceptable.** Lacks adequate outside preparation. Virtually no interest in self improvement and not motivated. Does not contribute to class; negative attitude.
Grading Breakdown:
Your final grade will be computed as follows

- Participation, Exercises, Attendance 300
- Character Monologue 100
- Final Project 200
- 4 Quizzes (including warm up: 25 points each) 100
- Self Assessment/Goals 200
- Journal 100

TOTAL 1000 Points

Grade Distribution:
- 900-100 = A
- 800-899 = B
- 700-799 = C
- 600-699 = D
- 599 or below = F

Schedule (subject to change):

Thurs: 1/18 Introduction/Course Overview/Goals
       *Prepare monologue for pretest*

Tues: 1/23 Pretest-present monologues

Thurs: 1/25 Anatomy of breath and speech

Tues: 1/30 Breath work/ANATOMY QUIZ
       *Read Rodenburg Chapters 1-5*

Thurs: 2/1 Discuss Reading/self assessment/coloring QUIZ ON READING
       *Read Rodenburg Chapter 8*

Tues: 2/6 Warming up: progression and purpose
       *Read Rodenburg Chapter 7*

Thurs: 2/8 NO CLASS: ONE ACT PLAY FESTIVAL

Tues: 2/13 Diagnosing bad habits in self and others
       *Prepare original monologue for Thursday*

Thurs: 2/15 Present original monologues again/self-assessment and peer review
       *Write self-assessment*

Tues: 2/20 SELF ASSESSMENT DUE

Thurs: 2/22 Articulation Anatomy

Tues: 2/27 ARTICULATION QUIZ/Articulation Work

Thurs: 3/1 Resonators/Shaping Sound

Tues: 3/6 Individual appointments

Thurs: 3/8 Vocal Health/Injury/self-care

Tues: 3/13 SPRING BREAK: PRACTICE GOOD VOCAL HEALTH

Thurs: 3/15 SPRING BREAK: PRACTICE GOOD VOCAL HEALTH

Tues: 3/20 Vowels and consonants

Thurs: 3/22 Pitch
Tues: 3/27  Speed/Breath control  
Find/memorize character monologue  
Thurs: 3/29  UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY: NO CLASS  

Tues: 4/3  Character voices  
Prepare character monologue  
Tues: 4/5  Present character monologue  

Tues: 4/10  Teach character voices  
Thurs: 4/12  Honoring the playwright's language/poetry  

Tues: 4/17  Physicality/discoveries  
Thurs: 4/19  Physicality/discoveries  
Choose monologue for final  

Tues: 4/24  Present monologues/table work troubleshoot  
Thurs: 4/26  Troubleshoot/Peer Review  

Tues: 5/1  Troubleshoot/Peer Review  
Thurs: 5/3  Troubleshoot/Peer Review  

Final Exam is Tuesday, May 8th from 1-3pm