Beginning Acting Lab
Drama 1051-002

Subject to Change
Spring 2024

W/F - 10:50am-11:50am

Instructor: Zeke Bocklage, MFA
(He/Him)

Contact: bocklage.ezekiel@sfasu.edu
O: 936-468-1227
C: 636-667-6680

Office Hours: M/W 12pm-2pm
T/TH 11am-Noon
Or By Appointment

Location: BLACK BOX THEATRE (Class)
GFNA 230 (Office)

Department: Theatre

Course Description

“Emphasis on the understanding and exploration of the actor’s tools and the application of the actor’s basic skills through the creative process”

“If we realize our individual responsibility to an art form, we must not only live up to it as individuals, but remember the collective form of this art, and that more than anything else is one for all and all for one” - Uta Hagen

Course Objectives

Upon successfully completing this course, Students will:

● Learn fundamental techniques, terms and concepts of acting.
● Increase their ability to relate, empathize, express and process emotions with clarity and passion.
● Learn the groundwork for theatrical collaboration, discourse and problem solving.
● Begin developing their own process to their craft through both a practical approach, as well as a theoretical and analytical background.
● Learn how to work with different personalities and approaches in a respectful, and productive way.
● Create awareness of how training in the arts and acting can aid in being a better citizen and human throughout our day to day lives.
● Develop the ability and tools to analyze and critique artistic work objectively.
Course Content:

Through the use of exercises, both structured and unstructured, the student will explore the basic skills of acting, which include: a repertoire of relaxation and warm-up exercises from which to build upon for use in the study of and preparation for acting, as well as the development of self-awareness, imagination, the mechanics of staging, character-process, foundational work in script analysis and mindfulness of the ensemble.

Students will memorize the general vocabulary of acting through the use of the addendum to the syllabus and in-class exercises and explorations. A comprehensive, written exam will be given at the end of the semester.

Execution of the basic acting skills will be demonstrated by the student in the form of in-class performances of monologues and in scene work with partners. Students are expected to be fully memorized for these performances and will be expected to submit written analysis for each performance, the content of which will vary according to the student's development of skills.

Expectations of Monologue Work

- Thorough written analysis/prep-work
- Clear through-line of thought
- Clarity of objective(s)
- Clarity of tactics
- Vocal exploration
- Physicality
- Presentations are fully memorized at the time of first performance

Expectations of Scene Work

- Thorough written analysis/prep-work
- Both characters “live” in the same world
- Clear through-line of thought
- Clarity in objective(s)
- Clarity in tactics
- Vocal explorations
- Physicality
- Presentations are fully memorized at time of Performance

Students will maintain a weekly journal detailing their observations regarding class work and the development of their skills. The course concludes in a final performance utilizing the skills and techniques acquired throughout the semester.
Required Texts

- *Scripts provided by yourself or the instructor*

Course Requirements

1. **Participation and Attendance (50%)** Your presences and involvement are essential to classroom discussion, but also for your own growth as an artist and academic.
   - A – Student shows a heightened level of attention, commitment, and effort.
   - B – Student shows an acceptable level of attention, commitment, and effort.
   - C – Student is present and not disruptive or obviously disengaged,
   - D – Student is present and mildly disruptive or disengaged.
   - F – Student is present and significantly disruptive or disengaged.
   - 0 – Student is not present or asked to leave class.

You are expected to attend every class unless pre-approved by the instructor. 5 or more unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

2. **Performance Work (50%)**

   - Monologue (15%) – You will rehearse and perform a new one-minute monologue of your choosing. It should be from a realistic play written in the last 30 years, and a piece that would be appropriate for you to use in a professional audition.

   - Directing Scenes Performance (10%) – You will audition for the Beginning Directing class and perform in two of the scenes directed by those students. You will turn in a journal of your rehearsal experience.

   - Class Scene Performance (20%) – You will perform a scene assigned to you. You will also turn in an analysis for this piece, which will be detailed in class and on d2l. If elements in the play are not comfortable for you, please discuss them with me, and we will find a solution that works for both of us.

**GRADES**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation and Attendance 50%</th>
<th>90-100 = A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Work 50%</td>
<td>80-90 = B</td>
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<td>70-80 = C</td>
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<td>60-70 = D</td>
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<td>0-59 = F</td>
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Attendance Policy

Attendance will be taken at the top of class every period. Being punctual and prepared is an expectation in any field of study, or system of employment. Class attendance and enthusiastic participation is the most important part of your success in this class. Your attendance and punctuality is crucial for building an ensemble, understanding the material, and respecting your fellow actor and the work itself.

"Everybody gets one". Everyone will get one unexcused, “Whoops I overslept”, “I am not feeling it today” absence. After 2 unexcused absences, the student's final grade will go down by one letter (A to B, for example) 3 or More (B to C), after 4 unexcused absences, the student is advised to drop the course. Missing a Midterm or Final performance or 5 or more unexcused absences will result in an F for the semester. After 7 Absences, excused or unexcused, the student will receive an F for the semester.

For Excused absences, the student can ONLY make up 15% of the coursework.

An excused absence is one that has been cleared with the instructor at least one hour prior to the beginning of class.

Be on time. Surprises happen, sometimes we run behind, but excessive lateness will not be tolerated. Your classmates rely on you in order to do the exercises/work the scenes. Don't do it for me. Do it for them.

Participation

"Art resides in the quality of doing; process is not magic." — Charles Eames

This is an experience based course, and you are expected to participate and commit with a generous heart, an open mind and a devoted work ethic. You are not graded on 'talent' in this class, you are graded on your Quality of Doing — there is no progress without putting in the work.

Rehearsal

You are expected to rehearse with your fellow actors outside of class, as part of the collaborative nature of theatre. We will discuss your outside rehearsals in class. Both in-class and outside scene work/rehearsal usually requires notes to be taken — please be prepared.

Play Attendance

Observation is critical in furthering your own skills as a practitioner. You are required to attend both Mainstage productions (The Piano Lesson & Once Upon a Mattress). Student tickets are available at the box office 8am-5pm, or their phone number is 936.468.6407. If there are any issues or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out to me.
A Note on Our Work and The Space

The “classroom” is a sacred space where we get to strip away the facades of socialization, explore truth, and play. Respect the space and your fellow artists. Disruptions and/or disrespect of the space will NOT be tolerated.

Your success in this class will be directly proportionate to your willingness to learn and perform ALL of the exercises presented. Not every exercise will work for everyone, but you must try them all. Showing excessive attitude and/or apathy towards exercises (saying stuff like, “This is dumb, I hate this, etc.”) harms you and your classmates’ ability to learn, and it is grounds to receive an “F” for any graded exercise. If you’re going to miss an Assessment Exercise, and you wish to do make-up work, you must notify the instructor by email prior to the date of the missed exercise. In regards to missing work, the instructor reserves the discretion to fail the student outright, and/or adjust the student’s final grade in any way, regardless of the student’s grade percentage earned in the class.

One of the most valuable skills to take away from this class is observing others work and expressing constructive critique. Be kind and generous, and be honest. Some of the greatest ways to improve your own work is to see the greatness in those around you and dissect how they achieved it. This is not an opportunity for bullying. Bullying destroys creative energy and trust. It will NOT be tolerated.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Turn it off. An acting class is a safe place for people to explore and experiment with the art of acting. This cannot happen when people are buried in your phones. It is not only disrespectful to those who are working in the room, but it severely detracts from your growth as well as you lose opportunities to observe and learn from your fellow classmates. If you are expecting an emergency call or text, please communicate with me prior to class beginning. If caught on your phone, you will be warned once. After that, you will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent. Please, just turn it off.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty and abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are: (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or
ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf.

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Student Wellness and Well-Being**

SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

**On-campus Resources:**

The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)  
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents  
936.468.7249  
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202  
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp  
936.468.1041  
The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”  
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services


**Crisis Resources:**

- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- joCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

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**DAILY PLAN/COURSE OUTLINE**

**SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH NOTICE**

***This plan may be altered to meet the needs of the class at the discretion of the instructor.***

**Week One (Jan 22) M - Syllabus and Course Requirements/Why are you here?**

**Homework:** “What Does Acting Mean To Me?”

- Your thoughts on what you hope to take away from this course. What are your current perceptions, thoughts and feelings on the term “acting”
- Maybe from your experiences with the craft or your thoughts in general on the topic. Typed, double spaced, MLA, 12pt font, 1 page

**W - What is Acting? & Exercises**

**Homework:** Journal about it

**F - Choosing a Monologue/What Makes a Good Monologue?**
BEGIN LOOKING FOR MONOLOGUE

UNIT ONE: COMMUNITY AND ART - “ONE FOR ALL ALL FOR ONE”

Homework: Journal about it

W - Communal Breath: Relaxation/Meditation & Imagination
Homework: Journal about it

F - Energy: Support, Empower, Enhance & What is Collaboration
Homework: Journal about it

MONOLOGUE CHOICE DUE

UNIT TWO: THE ACTOR & THEIR “WAY IN”

Week 3 (Feb 5) M - Outside/In or Acting with Affectations VS. Inside/Out
Homework: Journal about it

W - Exercises & Endowment
Homework: Journal about it

F - Exercises and Memorization
Homework: Journal about it

UNIT THREE: THE ACTOR & THEIR TEXT

Week 4 (Feb 12) M - Given Circumstances or the 5 W’s
Homework: Journal about it

W - Objectives
Homework: Journal about it

F - Tactics
Homework: Journal about it

Week 5 (Feb 19) M - The Super Objective
Homework: Journal about it
W - Beats: Objectives and Tactics
Homework: Journal about it

MONOLOGUE MEMORIZED

F - Beats: Objectives and Tactics
Homework: Journal about it

UNIT FOUR: THE ACTOR AND THE IMAGINATION

Week 6 (Feb 26)  
M - What does it mean to imagine?
Homework: Journal about it
W - Growtovsky and Animal Work with Monologue
Homework: Journal about it
F - Animal Work with Scenes
Homework: Journal about it

Week 7 (March 4)  
M - The Actor and Identity
Homework: Journal about it
W - The Actor and Identity
Homework: Journal about it
F - Monologue Workshop

SPRING BREAK MARCH 9-17

Week 8 (Mar 18)  
M - MIDTERM - Present Monologue and Assign Scenes
Homework: Journal about it

UNIT FIVE: SCENES

W - Dramatic Structure
Homework: Journal about it
F - THE PLAY
Homework: Journal about it
**DIRECTING SCENE AUDITIONS - MARCH 24 1pm in the UPSTAGE**

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<th>Week 9 (Mar 25)</th>
<th>M - Rehearsal Techniques</th>
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<td>Homework: Journal about it</td>
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<td>W - Beats &amp; Objectives</td>
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<td>F - Objectives and Tactics</td>
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<th>Week 10 (Apr 1)</th>
<th>M - Improv</th>
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<td>Homework: Journal about it</td>
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<td>W - Coach Scenes in class</td>
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<td>Homework: Journal about it</td>
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<td>F - NO CLASS EASTER BREAK</td>
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<th>Week 11 (Apr 8)</th>
<th>M - TBA</th>
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<th>Week 12 (Apr 15)</th>
<th>M - Scene Coaching</th>
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<td>Homework: Journal about it</td>
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<td>W - Scene Coaching</td>
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</table>
Homework: Journal about it

F - Scene Coaching

Homework: Journal about it

Week 13 (Apr 22)

M - NO CLASS - Directing Scenes Rehearsal

Homework: Journal about it

W - NO CLASS - Directing Scenes Rehearsal

Homework: Journal about it

F - NO CLASS - Directing Scenes Rehearsal

Homework: Journal about it

Week 14 (Apr 29)

M - NO CLASS - Directing Scenes Performed

Homework: Journal about it

W - NO CLASS - Directing Scenes Performed

Homework: Journal about it

F - NO CLASS - Directing Scenes Performed

Homework: Journal about it

MONDAY, MAY 6, 10:30-12:30pm FINAL & JOURNALS DUE