

USC School of Dramatic Arts

**Accent Reduction for the Professional
Practice and Theory
Fall 2015 6:00 to 8:50 p.m. Thursdays
Location: MCC 106
Instructor: Kathleen Dunn-Muzingo
Office: McClintock Bldg. Adjunct Office-2nd Floor
Office Hours: 4-6 Tuesdays
Contact Information: kdunn@usc.edu**

Course Description and Overview

An introduction to speaking Professional American English clearly and dynamically. The purpose of this course is to serve students who wish to gain experience and confidence in speaking Professional American English. There is an element of short performances as a means of exploring and expressing, but it will be geared toward the non-actor

Course Scope: Through class exercises, warm ups, presentations, and discussion students will begin to apply elements of healthy professional speech and voice through the study of American English. Through journaling, vocal practice and sound identification, the student will begin to experience the specific features and elements of clear, effective speech. These experiences are to provide the student concrete skills in developing their own unique and expressive voice that supports the student in presentation work, daily life and simple communication.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- 1. Identify the basic features of clarity, pronunciation and dynamics of Professional American English and begin to apply these new sensations in simple conversations and basic presentations.**
- 2. Compose a repertoire of situations that utilize Professional American English in the areas of simple conversation to a professional presentation in the field of student interest.**
- 3. Begin to develop power, range, and clarity by taking part in group warm ups focusing on consonant, and vowel features as well as healthy volume.**
- 4. Gain experience in spontaneous expression, by participating in partner exercises**
- 5. Gain more confidence in Professional American English through classroom exercises, conversation, and presentation.**
- 6. Identify and apply the basic theories of clarity and pronunciation through journaling about the use of vocal concepts in daily life events.**

**Prerequisite(s): As this is not a course in English grammar, so please adhere to university policy of having successfully completed the appropriate standardized tests and English Proficiency Criteria prior to taking this course.
<http://www.usc.edu/admission/undergraduate/firstyear/prospective/international.html>**

Required Materials: Notebook and Folder

Required Textbook: The Use and Training of the Human Voice by Arthur Lessac

Description of Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments

There is a total of 400 points for this course. It is based on points earned and averaged at the end of the semester. Paper work and assignments are due on the due date. Each day an assignment is late, ten points will be deducted from the initial grade. Three days past due, the assignment will no longer be accepted. No make ups for missed rehearsals or presentations.

Participation/Class Exercises	40 points
Journal Entries of Process	60 points
Three Voice Projects	300 points

Breakdown of graded areas:

Participation/Class Exercises:

Class exercises are planned for each class period as well as participation in a class warm up. The exercises will vary depending on student need and progression, and some exercises will be assigned and completed the same class period. The class warm-up is progressive with new elements being introduced each class period so that at the end of the semester, the student will have acquired a basic warm-up for American speech. Taking part in class discussion, warm ups and exercises are designed to support your speech projects. 40 points (3 points per class)

Journal Submissions:

In recording journal entries, the student will begin to understand the concept of self-teaching through habitual awareness in order to melt away vocal and physical habits which impede healthy, clear speech. It is the student's responsibility to carry what is learned outside the classroom, and the journal aids in that awareness.

Each week, the student will be given a vocal concept to apply in his/her daily life and practice. The student is expected to write a paragraph about a discovery or experience utilizing the concept in his/her daily life and practice. The Journals will be picked up twice during the semester, the first set of entries will be mid-semester and the second set of entries will be the final week of class. Specific dates can be found in the tentative schedule attached.

Three Speech Projects totaling 300 points:

There will be a total of three projects during the semester. For the first two projects, the material or speech should be written out and identified with the appropriate markings. For each presentation, the student is required to complete an in-class rehearsal.

Speech Project I: Consonant Energy Presentations of Short Selections

Speech Project II: Passion Project. Talk about someone who has inspired you, or share your favorite poem.

Speech Project III: Construct a presentation based on your major course of study.

DESCRIPTION OF GRADING CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS

Speech Project I: Consonant Energy Presentations of Short Selections- Short poems or five lines of text will be provided for your choosing. We will work as a group in exploring how to mark for clarity which will serve as a basis of how to wood shed your own speeches you create in the future. After marking, we will learn sight reading, memorization and rehearsal methods in presenting the short selections. This will be the foundation on how to present further vocal projects during the semester. Although memorization is suggested, it is not mandatory. However the project should be done to the expressive ability of the individual.

Speech Project II: Passion Project. Talk about someone who has inspired you, or share your favorite poem or famous speech. Speaking with passion or telling a personal story will help build spontaneous, emotional based speaking. This section will particularly focus on the use of vowels as a gateway to openness and warmth. We will learn to mark and identify for vowels. We will continue to work with consonants and clarity of thought. If you choose a favorite poem or famous speech, it does not have to be memorized, but done to the expressive ability of the individual.

Speech Project III: Construct a presentation based on your major course of study. This will be accumulation of all the marking and rehearsing techniques studied this far and its application to your personal field of expertise. You may use notes and visuals to aid your presentations.

Each project will contain the following breakdown:

<i>Written: Identification of consonant-vowel features in speech</i>	<i>50 points</i>
<i>Rehearsal: In class rehearsal and excercises</i>	<i>25 points</i>
<i>Performance/Presentation: In class performance-presentation</i>	<i>25 points</i>

To calculate your grade, each unit is valued at 100 points or 100%

Participation/Class Exercises/Journal Entries of Process	100%
Three Speech Projects (see above for breakdown)	100% for each

SCHOOL OF DRAMATIC ARTS GRADING POLICIES:

1. No late papers, exams, projects, etc. shall be accepted unless advance extensions have been arranged between the student and the teacher, or unless exceptional circumstances occur.
2. There are no unexcused absences allowed. See policy below for excused absences.
3. A grade of IN (incomplete) shall only be awarded under exceptional circumstances, according to University Policy.
4. Grading Scale for SDA: A indicates work of excellent quality; B of good quality; C of average quality; D of below average quality; and F indicates inadequate work.

94-100	A	4.0	74-76	C	2.0
90-93	A-	3.7	70-73	C-	1.7
87-89	B+	3.3	67-69	D+	1.3
84-86	B	3.0	64-66	D	1.0
80-83	B-	2.7	60-63	D-	0.7
<u>77-79</u>	<u>C+</u>	<u>2.3</u>	<u>0-59</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>0</u>

Submission Requirements for Assignments:

Text Identifications: Xerox and Double Space your speech/text. Mark for the appropriate features. Submit either a hard copy to instructor or scan and send via email.

Journal Entries: Maybe hand written, if your handwriting is legible, and hard copy submitted to the instructor. Entries may also be a double spaced WORD DOC via email. All assignments are due on the due date at 11:59 p.m.

Reading Assignments: The Use and Training of the Human Voice by Arthur Lessac

Week 1	Chapters 1 to 4
Week 2-5	Consonant Energy Chapter 5
Week 6 -9	Music of the Vowels Chapters 7 to 8
Week 10	Dynamics of Tonal Energy Chapters 6
Week 11-15	Reaping What We Sow Chapters 9 to 11

Final Examination Date:

Final Exam is December 11th 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP: http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, (www.usc.edu/scampus or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.