**USC**School of Dramatic Arts

**Theatre 352b (63068R) – Intermediate Acting II**

**Spring 2015 - Tuesday, Thursday 3:00 – 4:50 PM**

**Location: MCC 111**

**Instructor: John DeMita**

**Office: JEFF 201a, Second Floor**

**Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday, 10 AM – 12 PM and by appointment.**

**Contact Info:** [**demita@usc.edu**](mailto:demita@usc.edu) **/ 213-716-1485**

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**Course Description and Overview**

Continuation of world drama. Class performance and critique.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this course students should understand and be able to demonstrate facility with the following:

* Analyze text in the creation of compelling characters and situations.
* Examine a scene from a play of period style and heightened language in the realm of Jacobean, Restoration or 19th Century comedy, as well from a more contemporary play.
* Construct a strong physical and vocal presentation, including clear articulation and use of appropriate dialect.
* Define and execute strong intentions on stage.
* Practice and test concentration on stage.
* Create and utilize a strong, detailed environment for the character.
* Employ a variety of tactics, while executing with intention.

**Prerequisite**

Theatre 352a.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

* *The Way of the World,* by William Congreve.
* *The Country Wife,* by William Wycherly
* *Design for Living* and *Hay Fever,* by Noel Coward.
* Scenes, research, and exercises assigned by the instructor and available for download on the Blackboard website for the course.
* Mandatory Rehearsal Clothing:
  + Women – Long Skirts (floor length, preferably), Hard Shoes (no flip flops, sneakers, boots), Handkerchief, Folding Fan, Mask.
  + Men – Long Sleeve Collared Shirt, Jacket, Long Pants (no shorts), Hard Shoes (no flip flops, sneakers, boots), Snuff Box, Handkerchief, Walking Stick, (wooden dowel, umbrella acceptable).

**Recommended Texts**

* *Style: Acting in High Comedy,* by Maria Aitken
* *Playing Period Plays*, by Lyn Oxenford
* *Acting in Restoration Comedy,* by Simon Callow

**Description of Grading Criteria and Assessment of Assignments**

***Performances, exercises and written assignments will be assessed using the following guidelines:***

* Written assignments (character analysis, character biographies, etc.) must be turned in on or before the scheduled due date. Late work will not be accepted.
* Written assignments MUST be submitted by email unless a special arrangement has been made between the student and the professor. Do not turn in hard copies in class unless requested!
* Credit will be given for any in-class exercise performed on or before the scheduled deadline, and in a manner that reflects thoroughness of preparation. This includes the utilization of props, costumes, and confident memorization of text.
* If a student is concerned about their grade or progress in class, they should make an appointment to discuss this with the professor. Midterm grades will reflect only a “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory” score.

**Assessment of “Participation”**

***15% of the final grade is earned through class participation. This will be defined as:***

* Show up on time – students who are more than 5 minutes late are considered tardy. Three unexcused tardy arrivals will result in a deduction of 5 points from the final grade, unless special arrangements have been made with the professor.
* Printed copies of all scenes, monologues and play scripts must be brought to every class meeting. No electronic copies (laptops, tablets, phones) may be used in class. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
* Appropriate rehearsal clothing and props for **ALL EXERCISES AND IN CLASS REHEARSALS.**
* Openness to new methods of working and eagerness to attempt them.
* In class active student analysis and commentary on text.
* Constructive feedback on classmates’ acting presentations.
* Energized support of all classmates’ work.
* Willingness to experiment and apply the constructive feedback of professor and fellow students on ones own work.
* Meeting all assignment deadlines.
* Memorization of assigned material.
* Availability to fellow classmates to rehearse outside class.

**Note:** *If a student misses a deadline because of a partner’s unavailability, the available partner will not be penalized. If problems arise, a discussion with the professor with all involved must be arranged before the day of the scheduled scene or everyone will be held equally accountable.* ***BEFORE ANY SCENE MAY BE REHEARSED ON ITS FEET IN CLASS, THERE MUST BE A MINIMUM OF 4 HOURS OF OUTSIDE REHEARSAL.***

**Grading Breakdown**

Feedback, assessment, and grading of the course will be based on the successful completion of the following assignments by their assigned due dates:

Paraphrase / Operatives Monologue 5 Points (5% of grade)

Monologue Performance 10 Points (10% of grade)

Written Analysis of Scenes (10 points each) 20 Points (20% of grade)

Solo Performance Assignment 10 Points (10% of grade)

Scene 1 Performance 20 Points (20% of grade)

Scene 2 Performance 20 Points (20% of grade)

Cumulative Class Participation 15 Points (15% of grade)

Total 100 Points

**FOR ALL ASSIGNMENTS, POINTS WILL BE DETERMINED AS FOLLOWS:**

**100% - Excellent:** clear understanding of the class material is coupled with original and creative insight and confident preparation

**75% - Good**: class material has been understood clearly and performed competently

**50% - Average**: class material has been generally understood, but gaps in understanding and performance remain

**25% - Poor**: there are identifiable gaps in the understanding of class material, as well as deficiencies in basic requirements such as memorization, blocking, etc.

**0% - Unacceptable:** work was not completed on time, with no communication with professor or student partners

*When the GPA falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class have been excellent or good and toward the negative end of the scale for those with average or poor attendance and participation.*

**GRADING SCALE**

A = 96-100 points

A- = 91-95 points

B+ = 88-90 points

B = 85-87 points

B- = 81-84 points

C+ = 78-80 points

C = 75-77 points

C- = 71-74 points

D+ = 68-70 points

D = 65-67 points

D- = 61-64 points

F = 60 or below

The final course grade is articulated as a Letter Grade. This grade is translated into a G.P.A using the following scale:

**A = 4; A- = 3.7; B+ = 3.3; B = 3; B- = 2.7; C+ = 2.3; C = 2; C- = 1.7; D = 1; F = 0.**

When the average falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students whose attendance and participation in class has been good, but will be weighted toward the negative end of the scale for those with poor attendance and participation.

**CALENDAR (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

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| Week 1 | Introductions. Discuss student expectations and semester goals.  Articulation and Physical Warm-Ups.  **ASSIGN:** MonologuesParaphrase / Subtext Worksheet. Read “The Way of the World.”  **DOWNLOAD / PRINT:** Monologue Selections. |
| Weeks 2 - 3 | Vocal and Physical Exercises.  **DUE 1/19: First 10 Lines of Monologues MEMORIZED.**  Rehearse Monologues in Class. |
| Week 4 | Monologue Review.  Discuss and Cast Scene 1 “The Way of the World.” SCENE PARTNERS MUST SCHEDULE OUTSIDE REHEARSALS BEFORE CASTING IS FINALIZED.  **DUE 2/2: All Monologues Must Be Fully Memorized.**  **DUE 2/4: First Pass Monologue Performances, Paraphrase / Operative Worksheets Turned In.**  **DOWNLOAD / ASSIGN:** Scene 1 Paraphrase, Character Analysis Worksheet. |
| Week 5-7 | Rhetoric and Movement Exercises.  Rehearse Scene 1.  **DUE 2/9: Second Pass Monologue Performances.**  **DUE 2/16: Scene 1 Paraphrase, Character Analysis.**  **DUE 2/16: Scene 1 Must Be Memorized.** |
| Week 8 | **3/1: Scene 1 Performances and Feedback**.  Read “Design for Living” and “Hay Fever,” by Noel Coward  **DOWNLOAD / ASSIGN:** Solo Performance Exercise. Song interpretations. |
| Week 9 | Discuss and Cast Scene 2: “Design for Living” and “Hay Fever” SCENE PARTNERS MUST SCHEDULE OUTSIDE REHEARSALS BEFORE CASTING IS FINALIZED.  **DOWNLOAD / ASSIGN:** Character Analysis Worksheet #2. |
| Week 10 | **SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS** |
| Week 11 | Exercise: Cigarettes, Cocktails, and Conversations.  **DUE: 3/22, 3/24 Solo Performance Exercise (SCHEDULED)** |
| Weeks 12- 16 | Scene 2 Rehearsals  **DUE 4/5: Scene 2 Must Be Memorized.**  **DUE 4/21:** Character Analysis Worksheet #2.  **DUE 4/28: Scene 2 Performances and Feedback**. |
| TBA | **FINAL EXAM** |

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences.  Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards<https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>.  Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable.  See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university.  You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu/> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>.  This is important for the safety whole USC community.  Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person.  *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage [sarc@usc.edu](mailto:sarc@usc.edu) describes reporting options and other resources.

## **Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing.  Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more.  Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html>provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.  If an officially  declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* [*http://emergency.usc.edu/*](http://emergency.usc.edu/)will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.