

USC School of Dramatic Arts

THTR 140B - Voice I

Units: 2.0

Spring 2018—T/Th—Time: 2-3:50pm

Location: MCC 107

Instructor: Lauren Murphy Yeoman

Office: JEF 203

**Office Hours: T/Th 12:00-1:00pm,
or by appointment**

Contact info: laurenmu@usc.edu

Course Description

We will complete the Linklater voice progression begun in the first semester, acquiring a complete vocal system as a daily actor practice. From the principles of freeing and opening, we move into strengthening and developing, to become both loose AND strong, always through seeking maximum effect for minimum effort. From the foundation you have established of (i) releasing habit tensions and (ii) releasing breath and sound, we will examine 3-4 octave range expansion, enlarging breath capacity, dynamic articulation, and bigger sounds. We are conditioning your voice for greater demands of expression and language - heightened energy, longer thoughts, complex meaning and feeling. This will lead to long-form text work on contemporary scenes and Master American Playwrights, and using vocal dynamics of pitch, rhythm, volume and tone to shape speaking with intention. The overall goal is to allow your voice to serve your imagination and interpretation of character and text.

Everyone will also be required to lead a warm-up through the full progression of voice exercises. In small teams, you will plan a 20-minute warm-up to take the group through. This is for each member of the ensemble to glean independent understanding of the voice exercises. To learn something deeply, you must teach it.

Learning Objectives

- * Individual: To build and sharpen your tools and abilities for authentic dynamism of voice.
- * Ensemble: To further become both the one and the all in your BFA cohort: the individual dedication of each ensemble member contributing to the progress of the whole group.
- * Overall: To bridge the voice work directly into acting work, moving from personal into character and from expression into action. The raw materials of self will now be used to create transformational art. It is important to ascend to new levels of commitment, work ethic, hunger and inquiry.

Prerequisite Course: THTR 140 A

Concurrent Enrollment: Students must be registered for lecture and lab

Required Reading

- *Freeing the Natural Voice: Imagery and Art in the Practice of Voice and Language* - Kristin Linklater revised and expanded (same text as Fall semester)
- Contemporary and Master American Playwright texts - will be supplied by Lauren

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Homework assignments and in-class work, including but not limited to Personal Writings, Team Warmups and Scene Work, will be graded based on understanding of the material, adherence to the parameters and fulfillment of the requirements.

No late or incomplete assignments or exercises will be accepted, except in the case of University-validated emergencies.

Grading and Evaluation

Class Work and Participation - 40%

Personal Writings - 10%

Team Warmups - 15%

Midterm Scenes - 15%

Final Scenes - 20%

Grading Scale

Excellent quality: A = 100-94; A- = 93-90

Good quality: B+ = 89-86; B = 85-84; B- = 83-80

Average quality: C+ = 79-76; C = 75-74; C- = 73-70

Poor quality: D = 60's

Fail: F = 59 and below

Notes on Grading

-“Excellent” means that clear understanding of the class material is coupled with original and creative insight; “good” means that the class material has been understood clearly; “average” means that the class material has been generally understood, but gaps in understanding remain; “poor” means that there are identifiable gaps in the understanding of class material; “failure” means that gaps in the completion of work is coupled with poor understanding of class material.
-When the mathematic 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 Breakdown

A-excellent quality

B-good quality

C-fair quality

D-poor quality

F-fail

Attendance

Learning in class depends on the layering of intellectual and emotional discovery resulting from the consistent active exploration of 100% of your BFA Acting Ensemble. **No absences or tardies are allowed. Cumulative active class participation points will be lost.** Voice Class participation points will also be lost by absences and tardies in your acting and movement

classes for the same reason. *Attendance is weighted at no more than 15% as per University Guidelines.*

Class Meetings

Tues, Thurs 2:00-3:50

Location: MCC 107

Final Exam

Thursday May 3rd 2-4pm

Final Scenes by Master American Playwrights

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

Subject to change with pacing and needs of class

Week 1: 1/9, 1/11

Check in with state of post-break body and breath as we plunge back into basic voice. Where are you in your life and with your work?

Homework: * Follow the Reading Schedule to read chapters covered in class work

* Write journal reflection on class work from the week

Week 2: 1/16, 1/18

Review the voice progression and delve into the next sections - resonating cavities of multi-octave range; power breathing to support upper resonators.

Homework: * Follow the Reading Schedule to read chapters covered in class work

* Write journal reflection on class work from the week

Weeks 3-4: 1/23, 1/25, 1/30, 2/1

Lauren is away on MFA Audition Tour. Natsuko Ohama will be subbing and teaching you the rest of the progression. Prepare for student-led warmups. Testing review of progression in body.

Homework: * Follow the Reading Schedule to read chapters covered in class work

* Write journal reflection on class work from the week

Week 5: 2/6, 2/8

Lauren is back, student-led warmups AND first rounds of Contemporary Scenes begin.

Homework: TBA

Weeks 6-9: 2/13-3/8

Continue student-led warmups and scene work. You will be learning ways of working, rehabilitating language and absorbing text on visceral and practical levels. Text exercises will involve many different ways to explore and will depend on what is observed to be needed. We cannot predict at this point, but we will be working intensely. As you know, supporting others by listening and learning is going to be the most efficient thing you can do for yourself.

Homework: TBA

SPRING BREAK (March 11-18)

Week 10: 3/20, 3/22

Final Scenes will be assigned and fluid explorations continue. Keeping a sense of the build-up of the work, invoking the learnings of technique as the stakes are raised.

Weeks 11-14: 3/27-4/19

Work on Final Scenes, in the same vein as contemporary scenes to deepen and further the goals you have been identifying through the early phase of work.

Week 15: 4/24-4/26

Bring Final Scenes to fruition, potential sharing of rehearsal process with BFA faculty.

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://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety>. This is important for the safety of the 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 <http://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> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.