

USC School of Dramatic Arts

THTR 252b-62815R Intermediate Acting
Term— Spring 2018
Day-Time Tuesday/Thursday 8:00AM-9:50AM
Location: PED 206
Instructor: Christine Estabrook
Office: TBD
Office Hours: by appointment
Tues Thurs 2:00-3:30 PED 205
Contact Info: email: mestabro@usc.edu,
cell 818-681-6993

Course Description

1. The combination of the class discussion and execution of assigned exercises will come together and enhance the student's recognition of theme, and representation of characters, as a reflection of the playwrights' era.
2. The student actors will be guided and contribute as a ensemble in bringing the playwrights's vision to fruition. The art of acting relies on the ensemble. Therefore, an actor's self-discipline, affects the success of the class as a whole.

Learning Objectives

1. The student will learn how to bring a text to life through thoroughly investigating the text and targeting the moral and cultural climate prevalent in the 1910-1941 American sensibility.
2. The student will learn the importance of the actor's responsibility to the text, and his fellow actors in the class.
3. By using the techniques developed from all Class Work, Exercises, Interpretation of Text, Imagination, Observation, Character Improv, and Action, We will mount the scenes (casting designated by the teacher) from each play.
4. Each actor will participate with a total (100%) commitment in contributing to class discussion, class exercises, and constructive feedback on performance of scenes.
5. The scenes will be rehearsed by the students "out of class" as well as "in class".

Recommended Preparation: A practical understanding of all that is described in the course overview plus the development of professional work habits
Prerequisite(s): THTR 101, THTR 3 and THTR 252a.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

The plays: “The Children’s Hour” by Lillian Hellman, “Golden Boy” by Clifford Odets, “You Can’t Take It With You” by Moss Hart and George S Kaufman, and “ Our Town” by Thornton Wilder. All are available at USC Bookstore.

Supplementary materials

any historical accounts of the American life from 1910-1941
any internet sources or information from .com (history) or any .edu or .org.
Please avoid wikipedia.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

- *Every play must be read by EVERY student prior to class breakdown.
- *There will be no late assignments accepted. Assignments are accepted on the due date.
- *Written assignments (hard copy only) must be handed to the teacher on the due date.

Grades are determined by:

- 1.Active participation in the classroom regarding the breakdown and analysis of each text as reflected politically, morally, and culturally in America from 1910-1941.
2. A 100% commitment to willingly participate and cooperate with fellow students involving exercises, discussions of all class material, constructive feedback on scene-work, and incorporation of acting ideas and feedback concerning the improvisations, and plays.
3. A commitment to rehearsing and availability to scene PARTNER as a “work in progress” both inside and outside of the class.
4. The MEMORIZATION of scene assignments as they are a necessity for the in-class scene and monologue work.
- 5.Written Assignment which will be a one page essay question covering application of the class breakdown regarding a play discussed in class.
6. Grades are never determined by the teacher’s subjective idea of talent.

Grading Points Breakdown:

- Theatre exercise and games..... 5 points
- Bus station, train depot, or airplane waiting room Improv.... 5 points
- One-word Scene Exercise..... 10 points
- Midterm- monologue. Performed in class. Specifics to be determined by teacher.....15 points

- Oral discussion of class breakdown when applied to EVERY play5 points
- Written assignment (answering a question posed by the teacher, one 1/2 pages) regarding the class Breakdown as applied to one of the plays...5 points
- Oral presentation of 1910-1941 historical research 5 points
- Textual analysis of plays 5 points
- In class, Acting work on assigned scenes from plays..... 20 points(15)
- Cumulative Active Class Participation 10 points
- FINAL: scene presentations of assigned scenes from plays 15 points

TOTAL.... 100

points.

Grading Scale:

Excellent: A (4) = 100-96; A- (3.7) = 95-90 (clear understanding of class material coupled with original and creative insight)

Good: B+ (3.3) = 89-86; B (3) = 85-84; B- (2.7) = 83-80 (class material has been understood clearly)

Average: C+ (2.3) = 79-76; C (2) = 75-74; C- (1.7) = 73-70 (class material has been generally understood, but gaps in understanding remain)

Poor: D (.7-1.3) = 60's (there are identifiable gaps in the understanding of class material)

Fail: F (0) = 59 and below (gaps in completion of work and poor understanding of class material.)

Further Grading Notes:

- If the GPA falls between two grades, the final grade will be weighted toward the positive end of the scale for students with excellent/good attendance & class participation and toward the negative end of the scale for those with average/poor attendance & participation.
- If your work in class is unsatisfactory, you will be warned before the deadline for dropping the course with a grade of W. I will be happy to discuss your work at any time.

Additional Policies

Attendance is of primary importance in this class. The intellectual and emotional response to a playwrights voice is only understood in an ensemble atmosphere made-up of cooperation and a focus of energy by the entire class regarding the material assigned in the classroom and for outside rehearsal. Therefore attendance is of the utmost importance. Points will be subtracted from the grade for tardiness and absence. In accordance with the university policy it will not be more than 15% of the grade.

- Except for water, no food or drinks are allowed in class at any time.
- All students must help with the set up and strike of every class
- Students must place all extraneous belongings, (backpacks, sweaters, jackets, skateboards, laptops, cell phones, etc.) in the designated corner of the classroom at the start of class
- Students must be in proper rehearsal clothes (whatever they may be and understand that they change their clothes throughout the semester) at the start of class, promptly at 8 AM. NO FLIP FLOPS.

COURSE WEEK BY WEEK BREAKDOWN:

(The timeline is subject to change depending on the dynamics, pace and unpredictability of the creative process of any given class)

Week 1 (1/9/18, 1/11/18)—explanation and expectations of syllabus. Improvs, (Tiles, Nerf, 5 reels). (All improvs may be used as warmup for the semester.)

Waiting Room Improv Assignment is explained (no REAL cell phone use allowed in improv).

Week 2(1/16/18, 1/18/18)- assorted exercises AS WARMUP

2 classes of "Waiting Room Improv" Presentations with constructive class feedback discussion.

Homework-reading history focused on the economic, moral, and cultural mores which shaped years between 1910-1941 in America. Internet is possible source, Please look to history.com, .edu or .net.

Week 3(1/23/18, 1/25/18) Finish up Waiting Room Improv"

Presentations with constructive class feedback discussion.

Introduce and discuss "one word scene" Improv and explanation of action verb assignments.

Homework-reading history focused on the economic, moral, and cultural mores which shaped years between 1910-1941 in America. Internet is possible source, Please look to history.com, .edu or .net.

Week 4(1/30/18, 2/1/18) 2 days of Performances of "one word scene"

Using different action verbs and class discussion with constructive feedback.

Homework-reading history focused on the economic, moral, and cultural mores which shaped years between 1910-1941 in America.

Internet is possible source, Please look to history.com, .edu or .net.

Week 5(2/6/18, 2/8/18)- Class discussion on America culture in the years between 1910 and 1941.

HOMEWORK- start reading plays “The Children’s Hour”, “Golden Boy”, “You Can’t Take it With You” and “Our Town”

Week 6 (2/13/18, 2/15/18)- Introduction of the formal Class Breakdown to be used on all plays the rest of the semester.

Homework- continue reading of plays

Week 7(2/20/18, 3/22/18)- class discussion of breakdown of “The Children’s Hour” by Lillian Hellman. This will include information from our discussion of the cultural climate in America

Homework- monologues for Mid Term grade 3/1/18, 3/6/18,3/8/18.

Week 8(3/27/18,4/1/18)- In class Monologue presentation for Mid Term continues.

Homework- assignment of scene partners “The Children’s Hour”

Week 9(3/6/18, 3/8/18)- start “in class” rehearsal and constructive scene feedback from class of “The Children’s Hour”

Homework-rehearse “out of class”

SPRING BREAK (3/11/18, 3/18/18)

Week 10 (3/20/18,3/22/18)- class discussion of breakdown of “Golden Boy”

Homework- assignment of scene partners

Week 11 (3/27/18 3/29/18)- start “in class” rehearsal and constructive scene feedback from the class of “The Golden Boy”

Week 12 (4/3/18,4/5/18)- class discussion of breakdown of “You Can’t Take it With You”

Week 13 (4/10/18,4/12/18). start “in class” rehearsal and constructive scene feedback from the class of “You can’t Take it With You”

Week 14 (4/17/18, 4/19/18) class discussion of breakdown of “Our Town

Week 15 (4/24/18, 4/26/18) start “in class” rehearsal and constructive scene feedback from the class of “ Our Town”

Final Exam : May 9, 8AM-10PM The final will be Final Presentations of the SCENES rehearsed in class.

IMPORTANT DATES Spring 2018

Jan 15 Martin Luther King Day, university Holiday

Jan 26 Last day to register and add classes for Session 001

Feb 19 President’s Day, university holiday

Mar 11-18 Spring recess

April 27 Spring Semester classes end

April 28-May 1 Study Days

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 Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/student/scampus/part-b>. 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, intimate partner violence, stalking, and harassment are prohibited by the university. You are encouraged to report all incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity/Title IX Office* <http://equity.usc.edu> and/or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://dps.usc.edu>. This is important for the health and safety of the whole USC community. Faculty and staff must report any information regarding an incident to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide outreach and information to the affected party. The sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> fully describes reporting options. Relationship and Sexual Violence Services <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp> provides 24/7 confidential support.

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://ali.usc.edu>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://dsp.usc.edu> 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.

