

## USC School of Dramatic Arts

340B Section 63056D  
Spring 2018-T/TH 11:00 to 1 p.m.  
Location MCC 106

Instructor: Kathleen Dunn-Muzingo  
Office: JEF Bldg. Rm 200a  
Office Hours: TH/F 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
Email: [kdunn@usc.edu](mailto:kdunn@usc.edu)

Course Description and Overview: A Guided Study and Development of Dialect Acquisition and Voice Skills based on the foundational training acquired in 340A.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of 340B, the student will have:

- Continued development of voice and speech in the areas of articulation, resonance, and clarity to provide the student with professional vocal skills.
- Acquired vocal warm ups, text explorations and embodiment work culminating in performance work in the BFA show
- Created performances based on a concentrated training process involving research, text analysis, dialect training, and embodiment exercises, which will provide the actor tools for role creation for future projects.
- Acquired knowledge of various playwrights who specialize and contribute to voices in dramatic literature.
- Developed an appreciation of theatre as a cross-cultural and collaborative art form, where by pursuing authenticity in an accent-dialect, the student researches and embodies his/her role via socio-linguistics.
- Developed a unique repertoire of skilled dialects for voice over, film, and theatre

Pre-requisite(s): Dialects 340A / Concurrent with 315B and 320B

Course Materials:

Recommended readings: Stage Dialects by Jerry Blunt  
Required: Dialect Workbook –Kathleen Dunn-Muzingo  
Recording Device for Interviews

## DESCRIPTION OF GRADING CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS

Following is the grading criteria for School of Dramatic Arts-Departmental Policy

### **ATTENDANCE:**

#### **Absences/Tardiness:**

Learning in class depends on the layering of intellectual and emotional discovery resulting from the consistent active exploration of 100% of the 340a Ensemble. **No absences or tardies are allowed. Cumulative active class participation points will be lost.**

*Attendance by itself is weighted at no more than 15% as per University Guidelines*

- General guidelines for all written assignments: No late assignments, projects, exams, papers, or exercises shall be accepted unless advance extensions have been arranged between the student and the teacher or unless exceptional circumstances occur. See SDA guidelines as this is departmental policy.
- No unexcused absences allowed. See departmental policy.
- A BFA student can only be placed on probation once. See departmental policy.

Additional Instructor Guidelines for submission of work:

Surveys are to be emailed. Word Documents are preferred as the instructor can add notes. No taking photos of your written work and sending to the instructor, as this is difficult to see and evaluate. Sends of this nature will not be accepted.

Sound Labs can be turned in as hardcopies as you may want to draw and mark by Hand. If you submit a photo of your transcription your work will be considered late.

**GRADING BREAKDOWN:  
Three Dialect Units:**

**DIALECT UNIT 1  
GREAT EXPECTATIONS**

**Preparation Work: 100pts.**  
**Rehearsal/Performance 100pts.**  
**The two grades will be averaged into one grade for Great Expectations Unit**

***PREP WORK: 100 POINTS***

**Preparation and Practice Doc 50 points (No written survey necessary)**

Written observation of the basic elements of musicality, phrasing, intonation, vowel and consonant features, practice, and transcription of one hundred words of the source. Do not answer the survey questions, as this will be done in rehearsal with the cast. The document is due on the day of Living Sound Lab Explorations.

**Class Explorations: 50 pts.**

Living Sound Lab: The student will have the opportunity to bring 100 words of the source to life. The student will be graded on creative embodiment, consistent and accurate features and communication.

Iconic Image with Shared Object Story-. One of the assignments for Great Expectations is to prepare an improvised story of the character, in dialect, while sharing an object of importance. This is an opportunity to combine accent, imagination and physicality with improvised conversation. The student will be graded on embodiment of the accent, authenticity, accuracy and communication.

***REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE WORK: 100 pts.***

You will be graded on professional attendance of all classes and rehearsals for Great Expectations both in class and outside of class. What you do both in the classroom and outside will affect your overall grade. Show up, on time, warm up and be prepared to work both inside and outside of class.

How you creatively embody accent work will influence your rehearsal and performance grade.

## DIALECT UNIT 2

There will be one GROUP dialect project presentation unit during the semester, totaling 100 points.

### ***NEW YORK PROJECT UNIT: 200 POINTS***

The student will have two grades for the New York Unit. One grade for Prep and Practice totaling 100 points, and one grade for Rehearsal and Performance totaling 100 points. The two grades will be averaged into one grade at the completion of the unit.

PREP (100 points)

Preparation and Practice Document 75 points

Living Sound Lab 25 points

REHEARSAL AND PERFORMANCE (100 points)

Rehearsal of NY Scene 50points

Performance of NY Scene 50 points

#### ***Preparation and Practice Document (75pts)***

In being creative and specific in their voicing, actors spend hours honing their accent work. This document is designed to help you through the steps in dialect acquisition. The document has three parts: IPA Transcription of the first 100 words of your source, a written sound lab covering the basic features of the accent, and a short survey researching the background of the role you are bringing to life

#### ***Living Sound Lab: 25 pts***

Living Sound Lab: The student will have the opportunity to bring 100 words of the source to life and share as a monologue. The student will be graded on creative embodiment accurate and consistent features as well as communication.

#### ***Rehearsal and Performance of Short Scenes: 50 pts each.***

As this is a shortened unit. The student will apply the New York accent to short scenes utilizing the physical and vocal behaviors of the student's living sound lab. The student will be graded on physicality, accuracy of the NYC features and communication, and the ability to make adjustment and deepen character choices.

## DIALECT UNIT 3

### **Final Dialect Project:**

This project is according to individual student interest. It is an accumulation of all the skills of sound acquisition, voicing and bringing a self-studied accent to life.

Break Down:

PREP 100 Points

Practice and Preparation Doc 75 points

Living Sound Lab 25 points

PRACTICE: In Class Exercises and Participation exercises:

Recorded Interview	Complete/Incomplete
In Class Iconic Image Work	Complete/Incomplete
In Class Music Exercise	Complete/Incomplete

\*incompletes equal to 5 points off the final grade of the unit.

REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE 100 Points

Rehearsal	50 points
Performance	50 points

***Recorded Interview:*** (Complete/Incomplete)

You are required to interview a real person for this exercise. It is about deepening the humanity and nuances of your studied dialect. If you are working on the same accent, you may share interviews. Interviews in person preferably. The recorded interviews will be loaded on class blackboard to have for your library. Interviews will be shared throughout the course as the students acquire them. Failure to complete an interview will result in five points off the unit.

*Viggo Mortenson spent time talking to Russian prisoners for his role in Eastern Promises. Forrest Whitaker in Last King of Scotland went to Uganda prior to shooting to absorb the culture and learned Swahili, this informed his accented English.*

***Preparation and Practice Document (75pts)***

In being creative and specific in their voicing, actors spend hours honing their accent work. This document is help you through the steps in making your dialect more specific. The document has three parts: IPA Transcription of the first 100 words of your source, a written sound lab covering the basic features of the accent, and a short survey researching the background of the role you are bringing to life.

***Living Sound Lab: (20 pts)*** The student will have the opportunity to bring 100 words of the source to life and share as a monologue. The student will be graded on creative embodiment and voicing.

***In Class Iconic Image Work:*** (Complete or Incomplete) Explorations in the structurals and behaviorals of the Character (not Source). The student will be graded on creative choices in bringing the character to life physically. Failure to participate in the Iconic exercises will result in a five-point deduction off the unit grade.

***In Class Music Exercise:*** (Complete or Incomplete) Allowing the rhythm and tempo of the music to inform body and voice as you speak the text. The exercise is to support the student in making new discoveries in voicing, tempo and expression. Failure to participate will result in a five-point deduction off the unit grade.

***Rehearsal and Performance*** (100 points)

The student will be graded on combining the body, voice and imagination in creative character work. The performance of the Dialect Project will serve as the final for this class.

## GRADES AND WHAT THEY MEAN:

This is according to SDA guidelines:

1. There shall be annual reviews of the progress of all MFA and BFA students.
2. Letter grades and marks are defined as follows:
  - A** work of **excellent quality**
  - B** work of **good** quality
  - C** work of **fair** quality for **undergraduate** credit **minimum passing** for **graduate** credit
  - C-** **failing grade** for **graduate credit**
  - D-** work of **minimum passing** quality for **undergraduate** credit
  - F** **failure** for undergraduate credit

## GRADING:

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

### Final note about Grading in Art and Acting, from the instructor:

This is an art-form composed of research, application, knowledge and presentation of skills in an organic and truthful performance. One must embody the dialect as a whole person and not as a technical dialect. Following are descriptions of grades in this class and their meaning:

#### **A: Exceptional**

Exceptional means understanding and embodying all criteria of the dialect. The student has done exceptional research and homework, attended all rehearsals and participated in all class room exercises. This grade also represents truthful, creative and authentic embodiment according to the circumstances and style of the text.

#### **B: Good**

Clear understanding of the features of the dialect, basic features and all assignments handed in on time. Perhaps there is an element of lateness to one of the assignments and the performance is technically proficient, but lacking creativity and communication.

#### **C: Average**

General basic understanding of the features. However, paperwork is missing and a gap in performance due to carelessness of words or understanding of the dialect.

#### **D/F: Lack of commitment/ No Show**

**USC BLACKBOARD:** Course information, announcement and materials will be posted on **BLACKBOARD**. Please check periodically for announcements. This program is new to the instructor, so have patience if there are glitches. **Grades, however, will NOT be posted on Blackboard. URL:** <https://blackboard.usc.edu>

## 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](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.

Please sign and return the student background information sheet as an acknowledgement of what is to be expected in the class.

Student Background Information:

List any experience in voice, speech and movement you have had—including hobbies and languages:

Do you have any physical injuries that will not allow you to do certain types of bending, shaking, and stretching of the body? Please Explain

What are your goals for this class?

Please sign and verify that you have read the syllabus and that you understand what is required of you in this class.

Signature

Date

Print Name

e-mail:

Phone:



Tentative Due Dates:

Week of January 9 <sup>th</sup>	Review Body Energies/ Voice Warmup Vowel Ladder/IPA Syllabus
Week of January 16 <sup>th</sup>	Dialects of Great Expectations
Week of January 23	Preparation and Practice Doc due on Great Expectations Living Sound Lab Work
Week of January 30	Read Thru of Great Expectations
Week of February 6 <sup>st</sup>	Iconic Image and Shared Object Stories
February 13 <sup>th</sup> to March 1 <sup>st</sup>	TBD as we culminate the work in all three classes
Week of March 6 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction to NYC accents Address Prep for Dialect Projects/Features of ‘Accented English’
Week of March 20 <sup>th</sup>	NY Preparation and Practice Document Due NY Living Sound Lab Share and Work Iconic Image
Week of 27 <sup>th</sup>	NY Short Scenes
Week of April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Final Projects: Preparation and Practice Document Due/ Sharing of Living Labs
Week of April 10 <sup>th</sup>	In Class Music Exercise
Week of April 17	Iconic Image Explorations and Rehearsals Begin
Week of April 24 <sup>th</sup>	Rehearsals
FINAL May 8 <sup>th</sup>	11 a.m to 1 p.m PRESENTATION OF DIALECT PROJECTS