

### **Course Description and Overview**

Application and consolidation of the skills, knowledge and techniques acquired in the study of the fundamentals of acting encountered in **THTR 101**.

In this practice-based course, students will apply their fundamental skills in acting to contemporary plays. Over the course of the term, students will read, analyze, rehearse, and perform a variety of contemporary scenarios and scenes. Students will also read relevant plays and theory to improve their understanding of the underpinnings of the acting techniques being applied in class.

### **Learning Objectives**

**In this course, you will learn to:**

1. Develop and hone the skills of focus, openness, connection, and characterization by participating in in-class exercises and theatre games.
2. Participate in text analysis both individually and as a group, in order to improve your understanding of text and ability to apply that analysis to acting in scenes and plays.
3. Practice the art of self-discipline and rigor, understanding that the task of acting requires that one rehearse and engage in constant inquiry, and be disciplined, dedicated, and deeply committed to continuously learning and relearning the craft of acting, with precise attention to the minutest detail of voice, movement, spatial relationship, speech, text analysis etc.
4. Work on becoming an acting ensemble and sharing constructive feedback appropriate to an artistic setting.

### **Prerequisites: Thtr 101**

### **Course Notes:**

#### ***This course will include:***

- Theatre exercises and games targeting characterization, connection, text analysis and identification of subtext;
- Voice/Speech/Movement exercises that support and enhance text analysis and give dimension to the technical components of acting ;
- Practical experience working on at least **two** contemporary scenes. Work on building a character, and engaging actively in scene work on each scene with clearly defined objectives and actions.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials:  
Please Order the Correct Edition!**

ACTING: The Gister Method (The Joy Press, 2015)

WELCOME TO THE MOON and OTHER PLAYS by John Patrick Shanley (Dramatists' Play Service)

DOUBT by John Patrick Shanley (Theatre Communications Group)

**Additional Full-length Play(s) To Be Determined by Instructor, as Outlined in Class**

**Description of Grading/Assessment of Assignments:**

**1. Journal:** you must keep a journal of your work in class, complete with your observations/thoughts/ impressions of our exercises, research, scene analysis, etc. This is not your personal journal about your life, nor is it your in-class notes, it is your reflections on the work and your discoveries and confusions with that. **You Must Write Your Journal In Your Own NEAT Handwriting.** (20%)

**2. Scene Work:** Document your rehearsal process (include any research you may have done) in weekly Rehearsal Reports; write your Scene Analysis, and bring necessary props to class. You are expected to rehearse a minimum of four hours **per week** during rehearsal weeks. (25%)

**3. Papers (2): "Application of the Method"** This two-page paper, based on your scene work, will summarize your responses to the Five Questions as applied to your scene. Further explanation to be provided by the instructor in class. You must write in cogent sentences with basic essay structure. (two at 5% each; total of 10%)

**4. Midterm/Final:** There will be in-class performances for Midterm and Final that will require written work as well.

Performance: (total 15%)/ Written Self-evaluation: (total 15%)

**5. Participation/Attendance** (15%)

**Rehearsal: You Must Rehearse Outside of Class**

**GRADING POLICY:**

**Grades are not dictated by success of acting presentations or my subjective opinion of talent or artistic preference.**

**Grades are dictated by 100% active engagement in every class, as well as successful completion well-rehearsed scenes, self-evaluations and written assignments. Active in-class engagement includes:**

- 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 instructor and fellow students
- Thorough memorization of assigned material
- Availability to fellow classmates to rehearse outside class with a collaborative, generous spirit
- Meeting all deadlines. **No late assignments, exams, papers, presentations shall be accepted.**
- No emailed papers accepted.

**NOTE: A detailed grading rubric will be provided in class prior to each scene presentation.**

**NOTE: If a deadline is missed because of a classmate's unavailability, the available partner/s will not be penalized if a discussion with me and all involved occurs BEFORE the deadline.**

**Grading Points Breakdown:**

Journal .....	20 points
Scene work on First Scene .....	12.5 points
Papers on Scenes One and Two .....	10 points
MID-TERM Scene Presentation and Evaluation.....	15 points
Scene work on Final Scene.....	12.5 points
FINAL presentation of scene and self-evaluation.....	15 points
Cumulative active class participation .....	15 points

**TOTAL ..... 100 points**

**OTHER NOTES:**

**Lateness beyond 10 minutes will count as an absence.**

- Prepare whatever is asked of you.
- Bring your props, prepare your exercises.
- Keep up to date in your journal.

An unsatisfactory record of attendance and punctuality will be reflected in the students grading as follows:

**THERE WILL BE NO EXCUSED ABSENCES FOR THIS COURSE. One lateness or absence = 2 grade points docked.**

**Grading Scale:**

<b>Excellent:</b>	<b>A (4) = 100-96</b>	<b>A- (3.7) = 95-90</b>		
<b>Good:</b>	<b>B+ (3.3) = 89-86</b>	<b>B (3) = 85-84</b>	<b>B- (2.7) = 83-80</b>	
<b>Average:</b>	<b>C+ (2.3) = 79-76</b>	<b>C (2) = 75-74</b>	<b>C- (1.7) = 73-70</b>	
<b>Poor:</b>	<b>D (.7-1.3) = 60's</b>	<b>F (0) = 59 and below</b>		

- Excellent:** clear understanding of the class material is coupled with original and creative insight
- Good:** class material has been understood clearly
- Average:** class material has been generally understood, but gaps in understanding remain
- Poor:** there are identifiable gaps in the understanding of class material

**Failure:** gaps in the completion of work is coupled with poor understanding of class material.

**Further Grading Notes:** *When 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. I will be happy to discuss your work at any time*

### **Assignment Submission Policy**

Please hand all assignments in person – **not online**. No late assignments will be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made.

### **Assignment Rubrics**

Will be provided in class by the Instructor.

### **Additional Policies**

Please Note: There is absolutely no technology allowed in the classroom. **No cellphones**, no computers. Anyone caught using technology in class will be held responsible for destroying the working atmosphere in the classroom and graded accordingly.

Note also: Use of Social Media. **DO NOT POST ABOUT CLASS ON SOCIAL MEDIA**. Class is sacred. What happens in class stays in class. Anyone caught posting on Social Media about class activities will be held responsible for disrupting our process.

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## **Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown**

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

### **Week 1, 1/7, 1/9:**

- discuss syllabus/expectations
- discuss course goals, requirements, deadlines, required texts
- introduction to theatre games and exercises

**Homework: READ *Doubt* (DUE 1/14)**

### **Week 2: 1/14, 1/16**

- theatre exercises: character building, subtext

**Homework: Read *The Gister Method*, pages 7 to 92 (due 1/16)**

- introduction of Key Vocabulary/The Five Questions

**Homework: text analysis practice w/DOUBT; read *Welcome to the Moon***

### **Week 3: 1/21 (NO CLASS: MLK DAY)**

**1/23 Begin work on Scene One (from *Welcome to the Moon*)**

### **Week 4: 1/28, 1/30: Table work on Scene One**

### **Week 5: 2/4, 2/6: Initial physical work on Scene One**

### **Week 6: 2/11, 2/13 Fine-tuning, Scene One**

### **Week 7: 2/18 (NO CLASS: President's Day) 2/20 Final Rehearsals, Scene One**

## FIRST PAPER DUE

**Week 8: 2/25, 2/27 Mid-Term Scene Presentations**

**Week 9: 3/4, 3/7 Begin Text Analyses for Second Scenes**

**SPRING BREAK 7/10 - 3/17**

**Week 10: 3/18, 3/20 Physical Rehearsals, Second Scenes**

**Week 11: 3/25, 3/27 Continued Rehearsals of Second Scenes**

**Week 12: 4/1, 4/3 Fine-tuning of Second Scenes**

**Week 14: 4/8, 4/10 Fine-tuning of Second Scenes**

**Week 15: 4/15, 4/18 Final Scene Rehearsals  
SECOND PAPER DUE**

**Week 16: 4/22, 4/24 FINAL SCENE PRESENTATIONS**

**FINAL EXAM DAY (REQUIRED!): Monday, May 6th 11 am to 1 pm**

## 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” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/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>.

### 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 for DSP and contact information: (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) [ability@usc.edu](mailto:ability@usc.edu).

### 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. See the university’s site on Campus Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

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### Support Systems:

*Student Counseling Services (SCS) – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. [engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1 (800) 273-8255*

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. [engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)

*Sexual Assault Resource Center*

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: [sarc.usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu)

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086*

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support)

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

*Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710*

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa)

*Diversity at USC*

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. [diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

*USC Emergency Information*

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

*USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.*

**Provides overall safety to USC community. [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)**