

USC School of Dramatic Arts

240a VOICE II

Units: 2 units

T/Th 10 -10:50:

Location: zoom (invitation will be sent via blackboard and email)

Instructor: Laura Flanagan

Office: lgoldsch@usc.edu / 646-342-5314

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact Info: lgoldsch@usc.edu - see above

Course Description

The course is designed to re-introduce students to the fundamentals of voice training with a focus on putting those skills to use with heightened text. As such, we will explore the relationship between impulse and expression, deep release and communication, breath and meaning in an effort to provide you with the necessary confidence, skills, understanding and release and technique to begin your work with heightened language. In addition to weekly reading and text assignments, you will keep a journal of your growth and progression throughout the semester. The course will culminate in a final presentation.

Course Description Continued...

There is no such thing as a perfect voice. Every actor has their own strengths and weaknesses and these make us interesting and compelling performers. Actors that have great voices are actors whose voices are indistinguishable from the specificity, depth, commitment, and truth of their performance. We don't want to hear your voice, we want to hear, believe, and understand what you are saying. Meaning is our commitment to understanding what we are saying, and our willingness to communicate that understanding. Technique is the bridge between our understanding and our expression. Thus, our meaning is the depth of our courage, truth, range, freedom, inspiration and exhalation as actors. It is the spirit that unites us as humans and elevates our work from the realm of ego into a greater realm of transformation.

Learning Objectives

1. Create your own warmup using the fundamentals of de-structuring, restructuring, resonance, articulation, and thinking on the word.
2. Speak on support
3. Find meaning with a minimum of effort, maximum of expression.
4. Become comfortable and acquainted with learning a variety of texts - with an aim to allowing language to release your impulse and deep connection with word/image to spark your greater truth.
5. Familiarize yourself with specifics of speech actions.

Prerequisite(s): 140a, b

Concurrent Enrollment: 220a, 216

Course Notes

This course will take place on zoom, with occasional enhancements from blackboard. The majority of the class will be synchronous learning during a zoom session though we will occasionally use asynchronous techniques, recording ourselves outside the classroom.

Communication

This course relies on your full buy-in. The chat will be enabled but use it sparingly. Sometimes something comes up in an exercise that you need to communicate to me but you don't want to go on screen and speak. This is a fine time to use it. I will disable the peer-to-peer chat so that you can either chat with me or with the group but not amongst yourselves. Trust me, this is a good thing.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

This course requires a good internet connection, and appropriate operating systems for zoom. In addition this course will require that you have a quiet space, large enough to facilitate you lying down and moving around a bit. A yoga mat is preferable but not required, as are flexible loose clothing that you can move comfortably at home or in your workspace - wherever that is.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

All required readings and supplementary materials will be posted online during the semester. Advised but not required is VOICE AND THE ACTOR by Cicely Berry - available online in paperback or in kindle format: I am putting links to bookstores that are NOT Amazon, in case you want to spend your money elsewhere. There is no need to have this book on hand when we begin class. Getting it by the third or fourth week will be acceptable, so feel free to order it from the attached small bookstores. Or you can find it yourself on Amazon. **Skylight Bookstore in Los Feliz:** <https://www.skylightbooks.com/search/site/Voice%20and%20the%20aCtor>; **Vroman's Bookstore in Pasadena** <https://www.vromansbookstore.com/search/site/VOICE%20AND%20THE%20ACTOR>; **Book Soup in West Hollywood** <https://www.booksoup.com/search/site/Voice%20and%20the%20Actor>

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Each class will be broken down into two parts: Warm-up/Exercises for the first hour - Text/Play/Performance for the second hour. Assignments will be as follows:

- after each class you will write in your blackboard journal, reflecting on lessons, experiences, challenges and connections you made in that day's class. Each synchronous class time will be represented by a journal entry.
- Each new piece of text assigned will be learned fully and completely
- Group text work will necessitate rehearsal together on zoom or FaceTime outside of class.
- All assignments will be assessed for heart felt conscientious effort.
- Midterm will be a zoom performance of a text we have worked on in class.
- Final will be a zoom performance of a text of your choosing.

Grading Breakdown

Including the above detailed assignments, how will students be graded overall? Participation should be no more than 15%, unless justified for a higher amount. All must total 100%.

Journal	25	25%
Learning the assigned texts	25	25%
Midterm	25	25%
Final	25	25%

Grading Scale (Example)

Course final grades will be determined using the following scale

A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

Assignment Submission Policy

Assignments will be submitted through blackboard and USC email.

Grading Timeline

Journals will be graded at midterm and final

Daily text assignments will be graded daily.

Midterm and Final grades will be available four days after the test.

Additional Policies

Students are expected to attend all synchronous zoom meetings. Students are expected to arrive on time in the zoom classroom, ready to work. Journals will be checked weekly to make sure that students are keeping up with their work. I will be available for office hours for any individual concerns, challenges and needs that come during the course of the class.

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

(Please refer to the [Contact Hours Reference](#) guide.)

	Topics/Daily Activities	Readings and Homework	Deliverable/ Due Dates
Week 1	Introduction to Fitzmaurice Voicework ©	“Breathing is Meaning” by Catherine Fitzmaurice	Oliver, Mary. “Wild Geese” and/or “The Journey” / Due Tuesday
Week 2	Beginning to de-structure	Fitzmaurice Interview between Saul and Catherine	Lorde, Audre. “A Litany for Survival” /due Tuesday

Week 3	Finishing back- deconstructing positions	Breathing article from the Guardian	Neruda, Pablo - "Ode to the Present" / due Tuesday
Week 4	Learning front de- structuring	Howlround article of your choice with reflection in your journal	Brooks, Gwendolyn. "Speech to the Young..." / - due Tuesday
Week 5	Destructuring: the whole series	Mary Oliver: Breathing	Shakespeare, William. "Sonnet 29"
Week 6	Creating your warm- up		Write your own sonnet
Week 7	MIDTERM WEEK		Perform your midterm on zoom
Week 8	Beginning articulation	Cicely Berry Chapter 2	Thomas, Dylan. "Under Milkwood"
Week 9	Consonants continued		Lewis Carroll: "The Jabberwocky".
Week 10	Vowels Introduced		Herrick, Robert. "To Anathea.."
Week 11	Introducing Intention		Hughes, Langston. "Let America Be America Again"
Week 12			
Week 13	More Intention		
Week 14	FINAL EXAM	Poem of your choice	November 24th. 8am - 10am.
Week 15			
FINAL			

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. 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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. 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

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

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

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