

Movement Analysis for Vocalists MPVA 499 Special Topics

SYLLABUS: SPRING 2024 Thursdays 4-5:50pm

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Welcome to Movement Analysis for Vocalists!

In this course we will apply the principles and exercises of the Gyrokinesis® Method to better understand our bodies as instruments, and to increase our core strength, breath capacity and flexibility.

Gyrokinesis is a method of movement done on a chair, on the floor or standing. It is part of the Gyrotonic® Method developed by Juliu Horvath.

From www.gyrotonic.com:

“The Gyrotonic Method is an original and unique movement method that addresses the entire person by opening energy pathways, stimulating the nervous system, increasing range of motion, and improving strength and movement efficiency. With Gyrotonic exercises, each movement flows into the next, allowing the joints to move through a natural range of motion without jarring or compression. These carefully crafted sequences create balance, efficiency, strength and flexibility.

Gyrotonic classes are designed to take the body beyond its current limitations. People come out of a Gyrotonic class with increased freedom of movement, greater strength and more agility. Gyrotonic exercises are adapted to fit anyone’s ability, from those recovering from injury or living with a disability to elite athletes.”

Course Description

Movement Analysis for Vocalists offers students an introductory experience of the Gyrokinesis Method through physical practice, basic anatomy and kinesiology and the opportunity to apply the principles of enhanced freedom of movement to their chosen discipline.

Prerequisite: None Co-Requisite: None Recommended Preparation: None

Course Objectives

1. To elongate the spine, develop and invigorate core strength, enhance breathing and lung capacity, and increase both flexibility and range of motion.
2. To apply the method to the individual demands of the student's chosen instrument.
3. To apply the method to stage presence and movement in chosen discipline.
4. To impart basic anatomy and kinesiology as it relates to the exercises and the Gyrotonic Method.

Each class will consist of a brief discussion of one or more principles, followed by a series of exercises performed sitting in a chair, on a yoga mat on the floor and standing. Please dress comfortably in loose-fitting clothing which enables freedom of movement.

Course Materials:

Text:

Anatomy of Movement Blandine Calais-Germain Eastland Press, Seattle 2007

Each student is required to bring their own yoga mat.

Course schedule:

Week 1 –

Introduction to the method and exploration of the principle of ‘narrowing’ and the ‘seed center’. Explanation of the Homework Sequence. Introductory exercise sequence.

Reading from Textbook: “The spine” pp. 32-40

Week 2 –

Revisit the Homework Sequence followed by 90-min exercises sequence.

Reading: “The pelvic floor” pp. 40-49

Weeks 3 – 4 –

90-minute exercise sequence with focus on the Lumbar Spine.

Reading: “The lumbar spine” pp. 50-56

Weeks 4-5 –

Discussion and exercise sequence with focus on Thoracic Spine.

Reading: “The thoracic spine” pp.56-60

Weeks 6-7.

Discussion and exercise sequence with focus on Cervical Spine

Reading: “The cervical spine” pp. 65-70

Week 8 –

Mid-term exam: Students will video themselves performing the seated and floor portions of the Homework Sequence and submit by class time.

90-min exercise sequence.

Week 9-

Discussion of the ribs and diaphragm. Practice of the complete Gyrokinesis Sequence with focus on breathing.

Reading: “The diaphragm” pp. 89-90, “The movement of the ribs” pp. 60-62, and ”Abdominal muscles and breathing” pp. 94-100

Weeks 10-11-

Complete Gyrokinesis Sequence, adding abdominal exercises on the floor.

Reflection prompt for paper: How can I apply the principles of Gyrokinesis to my own warmup before practicing my instrument?

Weeks 12-13-

Complete Gyrokinesis Sequence, with abdominal exercises, adding standing aerobic exercises.

Discussion of individual student focus and how to adapt exercises to suit their physical and technical needs.

Reflection Paper due end of week 13.

Weeks 14-15-

Intensified practice of the full sequence, making adjustments to the sequence based on the feedback from students.

Class discussion and opportunity for questions related to final project.

COMMUNICATION

Communications for this course is essential. As an enrolled student, you are responsible for:

1. Checking your USC email regularly for announcements and updates. Please use your USC email address only.
2. Providing me with a reliable mobile phone number. Your number will be kept confidential.
3. Notifying me of your absences, be they planned or emergencies.

ABSENCES/ILLNESS

1. Absences are considered excused due to illness and family emergencies only. Classes missed due to these reasons will not count against your grade, unless chronic illness causes spotty attendance. Maintaining your good health is a requirement for this course.
2. One unexcused absence is permitted.
3. If more than two classes are missed due to any reason(s) other than serious illness or genuine emergencies, these will be considered “excessive absences” and will affect your semester grade.

GRADING

30% Embodied Practice- Students will be evaluated on their ability to perform the movement sequences, and their progress in improving the quality of their movement.

Alignment, movement flow, ability to follow direction and fully embody the movement sequences will be considered.

20% Active Learning Demonstration (in group setting students will be called upon to demonstrate basic understanding of movement principles and basic anatomy, and to identify and perform exercises that address movement challenges).

15% Mid-term- multiple choice on anatomy/kinesiology principles from the reading and class discussion.

20% Reflection Paper - A 1-2 page paper detailing how the principles of Gyrotonic can be applied to the student's instrument. Please include a discussion of general challenges for your instrument, as well as your own specific challenges

15% - Final Project: Participants will create a 5–10-minute exercise sequence based on the movements we have performed in class. The sequence should be seen as a personal warm-up for the participant's chosen discipline. This sequence will be performed in combination with the Homework Sequence and submitted as a video.

FINALLY....

Success in this course mostly depends on your active participation and personal practice of the Homework Sequence. Sharing observations from practice and asking questions are encouraged!

USC Thornton School of Music required syllabus elements:

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. Please do not share or otherwise distribute class materials, music scores or recordings produced by me or any students in the conduct of this course without expressed permission.

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, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct

Support Systems

Counseling and Mental Health - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-9355(WELL), press “0” after hours – 24/7 on call studenthealth.usc.edu/sexual-assault
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- based harm. Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) - (213) 740-5086 | Title IX – (213) 821-8298

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298

usc-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report

Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and micro-aggressions to the Office of Equity and Diversity |Title IX for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu

Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Campus Support and Intervention - (213) 821-4710

campussupport.usc.edu

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call