

Course: Acting Styles—Improvisation and Monologue Study

PEIMS Code: N1170126

Abbreviation: ACTMET4

Grade Level(s): 10-12

Number of Credits: 1.0

Course description:

This course is part of a cluster of courses designed to develop proficiency in acting by promoting an understanding of the methods, principles, practices and vocabulary common to all acting styles from Greek through Shakespeare to modern texts. In this course the students study the basic elements of improvisational acting and improvisational theatre. In addition, the students study ways of preparing modern and classical monologues. They continue to use the processes of researching a character. They use appropriate stage diction and projection in all spaces with a wide range of characters. They will create characters physically and use physical action. The course requires that the students transfer knowledge from one acting style to another. The course challenges the students to use a process of character development and expand their creative processes. This course emphasizes the complexity and thoroughness required to become a successful performer.

Essential knowledge and skills:

- a) General requirements: This course is intended for intermediate to advanced actors. Theatre I or the innovative course Acting Methods are recommended prerequisites.
- b) Knowledge and Skills:
 - (1) The student develops concepts and skills necessary to use improvisation as a tool in character development and as a performance tool. The student is expected to:
 - (A) incorporate the tools and processes of improvisation into actor training including what's beyond, the study of conflict, and the study of given circumstances;
 - (B) incorporate the tools and processes of improvisation into character development for a character in a scripted play including improvising missing scenes;
 - (C) design and participate in improvisations;
 - (D) articulate the purposes and benefits of improvisation practices such as theatre games and audience participation;
 - (E) evaluate implications of improvisation techniques and practices on scripted acting work;

- (F) create and portray characters in comic and dramatic improvisations as a means of character development using plot and conflict; and
 - (G) create and portray characters in improvisational theatre including scenes based on social and political themes.
- (2) The student develops concepts and skills necessary to develop and perform monologues in plays and for auditions. The student is expected to:
- (A) synthesize theatrical styles training and skills when preparing and performing monologues including text analysis, strong character choices, movement, and gesture;
 - (B) analyze both classical and modern texts to create complex and appropriate authentic characters in monologues;
 - (C) employ appropriate rehearsal techniques such as blocking, memorization, and repetition;
 - (D) evaluate the differences between performing a monologue for an audition and performing a monologue as part of a play, including the use of movement, the use of the audience, and the use of the introduction;
 - (E) create and perform monologues from modern plays as part of a play;
 - (F) create and perform monologues from classical plays as part of a play;
 - (G) create and perform monologues from modern plays using audition techniques; and
 - (H) create and perform monologues from classical texts using audition techniques.
- (3) Creative Expression: Performance. The students create characters for improvisation and in monologues for auditions. The student is expected to:
- (A) create and sustain characters in improvisations using a process of character development that is complex and repeatable;
 - (B) create and sustain characters in monologues from modern and historical texts using a process of character development that is complex and repeatable; and
 - (C) transfer skills and techniques used in one acting style to the skills required in different acting styles within the context of this course.
- (4) Historical and cultural relevance. The student relates theatre to history, society and culture. The student is expected to:
- (A) read, research, and analyze culturally and historically diverse texts and determine appropriate character choices using a comprehensive character development process;

- (B) research and analyze the historical periods and determine appropriate character choices within the appropriate style; and
 - (C) research and analyze the cultural and societal dynamics of characters and determine appropriate choices.
- (5) Critical Evaluation and response. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances. The student is expected to:
- (A) develop and incorporate the skills necessary to be a supportive and focused audience member;
 - (B) develop and use both positive and negative criticism for a proper written and verbal critique of student and professional work;
 - (C) apply appropriate theatrical vocabulary to communicate between director and actor, actor and stage manager, actor and actor, and actor and designer; and
 - (D) transfer information from one period and acting style to another by applying the skills learned from one period or style to the characters created for the ensuing class or project within the context of this course.

Description of specific student needs this course is designed to meet:

- Opportunity to engage in an in-depth study in a wide variety of acting styles and plays from both modern and classical texts
- Opportunity to develop authentic characters in those acting styles and in both classical and modern texts
- Opportunity to develop portfolio of monologues appropriate for auditions for plays, colleges and scholarships
- Opportunity to develop an acting portfolio of material from a wide variety both classical and modern historical periods and acting styles
- Opportunity to create improvisations as a character development skill and as a form of entertainment
- Opportunity to interact in a professional setting
- Opportunity to focus interests and develop career direction
- Opportunity to collaborate with other actors
- Opportunity for self-discovery and self-evaluation in a student-center environment
- Opportunities for students to develop individual and creative self-expression

Major resources and materials:

- Adler, Stella. *The Technique of Acting*. Bantam Books. 1988.
- Delgado, Ramon. *Acting With Both Sides of Your Brain*. Holt, Reinhardt and Winston. N.Y. 1986.
- Hagen, Uta. *The Art of Acting*. Applause Theatre and Cinema Books. 2000.
- Hagen, Uta. *Respect for Acting*. McMillan Publishing. 1988.
- Spolin, Viola. *Improvisation for the Theater*. Northwestern University Press. 1999.
- Access to library sources such as books and periodicals
- Access to electronic research tools
- Access to professionals in the theatre field
- Access to guest speakers, actors, directors, lecture-demonstrations
- Access to master classes in acting

Suggested course activities:

- Perform monologues from modern and classical texts and prepare for auditions
- Perform improvisations for character development and entertainment
- Read and research both classical and modern texts
- Create characters from both modern and classical plays
- Collaborate with other actors in an ensemble setting
- Demonstrate process of character development
- Demonstrate understanding of theatrical vocabulary at appropriate levels
- Demonstrate an understanding of different approaches to character study
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history of acting
- Research actors and acting styles
- Participate in master classes provided by professionals in the theatre

- Demonstrate appropriate behavior in a professional setting
- Attend professional performances
- View professional performance live and on DVD

Suggested methods for evaluating student outcomes:

- Formative and summative evaluation to monitor student progress and mastery of course content
- Vocabulary tests at appropriate levels
- Skills in monologues and improvisations
- Ability to know and use acting types
- Monitoring by instructor of individual progress
- Individual conferences between instructor and student
- Scheduled semester exams and juries on comprehensive work

Teacher qualifications:

- Any secondary theatre certification (e.g. Theatre: EC-12) as defined by SBEC rules, [TAC §231.241](#)
- Recommended: Experience in professional/community theatre.
- Recommended: BFA and/or MFA in Acting.

Additional information: