

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

- A. Department Information:
Division: Humanities and Social Science
Department: Speech and Performing Arts
Course ID: THART 120
Course Title: Acting Fundamentals I
Units: 3
Lecture: 2 Hours
Lab: 3 Hours
Prerequisite: None
- B. Catalog and Schedule Description:
Introduction to acting techniques including foundational performing skills using techniques in relaxation, concentration, improvisation and mime. Practice in non-verbal communication and creative problem-solving working individually and in groups.

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

- A. Demonstrate the ability to relax in a variety of stressful situations
- B. Practice creative problem solving in response to difficult tasks
- C. Develop the ability to work in groups to identify problems and develop solutions
- D. Develop the ability to both give and receive constructive criticism
- E. Create and perform improvisations involving objects, locations, and other characters
- F. Develop characters through physical characterization
- G. Demonstrate the ability to memorize lines effectively
- H. Evaluate the performance of others through active observation

IV. COURSE CONTENT:

- A. The purpose of acting
- B. The ideal actor and actor classifications
- C. Early acting and acting theories
 - 1. The first actors
 - 2. What the ancients tell us
 - 3. Decline of the theatre
 - 4. Commedia dell'Arte
 - 5. Shakespeare and his actors
 - 6. The 17th century
 - 7. The great debate: emotion versus reason
- D. Stanislavski and beyond
 - 1. The "method"
 - 2. After Stanislavski
 - 3. The director and freedom for the actor
- E. The body and stage movement
 - 1. How the body is organized
 - 2. Tension and relaxation
 - 3. The body in action
 - 4. Warming up
- F. Voice and the actor
 - 1. Factors of a good stage voice
 - 2. Vocal production
 - 3. Projection
 - 4. Getting the most from the dialogue
- G. Getting around the stage

1. The stage and stage areas
 2. Stage positions and the actor
 3. Stage movement and the audience
 4. Using movement
 5. Specialized stage problems
 6. Listening
- H. Using improvisation
1. Improvisations for larger groups
 2. Improvisations for one actor
 3. Improvisations for two or more actors
- I. Combatting stage fright
1. Stage fright defined
 2. Suggested causes
 3. Dealing with stage fright
- J. Auditioning and preparing a role
1. The audition process
 2. Basic steps in developing a role
 3. Finding one's own approach
 4. Ambiguous dialogue
 5. Monologues
 6. Scenes
- K. Putting the role onstage
1. Rehearsal guidelines
 2. The three V's of good acting
 3. Concentration
 4. Getting into the role
 5. Judging the actor's work
- L. Style and other problems
1. Comedy and farce
 2. Tragedy
 3. Period plays in general
 4. Shakespearean plays
 5. Sustained speeches
 6. Central staging
- M. Acting for the camera
1. Shooting the television drama
 2. Television and the theatre
 3. Television acting
 4. Subtlety and intimacy
 5. Action and reaction

V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. Lecture
- B. Small group discussion
- C. Small group projects
- D. Critical analysis of videotapes and films
- E. Field trips
- F. Observations
- G. Journaling

VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Observation: Sit for an hour in a public place such as a park, an airport, or a mall and watch people's behaviors. Prepare a 4-6 page paper detailing your observations, paying special attention to the dynamics discussed in class.

- B. Analysis: Prepare a written analysis of the characterization for a contemporary play. Be sure to address the character's role and purpose in the play, the unique physical and emotional attributes of the character, and detail your plan for representing those attributes in your performance.
- C. Performance: Using your written character analysis as research, keep a journal of your activities, thoughts, and emotions as you perform the role on a regular basis. Discuss the adjustments you make to your characterization along the way as well as your techniques for sustaining the character for the duration of the play.

VII. EVALUATION(S):

- A. Methods of evaluation:
 - 1. Objective and subjective examinations designed to test students' comprehension of course material. Sample test questions: List and define the basic components of analysis to consider when preparing for characterization.
 - 2. Subjective evaluation of student performance. Students are evaluated on their ability to apply course concepts to theatrical productions observed either in class, on video, or in the community.
- B. Frequency of evaluation:
 - 1. At least two examinations
 - 2. At least three performances
 - 3. At least three reviews of dramatic performances

VIII. TYPICAL TEXT(S):

- A. Cohen, Robert. Acting one (4th edition). McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2002
- B. Kahan, Stanley and Rugg, Kenneth W. Introduction to acting (4th edition). Allyn and Bacon, 1998.
- C. McGaw, Charles and Clark, Larry. Acting is believing (7th edition). Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 1996.

IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: None