

Acting 1

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Office Hours:

Description:

In a word this class is about relationships. Relationship to self, the work, your peers, your awareness, and most notably your habits. This class is the beginning of your collegiate actor training, the goal is to examine and get curious about where you place your attention. This class is dedicated to the pedagogy, praxis, development and process of acting technique. Acting, physical, and vocal exercises will be used in conjunction with performance projects to advance the growth of the actor in his/her acting process. The aim is to release into what is: To get your attention off yourself and on to your partner, to live truthfully under imaginary circumstances with precise repeatability and complete spontaneity, to make the event of the scene happen. We will do this through the training of exercises, performance projects, group work, and scene work of contemporary American playwrights to serve as a foundation for all future performance classes, auditions, and plays.

Objectives:

To fully explain, comprehend, and examine getting present, listening, and breathing into what is...

To fully explain, comprehend and examine what it means to work on self and work on the role.

To fully explore physically, examine and execute the technique of “sourcing” as applied to exercise and scene work.

To fully explain, comprehend, examine and execute “Playing Action”.

To fully explain, comprehend, examine where we place our attention.

To identify habits that add value to our acting training, and examine those that take away from fulfilling our potential.

To develop the actor’s Imagination.

To further develop the actor’s Impulse and Expression through participation, commitment, attitude, attendance, and punctuality.

Required Texts:

The Actor and the Target- Declan Donnellan

Suggestive Reading:

An Actor Prepares - Konstantin Stanislavsky

The Great Acting Teachers and Their Methods - Richard Brestoff

Course Requirements:

Attendance/Class Participation Policy: Attendance and participation in ALL acting classes is REQUIRED! It is expected that you come to class and that you be on time.

2 Lates = 1 Absence

20 Minutes Late counts as an Absence

Number of Absences

0-3

Best Case Grade if doing A Work:

A

4	B
5	C
6	D
7 or more Absences	F

Performance Projects (Exercises and Weekly performance projects earn non graded preparation pts up to midterm and final- You want to have 100pts going into your midterm, this will let you know where you stand with your work in my eyes and your eyes and will give us something to check in about)

Manifesto	10 pts. - 15 pts. (First Week)
Observational Exercise	10pts. - 15pts. (Second Week)
Object Exercise	10pts. - 15pts (Third Week)
Clown	10pts - 15pts (Fourth Week)
Artistic Response	10pts - 15pts (Fifth Week)
Monologues	10pts - 15pts (Sixth Week)
Midterm 20 points Graded	(8th Week)
Final 30 points Graded	(16th Week) Scene Work

Working Definition of Performance: Potential - Interference = Performance. These projects are exercises in handling and removing interference so that you may fulfill your potential in performance.

If you are going to miss a class, it is expected that you email, vidweber@gmail.com prior to class to explain your absence.

1. Acceptable Excuses to Miss Class:

- a. Running a fever, contagious or extremely ill.
- b. Family emergency such as death. (Please note that if you lie to your teachers about a family emergency, you are in violation of the University ethics policy and may be suspended.

We understand that in any given semester you may become ill or have a family emergency. However, after 3 absences your grade will be lowered. We also expect that you make it a top priority to keep yourself healthy through rest, exercise, hydration and healthy eating. Bad habits that lead to sickness including smoking, drinking and drug use are strictly prohibited.

2. **Professional Decorum:** All acting classes will be run as a professional working situation. This means:

- Coming to class fully prepared as assigned
- Showing respect for every member of the artistic ensemble.
- A complete commitment and focus to the work each class period.
- No cell phones, texting, or computers should be used in class.
- No chewing gum, eating, or drinking in class (except water).
- Wearing comfortable, loose fitting clothing suitable for complete freedom and range of movement.
- When working or presenting scenes, wear appropriate rehearsal clothes and hard-soled shoes when appropriate for the scene.

3. **Class Participation:** Participation is required. Participation with enthusiasm and courage is rewarded. Realize that acting involves risk- taking and that it is your responsibility to be an active participant each and every class period. Yours is not to ask why. Questions are most memorably and accurately answered in the doing. Just do it.

4. **Assignments:** All assignments performed and/or written, are to be completed on time. Written assignments must be turned in the day they are due. Sloppy or illegible handwritten assignments and ill-prepared exercises are unacceptable. Performance assignments will be made in class and will include exercises, open scenes, monologues and final scene work. Performance assignments will have a written component turned in as a

reflection after you have performed. A performance project can be rescheduled only by agreement of all parties involved and only with the prior approval of the instructor.

5. **Class activities and discussions:** We will be doing acting exercises, improvisation, monologue and scene work throughout the semester. Wear comfortable, non-restrictive clothes suitable for movement. Refrain from bringing food into the classroom. Come to class physically, mentally, and emotionally prepared to work. As always, what you take away from this class will be directly proportional to what you put in to it.

6. **Mid-term and Final Assessment papers:** These papers are your opportunity to honestly assess your progress at mid-term and again at the end of the semester. Reflect upon where you were in your acting process at the beginning of the semester and how you have grown during the course. Be specific about the exercises/scene work done in class and what you have learned from them. Include what your next set of goals will be. This is an opportunity for you take ownership of your development as an actor. DUE: A week after Midterm, and 48 Hours after Final.

7. **Actor Interview:** Actor Interview - Interview an actor you admire at ISU or elsewhere about his or her acting process. Turn in a 2-3 page edited version of the interview. Make a list of questions ahead of time, but allow yourself to be "in the moment" during the interview. This is a wonderful opportunity to sit down with someone whose work you have enjoyed this semester to discuss a mutual passion. There is no reason to feel shy in asking someone you do not know. Prior experience has shown that actors are eager to talk about their process. You may ask juniors, seniors, grads, your high school teacher/director, ISU acting faculty or other professional actors you may know (avoid interviewing someone of equal or lesser experience than you). At the end of the paper include what you learned from this experience and be prepared to share the highlights of the interview with the class.

This assignment is DUE: Final Exam Period

A. Textbook Analysis/Classroom Work. Read three (3) acting lessons per week

Apply the lessons to the work done in class.

Also comment on the lessons of the day, notes given to you and/or others to strengthen your performance and questions that may arise from the work done in class.

B. Personal Balance – Include a brief evaluation of your personal growth as a college student, including any questions you have about the acting program. DUE TBD, most likely after final exam.

C. World Events - Each week you are to find a current ARTICLE on-line, in a magazine or newspaper that sparks a strong emotion in you...Bring to class each Weds.

Production critique format: You are required to write a single page critique for each of the shows listed above. If you are working backstage for any of these shows you may write a substitute critique of another show.

1. **Focus on one actor.**
2. **Did you find his/her performances believable/truthful? Why or why not?**
3. **Describe the specific relationships they created with other characters.**
4. **Identify moments of truth.**
5. **When possible apply acting process learned in acting class to the actor's work.**

Written Assignments include:

Show Critiques:	DUE 1 week after Show Closes
Assessment Papers	DUE Final Exam Period
Actor Interview	DUE FINAL EXAM PERIOD
Textbook Quiz	DUE TBD

**This syllabus is subject to change*