

BASIC ACTING 2: MOVEMENT
WINTER 2006
COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number: TH 245.02
Class Meetings: TTH 1-2:50 pm/HB 118
Instructor: Prof. George Bellah
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Office: MC 107C
Office Hours: MTWR 10-11 am

Prerequisite[s]: TH 244 Basic Acting I or permission of instructor.

Required Textbook(s): Acting: Onstage and Off, by Robert Barton, current edition
[selected chapters published in a coursepack]

This syllabus and calendar are subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

Course Description and Objectives: Continued introduction to the development and training of the actor. The student actor will explore this development and training with the following in mind; 1) there is a connection between life in and out of the theatre, and 2) the personal examination of one's self and one's classmates is the first step toward learning characterization. The student actor will also learn responsibility for both in-and-out-of-rehearsal contribution and exploration, thereby learning self-sufficiency as an actor. The class will focus primarily on an exploration of the principles and various techniques of movement and their applicability to the development of character. Practice in the process of building characters based on a physical and psychological understanding of the character.

Student Outcomes: Because we will be primarily focusing on a preliminary exploration of body and movement, you may expect to learn how to:

- Observe and analyze the physical behavior of yourself and others.
- Reproduce a classmate's physical life.
- Identify, discuss, and practice body "maneuvers" [blocking/staging choices].
- Perform basic physical warmups [and recognize the importance of doing them regularly].
- Demonstrate a basic acquaintance with various movement techniques such as animal abstraction, Chekhov, and Neutral Mask, to name a few.
- Apply the above techniques and synthesize them using Stanislavski's 10 system steps.
- Apply the above techniques in improvisational work.

Assessment:

- Notation and documentation of physical behavior using correct terminology on supplied forms or using the appropriate analysis outline, and through written responses to live theatre productions. This knowledge may also be tested through quizzes.
- Presentation of your own physical behavior through the supplied exercise outline.
- Recreation of a classmate's physical life through performance using the supplied exercise outline and Neutral Mask.
- Participation in discussions and exercises focusing on blocking and staging. Neutral Mask will be used.
- Participation in daily physical warm-ups.
- Participation in in-class exercises and improvisations illustrating various movement techniques.
- Performance of open scenes incorporating the various movement techniques learned in class, as well as Neutral Mask.

Course Requirements:

1) **A) Attendance and Participation:** Both are mandatory. *No more than two [2] absences of any kind will be allowed. Each absence over the allowed two will result in a drop of one letter from the overall (quarter) grade. If you are late, you will be marked absent and ineligible to participate in that day's class. There is also a closed door policy; after the door to the classroom is closed, you may not enter, knock, sneak in, or otherwise disrupt the class.*

B) Missed Assignments and Quizzes: May be made up at the discretion of the instructor if at least one week notice is given or the absence results from illness, injury, family emergency, or other excuse deemed reasonable by the instructor. Otherwise, no performance, assignment, exam, or quiz will be given as a makeup.

C) Late Assignments: No assignments may be late. Late assignments will be penalized 1 letter grade if late by up to one class period and previously approved by the instructor. No assignments will be accepted if more than one class period late.

2) **Effort and Improvement:** Progress will be evaluated by the instructor through in-class participation and assignments. If the instructor or student feels progress is poor or otherwise merits discussion, a private conference may be scheduled at the discretion of either party.

Students who show a willingness to participate in exercises, lead class discussions, ask questions and explore topics, and/or show a marked improvement in their understanding of the subject will receive credit for their effort. Likewise, students who are reluctant to participate, are unprepared, or consistently engage in disrespectful behavior [i.e., talking during a lecture or performance work, chewing gum, or eating and drinking during class] will be penalized.

3) **Exams/Quizzes:** Performances of Open Scenes and/or physical life performances serve as exams. There may be regular assigned readings from either textbook(s) or handouts. A quiz on basic terminology and concepts learned may be given near the end of the quarter based on these readings and material otherwise covered in class.

4) **Assignments:** There will be in-class assignments, improvisation, and exercises. The major assignments will be the self-imitation exercises, physical life project, and the open scenes. The open scenes, partners, and physical life projects will be assigned by the instructor.

5) **Productions:** *All students are required to see the Winter Quarter production(s), if not cast in them, and write a 2-3 page type-written reaction paper about each focusing on acting and movement.* If you are cast, your reaction paper should detail your rehearsal and performance experiences acting in the production. These productions will be discussed in class. Due dates are on your calendar. Please use the appropriate terms and concepts in your written response and in the oral discussions.

6) **Extra Credit: Acting/Movement Journal-** This will consist of three parts; a) Acting/Movement Class, b) Acting/Movement Observed, and c) Acting/Movement. *The journal must be clearly divided into these three parts, with entries under each.* You will be responsible for at least two entries per week. Please use the appropriate terms and concepts when writing your journal entries. The journal will have two due dates: midterm (the date is on your calendar) and the last day of class (it will be graded and returned during the final).

Other extra credit may be made available at the discretion of the instructor.

7) Please wear loose, comfortable clothing [that you don't mind getting dirty] and shoes without hard soles to class. Due to the physical nature of the class, it is imperative that you be able to move about the space with confidence and freedom. *Please note that any physical contact that transpires during a classroom exercise, improvisation, or rehearsal/performance must be mutually agreed upon by all parties involved.*

Grading Procedure:

1)	Participation [Exercises/Improvs/Warmups]	10%
2)	Effort/Improvement	5%
3)	Self Imitation	10% [5% performance/5% body aware checklist]
4)	Physical Life Projects/ Checklists	20% [10% performance/10% paperwork]
5)	Open Scenes [Center/Leading/Animal]	45% [15% each-10% perf/5% paper]
6)	Production Response(s)	5%
7)	Quiz	<u>5%</u>
		100%

Extra Credit:

1)	Journal	10%
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Grading Policy: I do not subscribe to grade inflation. Thus, an “A” means that you have shown me **superior** understanding, preparation, and/or execution of any given assignment/task. A “B” means **above average** [you did a bit more than was asked of you], a “C” means **average** [you did exactly what was asked of you- no more, no less], a “D” means **below average** [you did less than I asked of you, the assignment is unfinished, shoddy work], and an “F” means failure to complete the assignment or understand it [extremely poor/shoddy/ill thought-out work]. **Any assignment/performance obviously unprepared/unrehearsed will receive a grade of F!**

Theatre Arts Mission Statements, Teaching Philosophies, and Disabilities Statement

Mission Statements:

- University Mission; “Docendo Discimus” (By Teaching We Learn)

The Department of Theatre Arts is an ensemble of artists, scholars, educators, and practitioners located in the heart of the Pacific Northwest who:

- prepare students for advanced study and professional careers in theatre;
- promote creativity and excellence in a diverse educational environment;
- cultivate, educate, challenge and enrich audiences; and
- train and prepare students from diverse backgrounds to link art and life through experiential learning; in order to nurture skilled, thoughtful, and courageous citizens who will promote a peaceful and tolerant global community
- Center for Teaching and Learning Theme; “facilitators of learning in a diverse world”

Teaching Philosophy:

The Theatre Arts Department supports and practices constructivism as a teaching philosophy. Indeed, it may be argued that it has used this philosophy in almost all of the diverse areas within the discipline since the art of theatre was created by human beings. Teachers of Theatre Arts practice tenets from the three forms of constructivism exhaustively covered in the Conceptual Framework; Developmental, Social, and Socio-cultural. As a result, we apply the views commonly and generally held by constructivist teachers;

- Learning opportunities are best when accompanied by high levels of active engagement with tasks that characterize them.
- Formal knowledge is valued and made available to the learner, but the learner is encouraged to reflect on it and be skeptical about it, rather than simply accept it.
- Multiple examples and a variety of representations of content enable learners to derive meaning.
- Critical thinking, reflection, and problem solving are prized and encouraged.
- Interaction and conversation with others in the learning environment can improve the learner’s ability to state her case, can widen perspective, and can motivate learning.
- Multiple and authentic measures of assessment provide richer insight into the learner’s construction of knowledge.
- Verbal explanations can and should be supplemented by experiential learning.

It should be noted that each teacher applies these precepts in diverse ways, according to their particular area within the discipline.

Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability that may prevent you from meeting course requirements, contact CWU Disability Support Services immediately, develop an Accommodation Plan; then meet with the instructor to work out arrangements of the Accommodation Plan. Course requirements will not be waived, but reasonable accommodations will be developed to help you meet the requirements. You are expected to work with the instructor and the CWU Disability Support Specialist to develop and implement a reasonable Accommodation Plan.