

COURSE SYLLABUS
Acting I
The University of Texas at Dallas

Course: Drama 1351.001
Instructor: Kathy Lingo
Semester: Spring 2013
Course Start/End Date: Jan. 14-May 4
Course Dates: M/W 2:30-3:45 p.m.

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Classroom: JO 1.216 (RH)
Email: klingo@utdallas.edu
(preferred contact)

Contacting Instructor: Please make an appointment if you cannot speak to me before or after class. I will be on campus a lot this semester, but will have different hours to meet with students due to the projects and performances I will be working with. I am here frequently in the evening and have a class on Monday evenings from 7:00-9:45. Please feel free to email me or make an appointment.

Please come by my classroom or the University Theatre before or after any class or rehearsal and if I have time I will speak with you. However, many situations and conversations do not need an audience of other students. Please feel free to make an appointment.

Course Description and Rationale

Acting is an expressionistic and mechanically aesthetic art. Theatre today is the study of psychology, sociology, anthropology, communication (written and oral), technology, kinesiology, and biology. As a matter of fact, today's generation of actors are influenced by all the sciences. It is an endeavor where humans must work with machines, technology, and space. In addition, today's actor must be acutely aware of his/her body and its potential to physicalize a character. Therefore, a good actor is intelligent; possessing acute sensory and intellectual perception. Most of the time, good actors are thought to be clever because they can absorb and conceptualize information quickly. Their senses must be sharp; fully committed to being mentally and physically in the moment. In this course, the person and/or character (physical and mental), situation (the social and human condition) and message (the objectives of meaning) will be examined holistically.

Great Acting is the absolute understanding of two words, control and submission. It is the contradictions of human nature that makes a character interesting... ie. her house is in disrepair, but she has 5,000 dollars worth of shoes in her closet. He does not take responsible control over his life, but focuses on trying to control everyone around him. The actor must be in constant control of his body and environment, yet completely submit to his character and fellow actors. We are constrained by the conditions, but liberated by our interpretation and expression. To coin the expression "what is up is down." Acting requires multi-dimensional thinking.

This course is designed to explore the intellectual and sensory skills needed to create and develop a character. It will focus on aligning the mind and the body to work harmoniously together in order to process and convey the message of the character and the playwright. We will study the different methods of character development and experiment with the “who, what, where, when, why and how” of acting. Ultimately, the course will teach the student actor to embody a character in order to present a portrayal consistent with the presentational style of the 21st century. Course work will include class exercises, acting assignments, assigned readings, class projects, and the creation and maintenance of an actor’s notebook.

Prerequisites:

College level reading and writing skills are a must, but this is only the beginning. A good actor must possess self discipline, self respect, and respect for others, gracious manners and a respect for protocol and process.

Learning objectives:

- Ability to strategically analyze information written and oral***
- Ability to assess what information most accurately and reliably responds to the needs of the character, the play and the audience.***
- Ability to interpret artistic literature from different perspectives***
- Ability to understand how play stimulates the mind and enhances personal knowledge of one’s self***
- Ability to understand and express the ethical obligations of the actor to the playwright, the director and the character.***
- Ability to understand the beginning elements necessary to shape a variety of characters within the individual***

Course Materials and Performance Attendance with written critic:

1. Required and recommended texts and materials

Uta Hagen, *Respect for Acting with Haskel Frankel*
Peter Brook, *The Empty Space: A Book About Theatre: Deadly, Holy, Rough, Immediate*

These books can be bought from Half Price Books or Amazon. These are old books, but good books.

2. Students **MUST** attend the following theatrical productions that will be performed at UTD
 - a. “Picaso at the Lapin Agile”, Feb 14-16 and Feb 21-23, 8 p.m. in the University Theatre
 - b. “Book of Days”, April 4-6 and April 11-13, 8 p.m. in the University Theatre
 - c. Spring Dance Show, April 25-27, 8 p.m. in the University Theatre

Review/Critique of Shows: After each of these three performances students must write a three page review of each show. This is an analytical academic paper. This paper is not the play synopsis, but an actual review and critique of the performance you attended. Assignment details will be discussed further in class.

UTD Theatre Attendance: When attending any theatrical event it is best to be 10-15 minutes early for seating and ticketing. Many theatres do not allow late arrivals to attend the show until intermission. The use flash photography, cell phones or computers is not allowed in the theatre during performances. If you take notes it must be with the old-fashioned pen and paper. If you are discovered using this type of equipment you maybe asked to leave the theatre or your device maybe taken from you. No food or drinks are allowed in theatre either. When attending any theatre performance please dress appropriately, do not put your feet on the backs of chairs, do not talk during performances to friends or others and do not leave your seat until intermission or the show as ended unless there is an emergency.

If your performance is filmed in class, you must bring the instructor a flash drive to procure a copy of your performance. Several may be required throughout the semester and will be announced in class prior to assignment due date.

Students must wear comfortable, flexible clothes to class. We will be working with our minds and our bodies, therefore the body must be unconstrained and free to form without worry of inappropriate exposure of body parts. We will be moving from the floor to the rafters.

Shoes must be comfortable, flexible, and protective. No flip flops or sandals allowed. Hard heeled or other shoes are only allowed through costuming. When working in the Rehearsal Hall no street shoes are allowed. Ballet slipper, soft dance pads or socks are permitted.

Textbooks and some other bookstore materials can be ordered online through [MBS Direct Virtual Bookstore](#) or [Off-Campus Books](#) online ordering site. They are also available in stock at [UTD Bookstore](#) and Off-Campus Books and can many times be found at Half Price Books.

Course Policy

1. Make-up exams: ***Exams will be in the form of performed and/or written assignments and will only be allowed if official emergency documentation can be proved.***
2. Extra Credit: ***Students will be given due dates and assignments in advance. Extra Credit work will not be given.***
3. Late Work: ***refer to make-up exams to whom the curtain is held for.***
4. Participation: ***We will be doing in-class activities and participation is a must, as well as part of the student's grade.***

Student Assessments

Grading Information

List point values and weights for all assessment tasks

Monologue Work		25%
Duet Scene		10%
Class Participation/Attendance (Criticism, Creativity and notes)		10%
Bio's /Research		10%
Script Analysis		10%
Self Evaluations		15%
Actor's Notebook		10%
Lab Practicum		10%
Total		100%

Lab Practicum: These are the twelve hours students must spend working in the theatre. Students must understand what goes on backstage to know how to manipulate and control the main stage. Students will sign up for four (3) hour time blocks to usher and/or work on crews, which equals twelve hours of lab time. Crews may set different time slots for work calls. A total of twelve hours must be completed. Students must sign up to work no later than 72 hours ahead of crew call time. These are hours students will be assigned to ushering and work crews. Work crew schedules will be posted on technical directors office door, which is also located on the first floor around the corner from the rehearsal hall or in specified areas.

Students will be responsible for their lab sheets. If you work on a crew, auditions or usher you must record those hours on your lab sheet and have an authorized signature approval. If you do not keep up with your sheet or lose it you will not receive any credit for this assignment. This is your responsibility and not the responsibility of the lab instructor or crew head. Bring the sheet to be signed the day of your assignment. If you do not bring it for signature you may not receive credit for those hours. There will only be one lab sheet allowed per student.

Crews will be called by need. They maybe called any day or time with notice. As soon as a crew time is called that your schedule allows, please sign up quickly. Do not wait until the end of the semester to begin building hours. You may not be able to acquire all twelve hours if you wait too long. You until April 13 to complete these twelve hours, so there are no excuses if you do not fulfill these requirements. The last show this semester goes up in April and there may not be many lab hours available after the show opens. Do not wait till the end of the semester to complete these hours. Many students will be competing for hours and students will reserve lab hours on a first come first reserved basis. Each crew call will only require a specific number of students. Once crews fill you cannot be added to that project and will have to wait for the next project.

**For Ushering Contact: Howard Medlock at extension 2972 Office: AS 1.106
For Crew Contact: Alex Loren-Hill or Matt Office: 1st floor Jonnson Crews will be posted.**

If you are assigned to a crew and do not show up for your assigned time you will not be able to make up those hours unless medical emergency documentation is provided and it is approved. If you arrive late, the time will be taken off your time allotment or the instructor may send you home and you will loose the opportunity to acquire those hours.

Scaled Score	Letter Equivalent
90 -100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D

Your instructor keeps a computerized and paper grade book. Due to past technological misfortunes, some operator errors and some systems errors with blackboard, orion, galaxy and whatever, your instructor chooses to use elements of both, maintaining the whole organization of the class in written format. You may always set an appointment with me to discuss your grades, if assignments are not posted on the web. There may be assignments and submissions posted on the w.w. web.

Participation

How can one take an acting course and not participate, mentally and physically, at all times? Theatre is a collaborative art. Absences are taken seriously and only one “free get out of jail” card is given per semester. In other words, 10 points will be deducted from your participation grade with each absence after the first one. Only absences where emergency/medical documentation is provided will be excused. Theatre requires discipline.

Please do not come to class ill. Remember, it’s a collaborative event and we don’t want to create a tragedy or comedy of errors with others’ health. Make sure to provide medical documents. The university clinic is sufficient, if you do not have a physician.

Participation includes contributions and reactions to classroom and studio work, verbal expression of ideas to others, enthusiasm for topic in those expressions and overall involvement/behavior in class activities. Students must speak up, but do so appropriately.

Assignments

This is a performance-based course. The student will edit literary works, to perform monologues and scenes for assignments, which will have time and objective

requirements. Editing is a skill that requires analytical and organizational understanding. Each piece will require different forms of editing and many times require manipulation of the written word to form a complete scene or different perspective. Each piece and performance must be examined and graded on an individual basis.

Performances will be graded in written and oral forms at the discretion of the instructor. Performances will be discussed openly in class for learning purposes. A copy of the edited work or monologue must be submitted to the instructor prior to performance, as well as submitted to the instructor's email.* Students are to take detailed notes of criticisms and comments made by the instructor and others during critique sessions. This will be a separate section in your notebook, which will be handed in at the end of the semester. Each class noted should be dated and comments need to be easy to read and understand. Please feel free to bring your computers to class, but you will always need a notebook to take notes, during class. These sessions will be used to evaluate and grade the development of the character and the actor.**

Self Evaluations: After each major grade performance the student is to submit an evaluation of their performance. The student should answer the following questions:

- 1. What do I think I did well?**
- 2. What do I think I did wrong or that I would correct?**
- 3. How can I correct these things? What will or can I do next time to correct my errors? What would be your solutions.**

These questions must be answered honestly, analytically and provide depth of understanding theatrical terms, practices and methodologies. Your solutions must be practical.

The Character Bio (written or performed) will be given from the character's perspective. They are based upon personal research of author, character, period and the intention of the entire piece of literature.

During your performance we should be able to see the characters' objectives and the audience should be able to employ/view/comprehend the "mind's eye" of the character. We should be able to see into the characters' rationale for every action and should define the motivating features, actions, and thoughts that support those objectives.

This is an example of a potential grading rubric which views acting in a clinical sense. Acting is objective and subjective, and the development of a character continues throughout the actor's life. There are always variables to consider when determining the quality of a performance. Here is a basic way to begin to determine what I am looking for in your performances if you take a technical perspective. However, I find it very difficult to quantify or numerically represent the feelings and emotions that a good performance can manifest in the minds and hearts of the audience.

I do not remember where I got this chart from, but I do not believe it is original. Probably Robert Cohen, but I don't want to lie.

	<i>Excel -lent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Miss -ing</i>
<i>Characteristic Assessed</i>					
Character Development					
Development/Justification	4	3	2	1	0
Clarity of the Condition/Situation	4	3	2	1	0
Clarity of the Objectives/Agendas	4	3	2	1	0
Research Questions/Limitations/Definitions	4	3	2	1	0
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE					
Organization/Interpretation/Invention	4	3	2	1	0
Relationship to all problems/characters	4	3	2	1	0
Completeness of Coverage	4	3	2	1	0
METHODOLOGY					
Appropriate Design of Character	4	3	2	1	0
Sampling/Instrumentation of Physicality's	4	3	2	1	0
Explicit Analysis of Character	4	3	2	1	0
OVERALL EVALUATION					
Organization/Continuity/Completeness	4	3	2	1	0
Interpretive Style/Technical Quality Editing	4	3	2	1	0
Embodiment of Character in Piece					
Total 50 points					
This will give you an idea of the way these grades might be translated. Excellent=A, Good=B, Fair/Average=C, Poor=D, Extremely Poor or Did not complete=F					

Character development requires many performances of the same piece and should evolve with each experience.

Goal/Objective/Motivators: Is what the character is trying to accomplish. Each character has a personal agenda and motivators. All must be revealed through how the character pursues the goal. Why are you doing what you are doing? What do you want the outcome to be? What motivates/drives your characters' behavior?

Others: What are all the struggles/obstacles in acquiring the goal, internal and external?

Tactics: The way we try to acquire our goals. Do we entice or force the goals, agenda and/or objectives of the character in the work?

Expectation: Cohen represents this element as having a connection to "E" words in general: excitement, energy, enthusiasm and may I add, execution. "Look at any fine play, and the chances are that the author created characters who not only desire goals but crave them." (pg. 53) This goes beyond a clinical study of character development.

Your instructor is a fan of Robert Cohen and has attended one of his workshops/seminars. I will be using many of Cohen's techniques/methodologies when coaching beginning actors and would encourage you to read his works.

NoteBooks:

Notebooks will be submitted for grading near the end of the semester. They must be neat and orderly. I will not accept notebooks with loose pages, things thrown in, sloppy presentation or without order. This assignment represents the intellectual quality of your work this semester. If a student submits a notebook in a sloppy or non-professional manner, the instructor has the right to refuse the notebook or give the student a failing grade on the assignment.

This assignment is due respect. All sections must be present in your notebook. All assignments are to be typed. **No handwritten assignments will be accepted.**

1. Bio's
2. Script Breakdowns
3. Copy of all scripts performed with subsections of Vocal notes/ Pieces researched but not selected for performance
4. Research: This would include research you would do on your characters, your pieces and anything valuable to character development as well.
5. Evaluations
6. Acting Notes and Criticisms
7. Lab sheet
8. Any additional assignments

Group Projects

Groups/Teams will be assigned when necessary in class and will be announced in a timely fashion. The Instructor may also use group sign-up sheets to form groups for group assignments or projects. A private discussion area may be set up on the Discussion board for internal group communications, if needed.

We will be playing lots of theatre games in this class, as long as time allows. These games require group work. These are a part of your participation grade and may be turned into specific group projects of performance. I.e. Critique groups may be formed to work on character development in a peer review type of setting.

Assignment submission instructions: Most assignments will be handed in during class time and all assignments must be typed. No handwritten assignments will be accepted. Please make a copy of all work you turn in. **Copies of all your assignments must be submitted in your notebook.**

Online Tests/Quizzes

Quizzes maybe given at any time the instructor feels necessary.

Final Examination

Your final in this course will be a monologue or a scene, or combination of both, with specific requirements to be fulfilled. It will be a piece of work that should demonstrate all the skills you have acquired throughout the semester. It may be a continuation of a previous work explored in class or a specific project developed between the student and the instructor. Detailed requirements will be given in class based upon individual and class needs.

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Scholastic Dishonesty

The University has policies and discipline procedures regarding scholastic dishonesty. Detailed information is available on the [Scholastic Dishonesty](#) web page. All students are expected to maintain a high level of responsibility with respect to academic honesty. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

Course Evaluation

As required by UTD academic regulations, every student must complete an evaluation for each enrolled course at the end of the semester. An online instructional assessment form will be made available for your confidential use. Please look for the course evaluation link on the course Homepage towards the end of the course.

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Course Outline/Schedule

Monday/Wednesday Schedule Fall 2012		
Monday, January 14, 2013	Cover Syllabus	Students need to begin research to find monologues.
Wednesday, January 16	Stage Directions/ Character Development/Breaking Down the Script	Bring 3 (one minute) monologues to class. Students must choose one.
Wednesday, January 23	Monologue Workshop/ What you need to know.	Students will work on monologues in class and will have to work on them at home.
Monday, January 28	Monologue Read Thru	.
Wednesday, January 30	Monologue Read Thru	
Monday, February 4	Last chance to work on monologues in class.	
Wednesday, February 6		First Monologues Due
Monday, February 11		First Monologues Due
Wednesday, February 13	-Theatre games -Choose partners in class	Self Evaluations of performance due in class.
Monday, February 18	Choose pieces and partners	Bring 3 duets to class (5 to 7 min. max.)
Wednesday, February 20		Students will meet individually with partner.
Monday, February 25	Duet workshop	.
Wednesday, February 27	Duet workshop	Reviews for "Picasso at the Lapin Agile" due in class. Bring hardcopy and send electronic copy to my email.
Monday, March 4		Run duet 1 st perform
Wednesday, March 6		Run duet 1 st perform
Monday, March 18	Workshop performance	Self Evaluation of performance due in class.
Wednesday, March 20	Workshop	

Monday, March 25	Theatre exercises	Bring monologue to class to read to class.
Wednesday, March 27	Workshop Monologues	
Monday, April 1	Workshop Monologues	
Wednesday, April 3		1 st monologue perform
Monday, April 8		1 st monologue perform
Wednesday, April 10		1 st monologue perform
Monday, April 15		Review paper for "Book of Days" due in class.
Wednesday, April 17		
Monday, April 22		Monologue Finals
Wednesday, April 24		Monologue Finals
Monday, April 29	Final Notebooks due	Self Evaluation of performance due in class.
Wednesday, May 1	Last Day of Class	

This course outline and schedule is purely tentative. It is a form of organization that is intended to help the professor reach the objectives of the course, but when dealing with human elements and development, there are always variables. The professor has the right to change the dates, times and assignments as she deems necessary. Instructions will be clearly discussed in class and students are required to take notes of all class discussions, which is part of their notebook assignment.

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A student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is

not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of F.

Please go to <http://provost.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/>