American College Dublin

PA203 ACTING 1: CREATING CHARACTER

Credits:	3 US credits / 6 ECTS credits
Credit level:	Stage one
Prerequisites:	None
Mandatory:	No
Contact hours:	40
Academic Year:	2016/17
Semester:	2
Lecturer:	Kristian Marken, Anne Legaretta, Russell Smith

INTENDED MODULE LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this module learners should be able to:

1. Understand the actor's relevant emotional, intellectual and physical resources;
2. Recognize how to draw on the actor's emotional, intellectual and physical resources in generating convincing and engaging characters from a written text;
3. Apply acting and characterisation methodologies in live performance with other actors and to an external audience;
4. Utilise a knowledge of the main principles of theatrical stagecraft;
5. Employ an awareness of the historical context of acting performance and the foundations of acting performance theories, systems and methodologies;
6. Appreciate the role of voice in theatrical performance and how vocal production can be most effectively generated and developed by an actor in live acting contexts;
7. Develop an enhanced ability to respond constructively to feedback, direction and instruction from lecturers and other students.

Learning outcomes 1-7 will be assessed by continuous assessment exercises, and 1-4 and 6-7 by the practical performance assessment.

MODULE OBJECTIVES

This course introduces the student to the imaginative process of creating character through exploring, understanding and excavating his or her own relevant intellectual, emotional and physical capacities. Students will learn to employ these resources in generating credible and engaging interpretations of dramatic text in performance. The course will also consider the work,

theories and systems of seminal founding practitioners of acting performance technique. The role and employment of voice and vocalisation in live theatrical performance will be examined.

MODULE CURRICULUM

Learners will realise the module objectives by completing a number of curriculum tasks and activities. These are planned to include the following topics:

- Introduction to the main aspects of creating character on stage: drawing on the actor's emotional and intellectual resources to present interesting, entertaining and credible characters;
- Learning and applying established acting methodologies for the purpose of presenting characters on stage;
- Stagecraft;
- Dramaturgy;
- The history and development of performance theory and acting methodologies;
- Voice and vocalisation on stage.

REQUIRED TEXT

Michael Powell, *The acting bible: the complete resource for aspiring actors*, Barron's Education Series, 2010.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST

Peter Brook, *The empty space*, Touchstone, 1968;
Marina Calderone, *Actions: the actor's thesaurus*, Drama Publishers, 2004
Uta Hagen, *Respect for acting*, Macmillan, 1973;
Sanford Meisner and Dennis Longwell, *Sanford Meisner on acting*, Random House, 1987;
Viola Spolin, *Improvisation for the theatre*, 3rd edition, New Albany Press, 1999;
Constantin Stanislavsky, *An actor prepares*, Routledge, 1936.

INTERNET WEBSITES

www.artslynx.org
www.performingarts.net
www.talkinbroadway.com
www.theatre-link.com
www.theatrelibrary.org
www.wwar.com

MODULE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The physical structures of the learning environment include a rehearsal and performance space (Black Box), an off-site dance studio, lecturing classrooms supplied with integrated chairs and desks and a whiteboard, a Powerpoint system and overhead projector.

The module learning environment also includes the College's library (the Rooney Library). In co-operation with the teaching staff and in association with Lynn University, Boca Raton, Florida, the Library is able to supply reading and research materials on all aspects of the proposed Liberal Arts degree (as well as a range of materials on history, sociology, literature, languages, art, international relations and environmental studies). There are networked computers (five) and printers, with Internet access and power points for portable computers. The library management system, Voyager, provides an online catalogue. Learners are able to search the catalogue, extend their loans, and place holds on titles from home. An inter-library loan service is available for staff and learners.

MODULE TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

The module intended learning outcomes are achieved through a range of teaching and learning strategies. These include six hours of practical instruction and two hours of classroom instruction combining elements of seminar and tutorial per week. Learners are expected to take detailed notes in class and to do practical exercises and other classroom activities prescribed by the lecturer. Learners are also expected to dedicate at least two hours per week to self-directed study which includes reading, elementary research, home assignments, group assignment preparation, individual projects, and revision of material for tests and final examinations. Self-study can be conducted in the College Library or at home. Learners can also contact their lecturer during office hours for further academic support. All these types of teaching provide a versatile opportunity to support and develop learner engagement with the programme.

MODULE ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

The extent to which learners have achieved the module intended learning outcomes is established by different kinds of assessment strategies. These include various forms of continuous assessment and the final project.

The extent to which students have achieved the intended learning outcomes is established by different kinds of assessment strategies. These include various forms of continuous assessment and a final performance assessment. Assessment instruments include evaluation of in-class acting and voice exercises, essays, class presentations, and live performances. The forms of assessment used in the module, together with their weighting, include the following:

- Class participation, including attendance, punctuality, appropriate conduct, and active involvement in class activities (10%);
- Acting exercises (20%);
- Voice exercises (20%);
- Showcase and/or other performances (20%);

- Performing arts history and theory papers (30%).

The assessment requirements and the divisions of grades within these components will be discussed in class.

The grading scale used by the American College Dublin is the following: A (80-100%), B+ (70-79%), B (60-69%), B- (55-59%), C+ (50-54%), C (40-49%), D (35-39%), F (below 35%).

As class attendance and punctuality is essential for successful performing arts learning and career development, strict penalties will apply for any unexcused absence or tardiness: 5% will be deducted from the final grade for each instance of an unexcused absence; 2% will deducted for each instance of an unexcused lateness (up to half an hour after the scheduled commencement of class; any student arriving unexcused more than half an hour after the scheduled beginning of class will be counted as absent and will have 5% deducted from his or her final grade).

Learners will be instructed in academic techniques of source referencing to avoid plagiarism, that is, unacknowledged appropriation of someone else's ideas, words, and research results. Plagiarism is regarded by the College as a serious offence punishable by downgrading, failure in the course work, and possible dismissal from the College. The College's detailed Plagiarism Statement is included in the Quality Assurance Manual, sections 3.8.1-3.