

Acting Fundamentals
Theater 120, Fall 2014
Prof. Mary Lynn Owen
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Office Hours: Immediately following class, and I'm also available by appt.

Course Description:

The aim of this course is to introduce you to the art and craft of honest, compelling, lively performance. Basic acting technique will be developed through group and individual exercises; weekly assignments, including reading/writing assignments; production attendance; and prepared scene work.

Course Objectives:

To build foundational acting skills – in particular, the physical, vocal, intellectual, and imaginative skills necessary for communicating effectively and honestly onstage

To begin to analyze text

To learn to work in collaboration with fellow actors, and to build ensemble

To instill an appreciation for the art of acting and for the theater

Grading

Your grade will be based on the following criteria:

- Active, focused participation in class exercises
- Careful preparation of assignments, including written assignments, and exams
- Acquisition of skills, and evidence of growth
- Class attendance and Production attendance

Grade Breakdown

Class/Event Attendance 25%

Because of the experiential and collaborative nature of acting training, attendance at all class sessions is required. Your semester grade will not be directly affected by one or two absences, but each absence beyond two will drop your final grade by one step (A to A-, A- to B+, etc.) Illness does not count as an excused absence.

If you wish to be accommodated regarding religious observances that may conflict with class attendance or class work, please make this request as soon as possible in the semester. With any absence, you are responsible for making up missed material. It is important to note that, with the building-block nature of the class exercises, a missed class makes successive exercises harder to grasp.

Class will begin promptly, and you are expected to arrive on time. Three tardies will affect your grade in the same way as an absence.

Use of cell phone during class will count as one absence. No warning is given.

REQUIRED EVENT ATTENDANCE

1. Theater Emory: either "Pinter Review," October 2 – 11 - OR - "A Pinter Kaleidoscope," October 31 – Nov 9
Box Office Number: 404-727-5050

It is your responsibility to acquire tickets.

Participation 15%

Attendance is not Participation. Acting training demands that you "show up" mentally, emotionally, and imaginatively as well as physically.

Participation includes active, wholehearted commitment to warm-ups, partner/group work, class exercises, and class discussions, particularly as we read and analyze scripts. Your participation grade is not based on how naturally talented you may be; instead, it reflects your willingness, enthusiasm, and serious endeavor.

Chatting during class, being passive or disengaged, leaving during class (except in emergencies), use of cell phone, and being unprepared will all result in a failing participation grade.

Assignments 10%

These include scene assignments, written responses, scene preparation, and short homework assignments. Late assignments will receive half credit.

Midterm 10%

The midterm will be held on **Thursday, October 9**, and will consist of a short, memorized scene. Scenes will be performed with a partner, and will contain certain applications from the class assignments and exercises. I will outline more clearly as we progress in the term.

Final Paper 20%

After attending required professional productions, you will submit a minimum 3 page paper, due **December 8, the last day of class**. This paper will evaluate your own work, considering the particular lessons we've learned in class, and will also reflect on your own growth as an actor. Specific guidelines to be given.

Final Exam 20%

This will be a scene performance, held on **the last day of class, during class time**. In the tradition of the Theater Studies Department, we will open this performance to an invited audience of your friends and interested faculty and students.

Additional class information:

- Attire: Class will always begin with a physical warm up. Wear comfortable, casual, non-binding clothes that permit physical flexibility and deep breath work. Wear shoes that permit active movement (no flip-flops, clogs, sandals)
- Nature of class exercises and material: Group exercises are, at times, strenuous and aerobic, and often involve close proximity to others. Texts may include adult subject matter.
- Material to bring to class: your personal notebook, assigned scripts, and props/costumes when exercise or scene requires. *If you must miss a class, you are expected to come to the next class fully prepared. If there are handouts I will try to leave them outside Dr. Lemons' door.*
- Because I'm also a professional actor, I may, at times, have conflicts with rehearsals, auditions, and the occasional day of shooting. I always work around class, but when necessary I use a substitute, usually my husband, Rob Cleveland, also a professional actor.
- The Emory Honor Code is in force in this course. Please note: plagiarism is the act of submitting someone else's work as your own, whether it is from another student, the Internet, or from using a published source without documentation.
- Students with documented needs for certain accommodations must consult with me asap.
- <http://theater.emory.edu> - THEATER AT EMORY WEBSITE!