

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for THEA 3A

BEGINNING IMPROVISATION

Effective: Fall 2015

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

THEA 3A — BEGINNING IMPROVISATION — 3.00 units

An entry level course designed to introduce to students to concepts of improvisation and creative dramatics . It will encourage students to "think out of the box", promoting creative problem solving within a supportive ensemble. Recommended for non-majors (Early Childhood education, Business, Speech/Communication majors especially encouraged) as well as Theatre: AA students.

3.00 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

Discipline:

Family: Theater Improv

	<u>MIN</u>
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- A. Participate comfortably in improvised (spontaneous) acting exercises.
- B. Express him/herself effectively both verbally and physically;
- C. Experience a greater sensitivity to and awareness of self and others;
- D. Identify and be able to apply the basic rules of improvisation.

V. CONTENT:

- A. Introduction to improvisation
 - 1. Purposes
 - 2. Rules and Etiquette
- B. Warm Ups and Preparation Exercises
 - 1. Body
 - a. Relaxation
 - b. Centering
 - c. Energizing
 - 2. Voice
 - a. Breath support
 - b. Articulation
 - c. Resonation
 - 3. Mind
 - a. Concentration
 - b. Imagination
 - c. Awareness
 - 4. Examples
 - a. Mirroring
 - b. Stretches and shakes
 - c. Tongue twisters
 - d. Guided imagery
- C. Improvisations and Theater Games
 - 1. Establishing setting
 - 2. Creating character
 - 3. Establishing, building and progressing scenes
 - 4. Work on rhythm and timing
 - 5. Staging and blocking
 - 6. Objectives and emotions
 - 7. Use of improvisational techniques with scripted scenes

- 8. Improvising with music
- D. Improvisation Backgrounds
 - 1. Commedia del Arte
 - 2. Creative Dramatics
 - 3. Viola Spolin and Theater games
 - 4. Improvisation in various non-theatrical career fields

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. Instructor responses to the work/play 1. Evaluation a. Of individual performances b. Of the group performing 2. Coaching
- B. **Lecture** -
- C. **Demonstration** -

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Active, creative participation in the activities of each class session.
- B. Keeping a journal of in-class activities
 - 1. Description of the game or exercise
 - 2. Level of participation by the students
 - 3. Personal observations of their own work and reaction to the improv or exercise (e.g. Thing learned or discovered)
 - 4. Observations of the work of other students
 - 5. Reading articles on the history of improvisations.
 - 6. Individual and group performance assignments.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

- 1. Exams/Tests
- 2. Class Participation
- 3. Other:
 - a. Student response and participation in the workshop sessions
 - b. Demonstration of growing awareness, imagination and creativity
 - c. Completion and quality of required projects
 - 1. Journal
 - 2. Leadership of a class session
 - 3. Improv group field trip
 - d. Evidence of ability to handle self-directed material
 - e. Evidence of ability to work actively and supportively with others
 - f. Tests on reading material

B. **Frequency**

- 1. Students will be participating daily in class exercises.
- 2. Journals could be collected bi-weekly.
- 3. A vocabulary/concepts quiz would be given at the end of the semester

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. Spolin, Viola (1999). *Improvisation for the Theater* (3rd ed.). Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- 2. Caines, Rebecca (2014). *Spontaneous Acts*. : Routledge Press.
- 3. Articles on Commedia del Arte and modern era improv groups
- 4. Handouts on improvisation purposes, rules and etiquette

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Loose, comfortable clothing
- B. A journal or notebook