



**THE 445: PROJECTS IN ACTING
COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2017
TR 12:30-1:45 p.m.
PERFORMING ARTS #126**

Instructor: Rebecca Worley, MFA, Assistant Professor of Theatre

Office Location: Performing Arts Center #105

Office Hours: Office Hours: M/W 2-4 p.m., T/R 9:30-10:30 a.m. or by appointment

Office Phone: 903-886-5339

University Email Address: Rebecca.worley@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbook:

Audition by Michael Shurtleff

Additional Readings:

Throughout the semester, there may also be materials on reserve that you will be required to copy and read. I will notify you in advance of the availability. Please plan accordingly for this expense. Additionally, I encourage you to put money aside to order new scripts. This will be a good opportunity for you to begin (or continue) building your own script library. Most scripts cost around \$7 a piece plus shipping. Since the book for this course costs very little, I would suggest putting some money aside for this expense now and begin budgeting that regularly in semesters to come. Searching for and buying new scripts will give you a leg up in auditions (you want to do something they have never seen if at all possible) and expand your personal repertoire.

Required Special Supplies:

In addition to standard classroom supplies (pens, pencils, paper for daily notes/assignments, a folder for those notes/assignments, computer paper, etc.), you will need the following supplies for this class.

- 1 hard-cover, three-ring binder with pockets
- dividers
- highlighters
- nice auditioning clothes (preferably several outfits that can be used as appropriate to the pieces you are performing)
- "TAMU-C Production Handbook"

Required Viewing:***One Flea Spare***

Directed by Rebecca Worley

Produced in the Studio Theatre by the University Playhouse at A&M Commerce

Feb. 28-Mar. 4 at 8 p.m. and March 5 at 3 p.m.

Smoke on the Mountain

Directed by Jim Anderson

Produced in the Main Stage Theatre by the University Playhouse at A&M Commerce

April 25-29 at 8 p.m. and April 30 at 3 p.m.

Tickets are available for a nominal fee from the University Playhouse Box Office (PAC 101) from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. Or, you may make advance reservations by phone at any time by calling 903-886-5900 or by email at playhouseboxoffice@tamuc.edu.

**Note: Please understand that viewing a performance of both of the University Playhouse shows listed above is an absolute requirement of the course. Part of becoming a skilled actor is viewing other actors' successes and challenges. Clear your schedule now! If you cannot attend both of these events, for whatever reason, you must consult with the instructor in advance in order to receive an alternate written assignment for this portion of the participation grade in the course.*

Course Description:

For the intermediate or advanced student actor, this course is designed to hone skills in characterization, voice, and movement in order to produce effective performance practices. The course will consist of rehearsals, one-on-one acting coaching, audition preparations and executions, readings, discussions, and activities.

Prerequisite:

The 213 - Fundamentals of Acting or transfer equivalent.

Course Introduction:

Welcome! This course provides a practical introduction to auditioning techniques for the actor. This is a class that will be challenging, invigorating, and participatory. Please consider yourself part of a workshop rather than a classroom as it is usually understood.

Although there is a lecture/discussion component to this course, by nature actor training requires substantial studio work – both inside and outside of the classroom. Please consider yourself part of a learning community where members support one another with suggestions and constructive criticism. Learning, observing, and sharing are central to this course. *Attitudes of awareness and openness are essential to your development and your contribution to the development of the other members of this class.* Please leave your worries, frustrations, competitiveness, and negativity outside the classroom door as much as possible.

Active participation in discussion and presentation of projects within the class is not only welcome, it is an essential requirement. Positive, helpful and constructive attitudes are also required! Presentations must be well prepared and shared with the understanding that questions and discussion will follow. The ongoing critique of performance is crucial to

everyone's learning process. You should be aware that the vast majority of class time is composed of activities in which you are REQUIRED to actively participate. If you have no plans or interest in sincerely exploring auditioning techniques and accomplishing significant growth as a performer, this is not the class for you.

In this course, I will serve as your teacher, acting coach, director, guide, and outside eyes/ears as we work very specifically on your individual performance efforts. I ask that you trust me and approach the work with an open mind, an open heart, discipline and commitment, and a willingness to try new things. Then, we can work through our artistic challenges together!

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. demonstrate understanding and practical proficiency in developing and executing professional and artistically effective individual acting auditions for theatrical productions.
2. display the acquisition of effective approaches and/or skills in working with a director/acting coach.
3. provide evidence of the essential knowledge needed, and ability to successfully develop and/or present, professional and artistically effective theatrical auditions with other actors.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

Participation and Growth (10 pts.): *Note that attendance alone does not constitute participation.* Active participation is vital in this class. This is an interactive environment and students must not only attend, but must also actively contribute to each class. Further, as also mentioned above, each student is required to attend both of the University Playhouse's productions this semester as part of this grade.

Positive, respectful and helpful attitudes are mandatory. *I would like to make this very clear: I will make every effort to treat you with the respect that I believe you deserve. You are also expected to treat your peers and myself with that same respectful attitude.* If I believe that a student is disrespectful, I will ask that person to leave the classroom. In this event, the student will receive a zero for his/her participation grade for the day (no matter how long you have been in class). Disrespect, rudeness, disruptive behavior, or negative attitudes will **NOT BE TOLERATED**. It should go without saying that refusal to participate in any activity during class will result in a substantial and appropriate loss of participation points for the student.

Previous acting experience will not guarantee you a good grade in this course. Significant growth and a genuine attempt within the class will. I challenge you to push yourself to grow and succeed. This class is concerned with developing *your* skills to the best of *your* ability. The community in the class is here to help all of us grow and expand our abilities.

Participation and Growth grades will be calculated daily and reflected upon/tabulated at the end of the semester. *Each student will begin with a mid-passing Participation and Growth grade*

of an 8. Strong effort or lack of effort during each class and over the course of the semester as a whole will either raise or lower that grade.

Monologue Submissions (2 @ 2.5 pts. each = 5 pts. total): Students will submit five selections for each audition (see parameters below; total of ten selections over the semester). Out of the five selections, two will be assigned for the corresponding audition. If approved, the *unassigned* selections will be included in your final Working Audition Portfolio (see parameters below). Grading will be based on appropriateness of the selections (parameters discussed in class) for the performer, originality, and dynamics between pieces.

Working Sessions (2 @ 10 pts. each = 20 pts. total): Each student will participate in two formally graded 15-20 minute working sessions with me. The Working Sessions will take place prior to each audition presentation in which the student must present a fully memorized and developed audition, which consists of two contrasting two-minute pieces. The student will be graded on the level of artistic quality presented, the professionalism of the preparation, and the effectiveness of his/her ability to work with a director/acting coach in achieving growth during the determined time period. More in-depth expectations will be discussed in class at a later date.

Audition Presentations (2 @ 10, 15 pts. = 25 pts. total): Each student will perform two preliminary individual auditions. They will consist of **two, two-minute contrasting pieces** (#1 will be contemporary & #2 will be classical) that you have not worked on in the past. You will select, memorize, work, and rehearse, the pieces prior to performances. You will work on a total of four pieces over the course of the semester. You are required to receive approval of your selected pieces from the instructor prior to working on them (see Monologue Submissions above). The goal is to gather and develop a wide variety of exceptionally strong, engaging, moving, and effective audition pieces for you to include in a Working Audition Portfolio that you may build upon in the future. So, the more varied your pieces over the course of the semester, the better! The student will be graded on the level of artistic quality presented, the professionalism of the preparation, and displayed improvement from the Working Session. Expectations of quality will become more rigorous as the auditions progress. More in-depth expectations will be discussed in class at a later date.

Script Work (2 @ 5pts. each = 10 pts. total): Each student will be required to submit two formal sets of script work (one per developed audition, beyond the final audition). Script work will minimally include cutting, effective scoring, and formal determination/writing of the basic given circumstances of each character portrayed in the audition. The script work will ultimately be included in your own Working Audition Portfolio. Students will be graded on both content and construction. More in-depth expectations will be discussed in class at a later date.

Working Audition Portfolio (10 pts.): Students will submit a final audition portfolio that includes a **minimum of twelve audition pieces** (this can include sheet music for musical auditions). You should include all *approved* Monologue Submission selections, as well as all completed Script Work from your developed audition pieces. **Note: you must find (at least)**

two NEW audition pieces for this assignment. Additionally, students will include information on three photographers for professional headshots (prices, parameters, contact information, etc.), a working resume, five professional audition calls (productions, summer stock companies, and/or MFA performance programs), as well as any other information deemed appropriate by the student. The style of this portfolio should be pragmatic: an organized compendium of information that would be useful to you as an actor.

Final Audition (20 pts.): You will participate in one final audition in this class. The audition will consist of **two, one minute**, contrasting monologues (**total audition time = two minutes**). You will be required to use **ONE piece** you worked earlier in the semester (re-cut and developed based on feedback received in the working session and original audition). You will be required to select, memorize, work, and rehearse a **NEW SECOND PIECE** that you have not worked on in the past. You will receive an “audition notice” approximately two and a half weeks before your audition date (which is your final exam time slot). Given the dynamics of the audition notice, you will decide which previously worked monologue is most appropriate to use for the audition, re-work that piece and select, memorize, and work a new monologue that you will then perform in as professional a manner as possible.

Remember: You will not know which monologue will be appropriate to present until the audition notice is posted – so you must continue working all pieces throughout the semester. I should see significant artistic improvement in the piece during the final audition since the first time you presented it for a grade! I should also see significant improvement in your ability to select, cut, and work a piece on your own. Additionally, the student must bring a formal acting resume (**worth 5 pts. of the grade**) to this audition which s/he has developed per the format and requirements provided by the instructor. Professionalism, quality, and improvement will be taken into consideration in grading of all of the above elements. More in-depth expectations will be discussed in class at a later date.

Grading:

The following grading scale will be used to determine all individual grades as well as the student’s overall grade in the course:

90-100 =	A
80-89=	B
70-79=	C
60-69=	D
59 and below=	F

Please note: A grade of “A” will not be assigned to an individual who has not completed ALL outside of class assignments, regardless of average.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

WORKING EMAIL REQUIREMENT: It is a course expectation that you have a working email address that you check daily. If you have not already acquired an email address through the university or otherwise, please make arrangements to do so before the next class meeting.

There WILL be times that I need to contact you with important information and email is often the speediest and easiest way of doing so.

WRITTEN WORK: Unfortunately, papers/projects do occasionally get lost. Please, for your sanity, save your work on an external source (thumb drive, external hard drive, etc). Do not depend on your paper staying on the hard drive of any university computer, as it will be deleted, altered, or worse – turned in by someone else as their work! Be aware that it is a course expectation that you keep copies of your assignments until you receive your final grade for the semester.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Contacting Me:

Please feel free to visit me during my office hours at any time during the semester. I am here to help! If you cannot make my office hours due to a scheduling conflict, please set up an appointment with me. It is not an imposition. Communicate, communicate, communicate! If something presents you with difficulties in this class, let me know. I cannot help you if I do not know what is going on. The easiest and most reliable way to contact me is **via email**. Please do not leave a message for me in the main department office.

Email Policy:

Before sending me an email with a general course-specific question, **review your syllabus/look at the handouts/check eCollege/ask a classmate first**. If your question has already been addressed in one of those places, then you will have the answer you need. If you cannot find the answer, please feel free to email me.

When emailing me: Please make your emails clear, concise, and written with proper grammar in order to assure my earliest attention. In addition, please follow some common “email etiquette” procedures in order to keep our electronic communication effective and efficient. Specifically:

- Write a relevant subject line (e.g., “Projects in Acting question,” or “THE 445 meeting request”)
- Address me by name (ie: "Dear Professor Worley" or "Hi Becca" or just "Becca")
- Bonus: "meaningless niceties" are never a bad idea!
- Concisely state what it is you need. If it can't be communicated in a concise manner, perhaps request an appointment. **If requesting an appointment**, give me times that you are available **in the initial email!!!** My office hours are posted above.
- Use a "sign-off" ("Thank you" is always good) and **sign your name**.

Not following these guidelines potentially puts you at the bottom of my list for response time.

Student Resources:**Department of Theatre**

Performing Arts Center (PAC) #101

Phone: 903-886-5346 (Main Office)

<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/mmct/default.asp>**Communication Skills Center**

Hall of Languages #103

<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/litlang/CSC/index.htm>**COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES****Course Specific Procedures:****Attendance Policy:**

You may accumulate two (2) absences before any penalty occurs. **There are no additional absences allowed without penalty. Plan accordingly. There is no such thing as an “excused” absence.** Of course, if you have a prolonged illness or injury, or if a family emergency arises, speak with your instructor ASAP. **Grades will be dropped in ½ letter grade increments for every class absences beyond the second absence.**

Late Arrivals:

To further foster a high level of commitment—and because the work we will be doing this semester will involve intensive focus—the class will adopt the following late entry policy. Students must be on time for every class. Entering a class late or leaving early is disruptive to the flow of the class and indicative of a less than disciplined/committed artist. Please be on time out of consideration to your learning process and the processes of others. If you are late for class, your participation grade will reflect this. The class will begin promptly at 12:30 p.m.! If you arrive after 12:40 p.m., please do not enter the classroom (you will be marked absent regardless). If you arrive within the ten minute grace period, please do so discretely in order to avoid disrupting the class activities/discussions. *It is your responsibility to make sure that you find me after class and document your late attendance for the day—otherwise, your initial marked absence documented during roll will remain.* Also, you are expected to stay until you are dismissed from class. An early departure will significantly reduce your participation grade as well. **Two late arrivals (within the ten-minute grace period) or early departures (or any combination of the two) will be counted as one absence in the class.**

Cell Phones and Laptops:

Please turn off all cell phones upon entering the classroom. Please do not check messages or engage in text messaging during class. This is disruptive to the flow of the course. Further, you are welcome to take class notes on a laptop or other electronic device. However, these devices should only be used for taking notes over the current discussions/activities – and you must type very quietly and turn off all sound so as not to disturb other class members. If I suspect that laptops are being used for other purposes, I will ban them from the classroom.

Late Work:

I do not accept late work. This policy also applies to all performances and working sessions.

Extra Credit:

As a general rule, there is no extra credit offered in this class – please, do not even ask.

Adaptation of Assignments:

Due to the fluid nature of this performance-based class, some assignments/scheduling may need to be adapted. All changes will be announced prior to implementation.

Food, Drink, Gum, and Smoking:

Please do not bring food or drinks into the classroom at any time (exception: you may bring bottled water with you to class). As this is a course focusing on practical performance, chewing gum is not allowed at any time during class. Smoking during class time (even when in individual rehearsals outside of the building) is never allowed.

Clothing:

Dress for maximum freedom and movement. You may occasionally be lying and rolling on the ground. Fair warning: the floor may or may not be spotless. Wear comfortable shoes that you can move around in or bring other shoes. Heels, boots, short skirts, tight jeans, and low-cut shirts will all restrict movement (and consequently restrict your ability to participate in class). Do not wear jewelry that will affect your freedom of movement or speech. No hats are allowed to be worn during warm-ups, activities, performances, etc. Also, please keep your hair securely away from your face during all exercises, working sessions, and performances in class. (It is essential that I be able to see your face during all practical acting work.) *No one will be excused from a class activity because of clothing concerns; you are required to wear clothing that will not inhibit participation in class activities.*

Incompletes:

Under normal circumstances, an Incomplete (I or X) will NOT be given for a final grade in this course. Per University policy, students who **because of circumstances beyond their control** are unable to attend classes will, upon approval of their instructor, receive a mark of X (incomplete) in all courses in which they were **maintaining passing grades at the time of the request** for an incomplete.

Artistic Content:

Writers and performers have explored a wide range of themes and viewpoints, using a variety of artistic approaches. Pieces will be selected by the students in order to aid their accomplishments in relation to the course learning outcomes. The pieces chosen and presented may contain ideas, language, or depictions of behaviors/images that you personally find offensive or otherwise disturbing. Try to concentrate on the performance rather than your opinion about the material in such an instance. However, there is a policy in this class that a performer is required to inform his/her classroom audience that the performance piece may be

deemed offensive. Any class member is always welcome to leave the classroom for that particular performance and return afterward in this case.

Performance Material:

All performance material will come from **play scripts** and must be approved by the instructor in advance. Please understand that I will not approve monologues/pieces that are over-used in auditions. You will need to search for and find new or lesser known scripts. **Also, no film scripts will be used in this class for performance purposes.** This is a course in acting for the stage – not film. Although there is significant crossover, these two art forms are different in a number of ways. Further, when choosing material, a piece found on the Internet or that is not part of an actual play script will not be acceptable. In order to work on selections in this class, you must have read the entire plays from which the pieces derive.

University Specific Policies and Procedures:

Academic Dishonesty:

This course adheres strictly to the college's guidelines for Academic Dishonesty printed in the *Student's Guide Handbook*. Plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), cheating, or otherwise representing another's work or ideas as your own without proper attribution will not be tolerated. **All work must be new and created for this class during this semester by you.** It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the definition of Academic Dishonesty at Texas A&M-Commerce. If such an instance occurs, the student will receive an automatic zero for the work in question, and I will immediately report the incident to the Head of the Department. *(You should be aware that this could result in dismissal from school without credit for the semester.)*

Campus Concealed Carry

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to (<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>) and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Students with a Disability:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that

provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct:

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Reading and Assignments are due on the days on which they are listed below.

WEEK ONE

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| T Jan 17 | Introduction to Course
Types of Auditions |
| TR Jan 19 | Reading: "Production Handbook" Audition Appendix and Shurtfleff – Forward and Ch. 1 "Practical Aspects of the Audition"
Discuss reading
How to find a monologue |

Monday, January 23 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 80% REFUND

WEEK TWO

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| T Jan 24 | Overview of Script Work: Selecting and Cutting an Audition Piece |
| TR Jan 26 | NO CLASS - TETA |

WEEK THREE**Monday, January 30 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 70% REFUND**

T Jan 31 Bring possible monologue selections for Audition #1 (contemporary)
Scoring an Audition Piece: Method of Physical Actions

**Wednesday, February 1 - CENSUS DAY
LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITH REFUND**

TR Feb 2 **Due:** Script submissions for Audition #1 (contemporary)
Warm-up Exercises
Scoring an Audition Piece: Method of Physical Actions (cont.)

WEEK FOUR**Monday, February 6 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 50% REFUND**

T Feb 7 Audition #1 pieces determined
Overview of Script Work: Determining and Documenting Given Circumstances

TR Feb 9 **Reading:** Ch. 2 "The Twelve Guideposts" – (Guidepost 1 "Relationship" and
Guidepost 2 "What are You Fighting For? Conflict")
Application of "Relationship" & "Conflict" to monologues

WEEK FIVE**Monday, February 13 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 25% REFUND**

T Feb 14 **Reading:** Ch. 2 "The Twelve Guideposts" – (Guidepost 3 "The Moment Before"
and Guidepost 4 "Humor")
Application of "The Moment Before" & "Humor" to monologues

TR Feb 16 **NO CLASS - UIL OAP CLINIC**

WEEK SIX

T Feb 21 **Reading:** Ch. 2 "The Twelve Guideposts" – (Guidepost 5 "Opposites" and
Guidepost 6 "Discoveries")
Application of "Opposites" & "Discoveries" to monologues

TR Feb 23 Audition #1 Working Sessions 1

WEEK SEVEN**DoT Production *One Flea Spare* February 28-March 5**

T Feb 28 Audition #1 Working Sessions 2

TR Mar 2 Audition #1 Working Sessions 3

WEEK EIGHT

T Mar 7 **Audition #1 & Script Work DUE**

TR Mar 9 Selecting classical pieces
Bring possible monologue selections

*****SPRING BREAK*** (March 13-17)**

WEEK NINE

T Mar 21 **Due:** Script submissions for Audition #2 (classic)
Working with classical pieces

TR Mar 23 Audition #2 pieces determined
Working with classical pieces
Translating classical pieces

WEEK TEN

T Mar 28 **Reading:** Ch. 2 "The Twelve Guideposts" – (Guidepost 7 "Communication and Competition" and Guidepost 8 "Importance")
Application of "C & C" & "Importance" to monologues

TR Mar 30 **Reading:** Ch. 2 "The Twelve Guideposts" – (Guidepost 9 "Find the Events" and Guidepost 10 "Place")
Application of "Finding the Events" & "Place" to monologues

Sunday, April 2 - LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITH Q GRADE

WEEK ELEVEN

T Apr 4 **Reading:** Ch. 2 "The Twelve Guideposts" – (Guidepost 11 "Game Playing and Role Playing" and Guidepost 12 "Mystery and Secret")
Application of "Game Playing/Role Playing" & "Mystery/Secret" to monologues

TR Apr 6 **NO CLASS – UIL OAP REGIONAL CONTEST**

WEEK TWELVE

T Apr 11 Audition #2 Working Sessions 1

TR Apr 13 Audition #2 Working Sessions 2

WEEK THIRTEEN

T Apr 18 Audition #2 Working Sessions 3

TR Apr 20 **Audition #2 & Script Work DUE**

Thursday, April 20 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW

WEEK FOURTEEN

DoT Production *Smoke on the Mountain* April 25-30

T Apr 25 **Reading:** Ch. 4 “Some Things an Actor Needs to Know”
Discuss Working Audition Portfolio parameters

TR Apr 27 *Final Audition Notice Posting*
Professional Development – Resumes

WEEK FIFTEEN

T May 2 Professional Development – MFA Programs/Internships

TR May 4 **Working Audition Portfolio DUE**
Wrap up and discuss final performance

WEEK SIXTEEN – FINALS WEEK – May 8-12

The Final Exam Period for this class is scheduled for Thursday, May 11th from 10:30 a.m-12:30 p.m.

Student Contract for THE 445, Spring 2017

I have read the Course Syllabus for THE 445 and understand its content including the attendance policy, productions required, academic honesty section, and classroom behavior requirements (including use of cell phones).

NAME (Signature)

Date