



**THE 315 – STAGE DIALECTS
COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2019
M/W 12:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. Performing Arts Center #126**

Instructor: Dr. Carrie Klypchak, Associate Professor of Theatre
Office Location: Performing Arts Center #129
Office Hours: M/W 11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1: 45 p.m. – 3 p.m. (and by appointment)
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COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbook:

Blunt, Jerry. *Stage Dialects*. Published: May 1994. ISBN (10):0871293315

Online retailers list used and new versions of the primary textbook from \$2.59 – \$29.12 (plus shipping). This primary textbook should be in the University Bookstore for purchase as well.

Blunt, Jerry. *Stage Dialects CD Set*. ISBN (10):1583428488

The student must acquire access to this CD set for at-home drills. Due to complications, the University Bookstore will not be carrying this CD set. Dramatic Publishing lists the new 3 CD set at approximately \$40.00 (plus shipping): http://www.dramaticpublishing.com/p1433/Stage-Dialects-CD-Set/product_info.html?osCsid=og8qe5n9rgtf0un296kkvhv486.

While we will not have time to utilize all of the dialects on the CDs, and we will ultimately only use CDs 1 and 2 in this course, you will save money by purchasing the entire 3 CD set rather than purchasing CDs individually. Also, it will be beneficial for you to own the entire 3 CD set in your future acting endeavors.

Earlier editions of the text/accompanying CDs may contain major differences in exercises, chapter breakdowns, and study material. Further, during certain sections of the course, you will be asked to bring your textbook to class meetings. Thus, you are encouraged to acquire the most recent edition of the textbook and appropriate accompanying CDs as soon as possible.

Required Special Supplies:

1. One blank flash drive or CD for preparation of the recorded Dialect Selections Project.
2. Access to a quality recording/playing device (CD player) for at home drills and completion of the Dialect Selections Project.

Suggested Outside Reading/Listening:

Kopf, Ginny. *The Dialect Handbook*. Orlando: Voiceprint Publishing.

This handbook can provide additional activities/exercises for the dedicated student of dialects.

McCrum, Robert, William Cran and Robert MacNeil. *The Story of English*. New York: Viking Penguin, Inc.

This book also accompanies a videotaped series of the same name. The book and series discuss English from its earliest times to the present, including international geographical development.

Stern, David Alan. *Acting with an Accent*. Lyndonville, Vermont: Dialect Accent Specialists.

The texts and accompanying CDs in this series can provide further information and drill exercises for the student.

Course Description:

Welcome! This course provides a survey of the basic techniques for learning and applying stage dialects. You will receive instruction in selected dialects that are frequently used by the American actor. You will explore a systematic approach to dialect acquisition, which will serve you in further independent dialect/accent study. The following major dialects are studied: New York-Brooklyn, American Southern, Standard English (with an additional introduction to Cockney), and Irish.

This is a class that will be challenging, invigorating, and participatory. Please consider yourself to now be a part of a workshop rather than a classroom as it is usually understood. Begin by considering yourself to be part of a learning community where members support one another with suggestions and constructive criticism. Learning, observing, and sharing are central to this course. An attitude of awareness and openness are essential to your development and your contribution to the developments of the other members in 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. You will be up on your feet and moving almost every single day. *If you have no plans or interest in sincerely exploring the artistic process of acquiring dialects for the stage and accomplishing significant growth as a performer, this is not the class for you.*

In this course, I will serve as your teacher, primary dialectician, acting coach, guide, and outside eyes/ears as we work very specifically on your dialect and 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 artistic challenges together!

Method:

In this course, we will be studying dialects of the English language. For our purposes, "Dialects" can be loosely defined as regional variations of pronunciation where English is spoken as the primary language. (FYI: "Accents" can be loosely defined as variations in the pronunciation of English by non-native speakers.) The primary method of dialect study in this class will be sound-substitution. By pinpointing the most important identifiers in a dialect and finding the correlating

sounds in standard American speech, we will be able to search a given text for those sounds and make the appropriate substitutions. Simplicity is the key. You will need a basic knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as acquired in your previous university-level voice class. Your knowledge of the IPA will allow you to fully understand the sound substitutions discussed in your text, lectures, etc. However, it is important for you to remember that we are not linguists – we are artists. We want to find a way of authentically and consistently evoking a dialect that is understandable for our American audiences. Thus, there will be times when the phonemes of a dialect must be slightly altered for the sound of an understandable stage dialect.

Prerequisite:

THE 236 (Voice and Diction), transfer equivalent, or permission from the instructor.

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

1. demonstrate a practical proficiency in presenting selected dialects of English speaking countries through active, embodied interpretations.
2. determine the appropriate sound substitutions in selected dialects of English speaking countries.
3. apply a systematic approach to stage dialect acquisition which will, in turn, allow the student to embark on successful attainment of additional dialects/accents in the future.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

PARTICIPATION AND GROWTH (Undergraduates 20%): *Note that attendance alone does not constitute participation.* As mentioned above, 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. Furthermore, the completion of miscellaneous homework assignments will also be considered part of your participation grade. There may be quite a few of these short assignments and they are all important in the development of your skills as an actor.

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 any activities conducted that day in class and receive a zero for his/her participation grade for the day (no matter how long the student has been in class). Disrespect, rudeness, or negative attitudes will *substantially* lower the student's participation grade. The following are other reasons you would be asked to leave the class and receive a zero for the day's activities: sleeping in class, reading the newspaper, working on other assignments, coming to class under the influence of . . . anything, or otherwise causing disruption or distraction during class (this includes cell phones going off and texting in class – turn them off when you come into the classroom and don't turn them on again until you leave). Finally, it should go without saying that refusal to participate in any activity or part of an activity during class will result in a substantial and appropriate loss of participation points for the student.

Previous stage dialect and/or acting experience will not guarantee you a good grade in this course. Significant growth and a genuine attempt within the class will. This is a class that

regards self-competition as a goal. You and your peers will arrive at various levels, and you will leave at different levels. However, growth from the beginning to the end of the semester can be evaluated. 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. Should it appear that members of the class are not completing outside readings, “pop” quizzes will be instituted in the course which will count toward your Participation and Growth grade as well.

Participation will be calculated daily and Growth reflected upon/tabulated at the end of the semester. *Each student will begin with a mid-passing Participation and Growth grade of an 80.* 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.

**Measures Course Learning Outcomes #2 and #3.*

REHEARSAL/DRILL LOGS (10%): Each student will be required to submit four Rehearsal/Drill Logs over the course of the semester. Each Log will count as 2.5% of the student’s overall grade in the course. Rehearsal Logs should be typed utilizing the appropriate format provided to you by the instructor. You should realize the vital importance of daily drill/rehearsal in order to achieve proficiency in stage dialects. Unless otherwise announced in class, each student is required to document at least four hours of drill/rehearsal time outside of class per Log submission (AKA: approximately twenty minutes per weekday for the three week period of the major unit of study). This assignment will be largely based on the “honor system.” However, if in-class performance suggests evidence that the student has not completed the documented logged times, there will be an appropriate deduction of the student’s Rehearsal/Drill Log grade. More specific criteria will be given in class at a later date.

**Measures Course Learning Outcomes #2 and #3.*

MONOLOGUE WORKSHOPS AND PERFORMANCES (60%): Each student will memorize, develop, and perform four monologues utilizing the four major dialects covered in this course New York-Brooklyn, American Southern, Standard English and Irish. Each monologue will be approximately two minutes in length, will be given to the student by the professor, and will be broken down into the smallest phonemic units possible for extremely detailed rehearsal by the student. It is important to remember that dialects for the stage are worthless unless they are supporting communication and action. The audience is only interested in what is happening or what is about to happen. Conversely, the audience will become bored and stop listening if they cannot understand what you are saying. All of our work on dialects will be for the purpose of clarifying and strengthening your work onstage. Thus, all of your performance work in this course will be graded on your ability to incorporate appropriate dialects into active interpretations. In other words, your acting and communication skills count! Work for an objective in your performances, using the dialect appropriately. Embrace the dialect as an avenue of communication that helps you achieve your objectives onstage rather than seeing the dialect as a burden. Each performance will be workshopped once and also given as a final presentation for the class. Each workshop will count as 5% of your final grade in the course and each final performance will count as 10% of your final grade in the course. More specific criteria will be given in class at a later date.

**Measures Course Learning Outcomes #1, 2, and 3.*

DIALECT SELECTIONS PROJECT (10%): At the end of the course, each student will submit a Dialect Selections Project (recorded on a CD or flash drive). After each final presentation in this class, it is the student’s responsibility to take the final critiques given by the instructor, improve

the piece, and record him/herself saying the piece. At the end of the semester, the Dialect Selections Project will be composed of four improved monologues which prove the student's proficiency in utilizing the major stage dialects covered in this course (New York-Brooklyn, American Southern, Standard English, and Irish). More specific criteria will be given in class at a later date.

**Measures Course Learning Outcomes #1, 2, and 3.*

Grading:

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

A	90%-100%	(Exceptional Quality Work)
B	80%-89%	(Above Average Quality Work)
C	70%-79%	(Average Quality Work)
D	60%-69%	(Below Average Quality Work)
F	0%-59%	(Fails to Meet Acceptable Expectations in Quality of Work)

GRADING RUBRIC:

Assignment	Grade
New York-Brooklyn Workshop (5%)	
New York-Brooklyn Performance (10%)	
Rehearsal/Drill Log #1 (2.5%)	
American Southern Workshop (5%)	
American Southern Performance (10%)	
Rehearsal/Drill Log #2 (2.5%)	
Standard English Workshop (5%)	
Standard English Performance (10%)	
Rehearsal/Drill Log #3 (2.5%)	
Irish Workshop (5%)	
Irish Performance (10%)	
Rehearsal/Drill Log #4 (2.5%)	
Dialect Selections Project (10%)	
Participation and Growth (20%)	
Semester Grade	

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

WORKING EMAIL REQUIREMENT: It is a course expectation that you have a working email address that you check daily. There may be times that I need to contact you with important information and email is often the speediest and easiest way of doing so.

SAVING OF ASSIGNMENTS: Unfortunately, papers/projects do occasionally get misplaced. Please, for your sanity, save your work on a thumb 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 his/her work! Be aware that it is a course expectation that you keep copies of your original and graded assignments until you receive your final grade for the semester.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Contacting Dr. Klypchak:

Please feel free to visit me during my office hours at any time during the semester. I am here to help! If you can't 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 is occurring that is presenting you with difficulties in this class, let me know. Don't be intimidated. I am here to assist you in success and will do my best to help you achieve it. Talk to me! The easiest and most reliable way to contact me is via email. I check it fairly frequently. Please do not leave a message for me in the main department office.

Student Resources:

Department of Theatre

Performing Arts Center (PAC) #101
Phone: 903-886-5346 (Main Office)

Communication Skills Center

Talbot Hall #103
<http://www.tamuc.edu/litlang/CSC/index.htm>

TAMUC Actor's Lab

Private Acting Coaching Sessions with Dr. Klypchak during office hours: open to all declared Theatre majors. Actor's Lab is also available to any student enrolled in Dr. Klypchak's course(s) during the semester of enrollment. Important note: in order to participate in Actor's Lab, a student must bring a memorized piece and sign up at least twenty-four hours in advance on the sign-up sheet on Dr. Klypchak's door – PAC #129. Sign-up sheets are posted every Friday for the upcoming week. Please be advised that in Actor's Lab, we promote the highest level of professional standards. Thus, under normal circumstances, if a student makes an appointment for Actor's Lab and fails to keep his/her appointment without significant advance notice to the instructor, the student revokes the privilege of Actor's Lab for the remainder of the semester.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Course Specific Policies and Procedures:

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 activities, performances, etc. Also, please keep your hair securely away from your face during all exercises, workshops, and performances in class – it is essential that I be able to see your face during all practical acting exercises.

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!

ATTENDANCE: You should realize the vital importance of daily student attendance for developing new skills and understanding new material. *You are expected to attend every class meeting.* I am very strict about this. *There is no way to make up a missed performance class!* In cases of *extreme* emergency (such as hospitalization or a death in the family), you are required to contact me via email *before* the class you must miss.

I will take roll at the very beginning of each class in order to aid me in calculating your participation grade and tracking your attendance. *If you are absent, you are making that choice, and I expect you to accept the consequences graciously and in a mature manner.* It is your responsibility to remain informed of class activities if you are absent for any reason.

The formal attendance policy for this class is as follows: You are allowed two emergency absences in this class with no attendance grading penalty (although your participation grade will still be lowered accordingly upon a missed class). Upon the third absence, the student's overall grade in the course will be reduced by 3 points. This 3 point deduction policy will continue for each subsequent absence. *Due to the mandatory daily interactive nature of this course, upon the sixth absence (regardless of circumstances), the student may automatically fail the course.* (Please be aware that missing a scheduled appointment/coaching time with me without significant and appropriate advance notification also counts as an absence.) Keep up with your absences in this course – this is your responsibility. Do not ask me how many absences you have during the semester; I may not have that information readily available when you need it.

*for more information on the university attendance policy please go to the following link:
<http://www7.tamuc.edu/registrar/attendance.asp>.

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 a.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 also significantly reduce your participation grade. *Two late arrivals (within the ten-minute grace period) or early departures (or any combination of the two) may 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, please take notes by hand and do not use laptops during class.

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS: All assignments must be submitted in hard copy to the instructor. While you are welcome to email me any questions that you may have, please understand that under normal circumstances, I cannot accept emailed student work at this time.

LATE WORK: *Workshops and Performances – Under normal circumstances, a missed workshop or performance may not be made up.* Late Written Work/Projects – Late miscellaneous homework counting as part of “participation” will not be accepted. Late project-based written work will be deducted a full letter grade each weekday after the assigned due date. This means that if you have to be absent for some reason on the day a written assignment is due, you must give your assignment to one of your classmates to hand in for you, or you will receive a grading deduction. All assignments are due within the first ten minutes of the class period unless I specify otherwise. At 12:40 p.m. on the day that the assignment is due, your assignment will receive one full letter grade reduction in credit; at 12:30 p.m. the following day another letter grade will be reduced, and so on. No late assignments will be accepted after one week past the original due date.

EXTRA CREDIT: As a general rule, there is no extra credit offered in this upper-level performance class – please, do not even ask. In the *rare* instance that an extra credit opportunity arises, that opportunity will be announced and equally available to all members of the class.

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. Students are not allowed to smoke during class time – even when in individual/partner rehearsals at an outside location.

INCOMPLETES: Under normal circumstances, an Incomplete (X) will not be given for a final grade in this course.

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, 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 assure 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.*)

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: 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
James G. Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

**Note: Please be aware that under no circumstances can I implement any disability accommodations without official documentation from the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services at Texas A&M University - Commerce.*

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 *Student's Guide Handbook*, Policies and Procedures, Conduct.)

NON DISCRIMINATION NOTICE: Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement 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 the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer. Web url: <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> 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.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Tentative Schedule: (subject to change at the discretion of the instructor)

Mon, January 14

Introduction to the Course

Wed, January 16

Lecture/Discussion

IPA/Sounds of Standard American Review

Have Read: Preface, Ch. 1 "Introduction" and Ch. 2 "The Phonetic Alphabet"

Mon, January 21

MLK Day – NO FORMAL CLASS MEETING

Wed, January 23

IPA/Sounds of Standard American Review

Overviews of Rehearsal/Drill Log Assignment and Dialect Selections Project

Mon, January 28

Lecture/Drill/Activity

New York-Brooklyn

Have Read: Ch. 4 "New York-Brooklyn"

Wed, January 30

Lecture/Drill/Activity

New York-Brooklyn

Monologue Work

Mon, February 4

New York-Brooklyn Monologue Workshops #1

Wed, February 6

New York-Brooklyn Monologue Workshops #2

Mon, February 11

New York-Brooklyn Monologue Workshops #3

Wed, February 13

New York-Brooklyn Monologue Presentations

Improvising New York-Brooklyn in Conversational Speech Session

Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #1

Due: Rehearsal/Drill Log #1

Mon, February 18

Lecture/Drill/Activity

American Southern

Have Read: Ch. 5 "An American Southern"

Wed, February 20
Lecture/Drill/Activity
American Southern
Monologue Work

Mon, February 25
American Southern Workshops #1

Wed, March 27
American Southern Workshops #2

Mon, March 4
American Southern Workshops #3

Wed, March 6
American Southern Monologue Presentations
Improvising American Southern in Conversational Speech Session
Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #2
Due: Rehearsal/Drill Log #2

Mon, March 11
Lecture/Drill/Activity
Standard English
Have Read: Ch. 6 "Standard English"

Wed, March 13
Lecture/Drill/Activity
Standard English
Monologue Work

Monday, March 18 – Friday March 22: NO CLASSES – SPRING BREAK

Mon, March 25
Standard English Monologue Workshops #1

Wed, March 27
Standard English Monologue Workshops #2

Mon, April 1
Standard English Monologue Workshops #3

Wed, April 3
Standard English Monologue Presentations
Improvising Standard English in Conversational Speech Session
Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #3
Due: Rehearsal Drill Log #3

Mon, April 8
Lecture/Drill/Activity
Introduction to Cockney

Wed, April 10

Lecture/Drill/Activity

Irish

Have Read: Ch. 8 "Irish"

Mon, April 15

Lecture/Drill/Activity

Irish

Monologue Work

Wed, April 17

Irish Workshops #1

Mon, April 22

Irish Workshops #2

Wed, April 24

NO FORMAL CLASS MEETING – Dialect Selections Work with Partners

Mon, April 29

Irish Workshops #3

Wed, May 1

Irish Monologue Presentations

Improvising Irish in Conversational Speech Session

Course Evaluations

Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #4

Due: Rehearsal/Drill Log #4

Final Exam – Wed, May 8

Due: Dialect Selections Project. Please hand-in directly to Dr. Klypchak or place in Dr. Klypchak's mailbox in a sealed envelope labeled with your full name in the main department office (PAC #101) by 3:15 p.m. on Wed., May 8. *Note: No late work accepted on this project!*