



THE 236  
VOICE AND DICTION  
SYLLABUS: SPRING 2021

Instructor: Joe Reynolds, MFA Yale University

Office Location: Online

Office Hours: by appointment - after 4 pm or anytime on the weekends

Phone: 323-314-9566

University Email Address: joe.reynolds@tamuc.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Communication Response Time: 24 hours or less

Materials – textbooks, readings, supplemental textbooks:

Textbooks Required: *FREEING THE NATURAL VOICE*, by Kristen Linklater.

Textbooks Optional: *Speak With Distinction* by Edith Skinner

PDFs, Articles and Videos.

Course Description: This course is designed for actors, teachers of acting, voice and speech, and for those people who want to improve their speaking voice. The approach is to liberate one's natural voice and to recognize the difference between "natural" and "familiar." The exercises are designed to eliminate the blocks which distort speech communication. The objective is a voice in direct contact with thought, emotion and imagery. A voice free from tension and negative environmental influences. As Kristin Linklater says,

"To free the voice is to free the person."

Course Overview: This course is designed as an introductory course that should lead to the knowledge and tools that will enable you to improve your own speaking voice. The main areas of focus will be proper breath support, self-awareness, vocal and articulation exercises, the study of the broad application of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), and how to connect thoughts, emotions and imagery with the breath and voice.

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the semester, the student will be able to:

1. Develop an ability to perceive habits and register new experiences
2. Demonstrate proper breath placement and support through relaxation and sensory awareness exercises.
3. Recognize the ultimate controls for breath and speaking are thoughts and feelings.

4. Demonstrate the thought/breath/body/voice connection while releasing sound
5. Recognize and eliminate areas of tension which distort communication
6. Explain the channel of sound and main resonators and articulators for speech
7. Demonstrate a relaxed, expressive, and flexible voice
8. Use various texts to connect breath, sound and imagery
9. Demonstrate an effective voice warm-up for the stage actor
10. Recognize and execute the appropriate symbols involved in the broad application of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).
11. Demonstrate the qualities of the standard American dialect or “good speech for the stage.”

## Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

Extensive practice and drill is necessary for personal improvement. Practice the warm up exercises daily. When recording videos or meeting online, please wear clothing which allows you to move and breathe! Sweat pants, t-shirts, yoga clothes are great. No belts or tight pants, please. Have a water bottle handy, but please, no eating during class. Please position your computer so that I can see you.

We will be working on breathing, body alignment, vocal exercises and text work. We will work with text, mostly Shakespeare. During the semester, I will be setting up individual tutorials with you to see how your work is going & offer helpful feedback. If you have questions or concerns during the semester, please schedule an appointment with me. I am always happy to meet with you (virtually, of course) outside of class hours. The best time for me is after 4 pm or any time on weekends.

Learning online has its challenges, but I know that we can create an effective learning environment together. Check the online module daily for announcements. Communicate with the discussion boards, meet up with each other virtually through zoom or this platform whenever you can. Let me know how I can help you learn. Make an appointment to virtually meet. Stay positive, stay calm and don't forget to breathe!

**ASSIGNMENTS (50%):** There will be TEN ASSIGNMENTS given over the course of the semester. Each assignment will count as 5% of your overall grade in the course.

**QUIZZES (20%):** There are 4 quizzes. Each quiz will count as 5% of your overall grade.

**DISCUSSIONS (10%):** There are 5 discussion boards for you to post your comments. Each discussion will count as 2% of your overall grade.

**FINAL PROJECT (10%):** Demonstration of an effective Vocal Warm Up worth 10%.

**FINAL EXAM (10%):** One final exam worth 10% of your overall grade.

## Grading

Grades will represent levels of achievement.

“A” = 90 – 100 %

“B” = 80 – 89 %

“C” = 70 – 79 %

“D” = 60 – 69 %

“F” = 59% or less

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

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement:**

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. My contact information is at the top of this syllabus. I try to answer all emails and voicemails in a timely fashion. I am here to assist you in success and will do my best to help you achieve it.

### **COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**

NOTE: This outline is subject to change. Check the module each week for up to date information.

week #1 – 1/11 - 17 Assignment 1

week #2 - 1/18 - 24 Assignment 2 Discussion 1

week #3 - 1/25 - 31 Assignment 3

week #4 - 2/1 - 7 Quiz 1

week #5 - 2/8 - 14 Assignment 4 Discussion 2

week #6 - 2/15 - 21 Assignment 5

week #7 - 2/22 - 28 Quiz 2

week #8 - 3/1 - 7 Assignment 6 Discussion 3

week #9 - 3/8 - 14 Assignment 7

week #10 - 3/15 - 21 Quiz 3

week #11 - 3/22 - 28 Assignment 8 Discussion 4

week #12 - 3/29 - 4/4 Assignment 9

week #13 - 4/5 - 11 Quiz 4

week #14 - 4/12 - 18 Assignment 10 Discussion 5

week #15 - 4/19 - 23 (last week before finals) Record your warm-up

week #16 - 4/26 - 30 (final exam week) Final Exam

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Reliable internet access

## **Instructional Methods**

lectures, readings, learning activities, quizzes, project, final exam

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

***note due dates, turn work in on time, don't get behind***

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **LMS**

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

## **University Specific Procedures**

### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### **TAMUC Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

### **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

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

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **Nondiscrimination 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.