



**THEA, 1351, 01E, Fundamentals of Acting**

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2021

MWF 12:00-12:50pm

Location: PAC 126 Blackbox

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Triston P. Pullen, MFA, Adjunct Professor of Theatre

**Office Hours:** M/W/F 11:00-11:50am or by appointment

**Office Location:** Room #108

**University Email Address:** triston.pullen@tamuc.edu

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Required Textbook:**

*A Practical Handbook for the Actor* by Melissa Bruder, Lee Michael Cohn, Madeleine Olnek, Nathaniel Pollack, Robert Previto, and Scott Zigler.

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams

**\*\*The following text will be provided in a PDF format by instructor on Myleo**

1. *Small Mouth Sounds* by Bess Wohl
2. *Precipice* by William Mastrosimone
3. *The Acting Craft* by Jon Jory
4. Various other hand outs

**Required Viewing:**

*Addams Family the Musical*

Book by: Marshall Brickman & Rick Elice

Music & Lyrics by: Andrew Lippa

Directed by Duncan Michael

October 19-24

*In the West*

By: 21 Texas Writers

Directed by: Dr. Carrie Klypchak

November 16-21

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.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course focuses on introducing and developing the basic acting techniques of characterization, role analysis, stage movement, voice, and body control.

## Course Ethics and Attendance:

*Note that attendance alone does not constitute participation.* Promptness, attendance, and “attentiveness” are valued in this class. Please behave accordingly and do not disrupt the class with excessive talk or the use of cell phones or other devices. This is a class that will be challenging, invigorating, and participatory. Active participation in discussion and presentation of projects within the class is not only welcome, but also 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 acting and accomplishing significant growth as a performer, this is not the class for you.*

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

1. demonstrate understanding and practical proficiency in executing the
2. foundational principles of Stanislavski’s approach to realistic acting for the stage.
3. display acquisition of effective skills in working with others via a disciplined, collaborative, professional, respectful, and productive approach throughout the rehearsal and performance processes.
4. exhibit proficiency in accepting and incorporating constructive criticism into his/her own performances, while developing the skills needed to humanely and insightfully evaluate both personal artistic efforts and the work of others.
5. gain confidence speaking, teaching and working in front of peers, by mastering appropriate warmup techniques, vocal exercises and practicing varied performance styles.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Classroom Participation- 200 points total:** *Note that attendance alone does not constitute participation.* Promptness, attendance, and “attentiveness” are valued in this class. Please behave accordingly and do not disrupt the class with excessive talk or the use of cell phones or other devices. **This is an acting class, so participation is required. We will be moving in this class, so please make sure to wear clothing that allows for movement.**

**Character Paperwork- 150 points total (6 assignments at 25 points each):** For each performance the students will fill out paperwork about their character to help understand their character’s given circumstances. The aim of this paperwork is to help the actor with character development. Paperwork will also include your scored scripts.

**Character Development Exercise- 100 points total:** Using the *Small Mouth Sounds* by Bess Wohl, the actors will use the character descriptions to develop a character.

**Short Quizzes- 200 points (4 Quizzes at 50 points each):** The quizzes will be completed after reading the plays, book, and/or lecture. A pdf of the plays will be provided on MyLeo where the quiz will also be administered. **Quizzes are due the same day they are administer.** The quizzed will be multiple choice with one short answer question.

- *Acting Vocab*
- *Small Mouth Sounds by Bess Wohl*
- *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams*
- *Precipice by William Mastrosimone*

**Midterm Performance- 125 points total:** The midterm presentations will be the final product of weeks of rehearsals and in class workshops. Each student will perform a monologue from *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* by Tennessee Williams.

**Final Performance – 125 points total:** The final presentations will be the final product of weeks of rehearsals and in class workshops. Each student will be paired with a partner in order to perform *Precipice* by William Mastrosimone.

**Live Performance: 100 points total (2 at 50 points each):** You are **required** to see two live theatrical productions this semester. **You must turn in your program and ticket the Monday after the show closes to get your grade.** We will talk about the performance extensively in class.

**AUDITIONS:** As a student in the acting class, you are required to audition for the Theatre Department's Season Show for the semester- **ADDAMS FAMILY THE MUSICAL** and **IN THE WEST**. **Failure to audition will result in the deduction of a total of 150 points (75 points for each audition) for the overall courses.**

**Extra Credit:** No extra credit is offered for the course.

### Grading System and Scale:

In class Participation	200 points total
Character Paperwork	150 points total (6 at 25 points each)
Quizzes	200 points total (4 at 50 points each)
Live Performance	100 points total (2 at 50 points each)
Character Development Project	100 points total
Midterm Presentation	125 points total
Final Presentation	125 points total
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>1000 points</b>

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Point Ranges</b>
A+	990 - 1000
A	910 - 989
A-	900 - 909
B+	890 - 899
B	810 - 889
B-	800 - 809
C+	790 - 799
C	710 - 789
C-	700 - 709
D+	690 - 699
D	610 - 679
D-	600 - 609
F	0 - 599

## **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

### 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 can't make my office hours due to a scheduling conflict, please set up an appointment with me. It is not an imposition. Don't be a stranger! If something is occurring that is presenting you with difficulties in this class, let me know. I cannot help you if I don't know what is going on. The easiest and most reliable way to contact me is via email. I check it almost constantly. Please do not leave a message for me in the main department office

### 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>

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### ATTENDANCE POLICY:

You may accumulate three (3) 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 1/2 letter grade increments for every two class absences beyond three. (Example: Someone with an "A" average who misses class five times will be in the "A-" range; a seventh absence moves that student down into the "B+" range and so on...)

### 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 student. Please be on time out of consideration to your learning process and the processes of others. 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. 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, 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.

**EXTRA CREDIT:**

The instructor reserves the right to offer extra-credit to all students, and to gauge its application appropriately and uniformly for all.

**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.

**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 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.)

**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

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/)

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

## 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.

## 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.

## A&M-COMMERCE SUPPORTS STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

## COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

WU: Warmup

AUGUST 30	<b>WEEK 1</b>	<b>Monday</b>	Introduction to Class/Cover Syllabus Homework: Read A Practical Handbook for the Actor
SEPTEMBER 1	1	Wednesday	Viewpoints (Topography, Tempo, Repetition, Shape, Gesture)
SEPTEMBER 3	1	Friday	Viewpoints (Architecture, Spatial Relationships, Kinesthetic Response)
SEPTEMBER 6	2	Monday	<b>LABOR DAY NO CLASS</b>

SEPTEMBER 8	2	Wednesday	WU/ Discussion over Reading/ Given Circumstances/ Objective/ Super objective
SEPTEMBER 10	2	Friday	WU/ERBS (I blank you)
SEPTEMBER 13	3	Monday	WU/Physical Task/Raising the Stakes
SEPTEMBER 15	3	Wednesday	Small Mouth Sounds Discussion/ SMS Developing Character/ SMS Assign Characters <b>QUIZ OVER SMALL MOUTH SOUNDS DUE BEFORE CLASS</b>
SEPTEMBER 17	3	Friday	WU/SMS Character Development Workday
SEPTEMBER 20	4	Monday	WU/SMS Character Development Workday
SEPTEMBER 22	4	Wednesday	WU/Small Mouth Sounds Scene Work
SEPTEMBER 24	4	Friday	Small Mouth Sounds Scene Work <b>QUIZ OVER ACTING VOCAB DUE BEFORE CLASS</b>
SEPTEMBER 27	5	Monday	Small Mouth Sounds Scene Work
SEPTEMBER 29	5	Wednesday	Small Mouth Sounds Presentation
OCTOBER 1	5	Friday	Small Mouth Sounds Presentation
OCTOBER 4	6	Monday	Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Discussion/ Lets Break it Down <b>CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF QUIZ DUE BEFORE CLASS</b>
OCTOBER 6	6	Wednesday	Assigning Monologues/Blocking for Cat on a Hot Tin Roof
OCTOBER 8	6	Friday	WU/Blocking for Cat on a Hot Tin Roof
OCTOBER 11	7	Monday	WU/Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Mono Work
OCTOBER 13	7	Wednesday	Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Mono Work – Raise the Stakes
OCTOBER 15	7	Friday	Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Mono Work
OCTOBER 18	8	Monday	Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Mono Work <b>ADDAMS FAMILY OPENS THIS WEEK- MAKE SURE TO SEE THIS PERFORMANCE.</b>
OCTOBER 20	8	Wednesday	Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Mono Work
OCTOBER 22	8	Friday	Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Mono Work
OCTOBER 25	9	Monday	Mid-Term Presentations <b>TICKET AND PROGRAM DUE FOR LIVE PERFORMANCE GRADE</b>
OCTOBER 27	9	Wednesday	Mid-Term Presentations
OCTOBER 29	9	Friday	Mid-Term Presentations
NOVEMBER 1	10	Monday	Precipice – Discussion/assigning groups <b>PRECIPICE QUIZ DUE BEFORE CLASS</b>
NOVEMBER 3	10	Wednesday	Precipice Blocking Day

			<b>CHARACTER BREAKDOWN DUE AT START OF CLASS.</b>
NOVEMBER 5	10	Friday	WU/Precipice Workday
NOVEMBER 8	11	Monday	WU/Precipice Workday
NOVEMBER 10	11	Wednesday	Precipice Workday
NOVEMBER 12	11	Friday	Precipice Workday
NOVEMBER 15	12	Monday	Precipice Workday <b>IN THE WEST OPENS THIS WEEK- MAKE SURE TO SEE THE PERFORMANCE</b>
NOVEMBER 17	12	Wednesday	Precipice Workday
NOVEMBER 19	12	Friday	<b>WORKDAY NO CLASS</b>
NOVEMBER 22	13	Monday	Precipice Workday <b>TICKET AND PROGRAM DUE FOR LIVE PERFORMANCE GRADE</b>
NOVEMBER 24	13	Wednesday	THANKSGIVING BREAK
NOVEMBER 26	13	Friday	THANKSGIVING BREAK
NOVEMBER 29	14	Monday	Precipice Workday
DECEMBER 1	14	Wednesday	Precipice Workday
DECEMBER 3	14	Friday	Precipice Workday
DECEMBER 6	15	Monday	Final Presentations
DECEMBER 8	15	Wednesday	Final Presentations
DECEMBER 10	15	Friday	Final Presentations
DECEMBER 13	16	Monday	<b>NO CLASS</b>
DECEMBER 15	16	Wednesday	<b>NO CLASS</b>
DECEMBER 17	16	Friday	<b>NO CLASS</b>

Revised 8/10/2021

**Class Schedule Is Subject to Change! I will never add to the schedule, but I will only take things away.**



*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*