



## **Fundamentals of Acting** **THE 1351** **Fall 2024**

**Instructor:** Jackie Rosenfeld

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**Office:** PAC 128

**Office Hours:** Mon/Wed 2-4pm T/TH 1-2pm and by appointment

**Class Time and Place:** M/W 12:30pm – 1:45pm PAC 126 (Studio Theatre)

**Catalogue Description:** Basic acting techniques of characterization, role analysis, stage movement, voice and body control.

**Objectives:** In this course we will explore the foundations of acting skill. We will focus particular attention on the actor's work on themselves. Significant time will be given to work on imagination and communication on stage, as well as, the basics of script analysis.

**Required Texts:** *Acting: the basics* by Bella Merlin, second edition  
(Paperback available in bookstore or online for about \$22. Kindle edition available for \$12-21.)

### **Program Learning Outcomes**

This course applies to the following Department of Theatre Program Learning Outcomes at an introductory level.

- The student will be able to analyze a script in ways that are necessary to a theatre practitioner or scholar/critic.
- The student will demonstrate an understanding of the component areas of theatrical creation, process, production, performance, and study, and their interrelationships.
- The student will demonstrate competence in one or more areas of theatre specializations.
- The student will demonstrate collaborative and/or leadership competencies appropriate to participate or take a leadership role in an effective theatrical production.
- The student will be able to complete and document a major project as a stage manager, as a designer or technician, or as an actor or director, demonstrating advanced competence in the student's specialty.
- The student will be able to present an effective presentation appropriate to the student's specialization.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Analyze a dramatic text and interpret a character.
- Explain fundamental concepts of modern acting theory.
- Employ standard acting vocabulary.
- Articulate a basic personal artistic process.

- Translate critical analysis into specific vocal and physical choices.
- Demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively on a creative/interpretive project.

**Grading components:**

1) Engagement	30%
2) Production Responses	20%
3) Reading Quizzes	10%
4) Performance Work & Analyses	40%

Final Grading: (0-59.4) F (59.5-69.4) D (69.5-79.4) C (79.5-89.4) B (89.5-100) A

**Engagement (30%):** The expectation in this class is that you are fully engaged as an artist for each class session. You must be present and ready to work at the beginning of each class. You are expected to be mentally, emotionally, and physically prepared. You will be asked to engage as a student, artist, and collaborator every day. You should meet or exceed the expectations of the course, the Department of Theatre, and the University. Your engagement will be noted and evaluated.

NOTE: You should expect to commit significant out of class time to preparation and rehearsal. You must treat this out of class work as a serious commitment. If I receive more than two complaints about any student's presence, preparation, or participation in outside rehearsals, that student will be asked to withdraw from the class. Below is a rubric for Engagement grading:

- A** – Student shows a heightened level of attention, commitment, and effort.
- B** – Student shows an acceptable level of attention, commitment, and effort.
- C** – Student is present and not disruptive or obviously disengaged,
- D** – Student is present and mildly disruptive or disengaged.
- F** – Student is present and significantly disruptive or disengaged.
- o** – Student is not present or asked to leave class.

**Production Responses (20%):** Students are required to see the Mainstage productions of the *Student Showcase* and *Stuart Little*. A 700 word commentary on the production is due at the class period immediately after each production closes. Specific assignments will be distributed prior to each production.

**Reading Quizzes (10%):** There will be regular reading assignments with corresponding quizzes taken in class.

**Performance Work & Analyses (40%):** Throughout the course of the semester you will rehearse and perform several pieces. Each of those assignments is outlined below. More specific details will be forthcoming in class.

**Breakdown of Performance Work Assignments:**

Stage Direction Scenes – You will perform a short self-created scene with a partner(s) with no dialogue.

Three Words Scenes - You will perform a self-written short scene with a partner(s).

Monologue – You will rehearse and perform a new-to-you one-minute monologue of your choosing. It should be from a realistic play written in the last 30 years, and a piece that would be appropriate for you to use in a professional audition. You will also turn in an analysis for this piece, which will be detailed in class and on D2L.

Scripted Scene Performance – You will perform a scene assigned to you. You will also turn in character analysis and scene scoring for this piece, which will be detailed in class and on D2L.

Rehearsal Journals – You will maintain an ongoing log of your rehearsals both inside and outside of class. Details to be provided.

### **Course Specific General Expectations:**

- Your clothes should effectively cover your body through a range of movement possibilities. Hats, if worn, must be turned with the bill backwards. If you are not wearing class appropriate clothing, you will be asked to leave, and receive an absence for the day, as well as, a loss of engagement points.
- This class requires significant physical interaction between students. Please come to class clean, and with nails trimmed.
- Larger jewelry should be removed before class. This includes necklaces, long, dangling earrings, watches, body piercings and large rings. This prevents potentially dangerous snags on your own body or other's bodies.
- Soft soled movement or athletic type shoes shall be worn for class.
- Bring a no-spill water bottle to class. Only water is allowed. Fill it before class. No food in class (this includes gum and candy). \*Speak to me if you have medical needs.
- Hair should be kept out of the face.
- Assist in keeping the space clean, organized and ready for the next class.
- As a student in a pre-professional theatre program you should approach class in the same way that you would a rehearsal. You should be on time. You should be prepared.

### Absences/Lateness:

Theatre is an intrinsically collaborative art, and the practical application side of your training occurs largely in the classroom. Therefore, your absence from class impacts not only your learning, but also the learning of other students. You should not miss class. You will lose engagement points anytime you do. However, I recognize that life happens. Please be in communication with me about any absences. If you do not communicate with me about an absence within 24 hours or if your absences become excessive your grade will be significantly impacted. The same is true for chronic lateness. It is your responsibility to obtain any missed notes from a classmate. It is your responsibility to check in with me after class if you arrive after attendance is taken.

- Seven (7) absences in a M/W class will result in an automatic failure of the course.
- Course Work: All course work must be completed and turned in as indicated by the course calendar, as discussed in class, or communicated on D2L. Late work will only be accepted in emergency circumstances. It is your responsibility to pursue making up missed work, not my responsibility to make sure you do so.

### General Expectations:

Please respect others as well as yourself; this includes other students, the instructor, guest speakers, and performers. The majority of the following guidelines for behavior reflect this principle.

1. Recording class in any form is not allowed.
2. Cell phones should be set to silent or turned off and stowed before you enter the room. Absolutely NO use of cell phones is allowed in class unless there is an emergency, or it is approved/ requested by the instructor.
3. Disorderly conduct or talking inappropriately in class is not permitted.
4. Failure to follow any of these expectations will result in being dismissed from class and counted absent (unexcused).

### Community Guidelines:

We, as a class, will determine the guidelines of behavior for this course. They will be discussed in class and made available on D2L.

### **Diversity**

This class engages material covering a diverse range of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, and disability. While I encourage you to formulate and express your thoughts and opinions throughout the semester, discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated.

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement**

I welcome visits during my office hours and am always happy to make appointments during a time that works best for both the student and I. I don't believe in dumb questions, though I do believe often times the syllabus has not been checked before some questions are asked. If you think it might be on there (a due date or a class policy) check there first. Otherwise feel free to e-mail me or stop by my office. Monday through Friday I will respond to e-mails with 24 hours.

### 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>

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### 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.

## **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)

## **Tentative Calendar**

<b>Date</b>	<b>In Class</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
M 8/26	Introductions & Syllabus & Expectations	
W 8/28	Auditioning Techniques	
M 9/2	Stage Directions and Movement Discuss Rehearsal Journals Assign Stage Directions Scenes	
W 9/4	Work on Stage Direction Scenes	Rehearse outside of class for one hour
M 9/9	12:30 – 1pm Check in and Rehearse 1:10 – 1:45pm Perform Stage Direction Scenes	Rehearsal journal due at check in Read Intro of <i>Acting: The Basics</i> (A:tB)
W 9/11	Discuss Stage Direction Scenes Discuss Intro of A:tB	Read Chp 1 of A:tB
M 9/16	Discuss Chp 1 of A:tB Assign 3 Word Scenes	

W 9/18	Assign Production Response Work on 3 Word Scenes	Rehearse outside of class for one hour
M 9/23	12:30 – 1pm Check in and Rehearse 1:10 – 1:45pm Discuss Student Showcase	Production Response due by 12:30pm.
W 9/25	12:30 – 1pm Check in and Rehearse 1:10 – 1:45pm Perform 3 Word Scenes	Rehearsal journal due at check in Read Chp 2 of A:tB
M 9/30	Discuss 3 Word Scenes Discuss Chp 2	Read Chp 3 of A:tB
W 10/2	Discuss Chp 3 Talk about monologues	Spend time looking at monologues
M 10/7	Assign Monologues and character analysis	Monologue approved by 12:30pm on Wednesday Read Chapter 4 of A:tB
W 10/9	Discuss Chapter 4 Rehearse Monologues	Read Chapter 5
M 10/14	Discuss Chapter 5 Rehearse Monologues	
W 10/16	Rehearse Monologues Perform Monologues	Rehearsal journal due at check in Read Chp 6 and Epilogue
M 10/23	Discuss Chapter 6 and Epilogue Assign script for scenes	
W 10/25	Read script in class Assign groups	
M 10/28	Finish reading script in class if needed How to Score a Scene (bring PENCILS!)	
W 10/30	Character Analysis Rehearse	
M 11/4	Rehearse	Scene Scoring due (always a rough draft)
W 11/6	Rehearse	Character analysis rough draft due
M 11/11	Rehearse	
W 11/13	Rehearse	
M 11/18	Rehearse	
W 11/20	NO CLASS	
M 11/25	Discuss <i>Stuart Little</i>	Production responses due by 12:30pm
W 11/27	NO CLASS	
M 12/2	Rehearse	Character Analysis due
W 12/4	Rehearse	
M 12/9	NO CLASS	
W 12/11	Final Exam 1:15pm – 3:15pm	