



**THE 315: Stage Dialects
COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2025
M/W 12:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.; Performing Arts Center #126**

Instructor: Dr. Carrie Klypchak, Professor of Theatre
Office Location: Performing Arts Center #129 and BA #249B
Office Hours: M/W 1:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (in PAC Office); T/R 1:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (in BA Office); and by appointment
Office Phone: 903-468-2015
University Email Address: Carrie.Klypchak@tamuc.edu

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 at a very inexpensive price. This primary textbook should be in the University Bookstore for purchase as well.

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

Additional materials/handouts needed during each class will be uploaded to D2L.

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, Cockney, and Irish.

This is a class that will be challenging, invigorating, and participatory. Please consider yourself to now be a part of an active learning community rather than a classroom as it may traditionally be understood. Begin by considering yourself to be part of an environment where artistic community 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 developments of the other members in this class. Please leave your worries, frustrations, competitiveness, and negativity outside of the class 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 the artistic process of acquiring dialects for performance 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. While your text communicates much through the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), it is important for you to remember that we are not linguists – we are artists. (As well, for those of you who don't know the IPA, I will help you along – no worries!) We want to find ways of authentically and consistently evoking a dialect that is understandable for our American audiences. Thus, there will be times when the phonemes (or smallest isolatable unit of sound) of a dialect must be slightly altered for the sound of an understandable stage dialect.

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 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 (15%): *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.

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 expected to undertake at least three hours of drill/rehearsal time outside of class per unit of study (AKA: Approximately twenty minutes per weekday for the period of the major unit of study is expected). This

assignment will be largely based on the “honor system.” However, if in-class performance suggests evidence that the student has not completed the required outside drill/rehearsal time, there will be an appropriate deduction of the student’s Participation and Growth 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 any activities conducted that day in class and receive a zero for their 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, working on other assignments, coming to the class under the influence of any illegal substance, 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 #1, #2, and #3.*

MONOLOGUE WORKSHOPS AND PERFORMANCES (75%): Each student will memorize, develop, and perform five monologues utilizing the five major dialects covered in this course: New York-Brooklyn, American Southern, Standard English, Cockney, and Irish. Each monologue will be approximately one-to-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 and/or screen 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 and on screen. 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 in performance rather than seeing the dialect as a burden. Each performance will be workshoped 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 via a submitted video recording in D2L. 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 themselves performing the piece. At the end of the semester, the Dialect Selections Project will be composed of five 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, Cockney, and Irish). More specific criteria will be given in class at a later date.

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

Grading:

SEMESTER 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% (Good 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)

Note: Numerical correlations for individual assignments receiving awarded letter grades in this class may be calculated as follows: A 95%; B 85%; C 75%; D 65%.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

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Leomail:

It is a course expectation that you use your Leomail email address and that you check daily. There will be times that I need to contact you with important information and email is the speediest and easiest way of doing so.

Saving of Assignments:

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.

LMS:

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University 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

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.

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)

ETAMU 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 request a session at least twenty-four hours in advance by emailing Dr. Klypchak. 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 their appointment without significant advance notice to Dr. Klypchak, the student revokes the privilege of Actor's Lab for the remainder of the semester.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures:

ATTENDANCE: I have designed this course for those serious students of the theatre who are committed to developing as artists and generating an exceptional product. With that said, serious students of the theatre do not skip class unless there is an emergency. In this practically based class, there is no such thing as an "excused" or "unexcused" absence. *Class meetings are highly interactive in nature.* You must come to class prepared to participate. It is also important to note that participation is a major component of your grade. Something to keep in mind: *you must be present in order to participate.* I expect you to practice/rehearse outside of class in preparation for in-class activities, I expect you to be familiar with any readings required, and I expect you to have completed all assignments, drills, etc. on time.

I will take roll at the very beginning of each class in order to aid 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.

Prompt attendance is required at all classes. The formal attendance policy for this class is as follows. Under normal circumstances, you are allowed two *emergency* absences in this course with no attendance grading penalty (although your participation grade will still be lowered accordingly upon a missed class). Please note that it will prove very challenging if you miss at all as it is absolutely impossible to "make up" a missed performance-based class; I encourage you to avoid missing even one class if at all possible. Under normal circumstances, upon the

third absence, the student will receive a deduction of three points from their final grade; upon the fourth absence, the student will receive another three points deduction from their final grade; upon the fifth absence, the student will receive another three points deduction from their final grade; *due to the interactive nature of this course, under normal circumstances, upon the sixth absence the student will either be administratively dropped from, or receive an automatic F in, the course (depending on the point in the semester).*

Please be aware that missing a scheduled appointment/coaching time with me without significant and appropriate advance notification may also count 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 p.m., please do not enter the classroom (you will be marked absent regardless). If you arrive within the ten-minute grace period entry, 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. A late arrival or early departure will 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: 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.

LATE WORK: Under normal circumstances, I do not accept late assignments, including workshops or performances, in this advanced class.

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, AND GUM: 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.

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

University-Specific Policies and 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>

ETAMU Attendance:

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance 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 East Texas A&M University 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>

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

AI Use Policy:

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

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:

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: 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/>

Nondiscrimination Notice:

East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M 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 East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health:

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, 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

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

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

Mon, January 13

Introduction to the Course

Wed, January 15

Lecture/Discussion

IPA/Sounds of Standard American Review

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

Mon, January 20

MLK Day – NO FORMAL CLASS MEETING

Wed, January 22

IPA/Sounds of Standard American Review
Overview of Dialect Selections Project

Mon, January 27

Lecture/Drill/Activity
New York-Brooklyn
Have Read: Ch. 4 "New York-Brooklyn"

Wed, January 29

Lecture/Drill/Activity
New York-Brooklyn
Monologue Work

Mon, February 3

New York-Brooklyn Monologue Workshops #1

Wed, February 5

New York-Brooklyn Monologue Workshops #2

Mon, February 10

New York-Brooklyn Monologue Presentations
Improvising New York-Brooklyn in Conversational Speech Session
Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #1

Wed, February 12

Lecture/Drill/Activity
American Southern
Have Read: Ch. 5 "An American Southern"

Mon, February 17

Lecture/Drill/Activity
American Southern
Monologue Work

Wed, February 19

American Southern Workshops #1

Mon, February 24

American Southern Workshops #2

Wed, February 26

American Southern Monologue Presentations
Improvising American Southern in Conversational Speech Session
Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #2

Mon, March 3

Lecture/Drill/Activity
Standard English

Wed, March 5

Lecture/Drill/Activity
Standard English
Monologue Work

March 10-14 – Spring Break - no classMon, March 17

Standard English Monologue Workshops #1

Wed, March 19

Standard English Monologue Workshops #2

Mon, March 24

Standard English Monologue Presentations

Improvising Standard English in Conversational Speech Session

Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #3

Wed, March 26

Lecture/Drill/Activity

Cockney

Have Read: Ch. 7 “Cockney”

Mon, March 31

Lecture/Drill/Activity

Cockney

Monologue Work

Wed, April 2

Cockney Workshops #1

Mon, April 7

Cockney Workshops #2

Wed, April 9

Cockney Monologue Presentations

Improvising Cockney in Conversational Speech Session

Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #4

Mon, April 14

Lecture/Drill/Activity

Irish

Have Read: Ch. 8 “Irish”

Wed, April 16

Lecture/Drill/Activity

Irish

Monologue Work

Mon, April 21

Irish Workshops #1

Wed, April 23

Irish Workshops #2

Mon, April 28

Irish Monologue Presentations

Improvising Irish in Conversational Speech Session

Assign: Dialect Selection Entry #5

Wed. April 30
TBD

Final Exam – Wed, May 7

Due: Dialect Selections Project uploaded into D2L by 3:15 p.m.