

**FALL 2011 SYLLABUS:
THF 101 ACTING INTRODUCTION
Fridays 8:35AM-11:25AM in FAC 132
Instructor: Enza Giannone
Syllabus Subject to Change**

Contact Information:

e-mail: enza.giannone@asu.edu (best way to reach me)

Office: Tower Center Room 111--123 E. University (<http://www.asu.edu/tour/tempe/tower.html>)

Directions to Office: Walk along the length of Lot 16, toward University, take a right on University, 2nd white building on right. Go around to the side of building, through small alley. Go through first door on the right. Office door is to the right of an arts room.

Office Hours: By appointment only.

There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening, that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and will be lost.

- Martha Graham

Catalogue: Introduces basic principles of acting. Topics include terminology, scene and character analysis, exercises and improvisation, audition preparation.

Additional Description: We will begin by creating a strong ensemble that supports all members as they work towards reaching an understanding of the acting process. Discussions, warm-up activities, and exercises will focus on tuning the actor's instrument: **the whole self**. The goal of these exercises will be to integrate all parts of the actor's instrument—imagination, emotion, body and voice--so that the actor can react quickly, strongly and truthfully under imaginary circumstances. Students should bring their life experiences and a willingness to experiment. Our goal will be to create experiences students can later draw upon in their own disciplines. The class will give an overview of how to recognize and/or create the given circumstances of imaginary work (who, what, where, when), how to develop and create characters, and the important principles of acting: focus, self-discipline, ensemble-work, sensory and emotional awareness, risk-taking, living "in the moment," identification of objectives and justification of specific "BIG CHOICES." Skills will be applied to pantomime, movement, improvisation, monologue and scene work. Students will be encouraged to begin exploring what works best for their individual processes. While I acknowledge this is a non-theatre major class whose students have varying interests in acting **ALL students will be required to take part in class exercises and participate in outside class rehearsals and projects.**

Course Objectives:

Students will:

Knowledge:

- Demonstrate a knowledge of basic acting terms and concepts.
- Demonstrate the ability to absorb and employ various acting techniques including the basic imaginative, emotional, physical, and vocal skills necessary for acting.
- Demonstrate the ability to utilize direction.
- Perform with a relaxed, concentrated honest acting style.

Community:

- Work as an ensemble and be supportive of each other on and offstage--"teamwork."
- Develop observation and constructive feedback skills that will be positive and beneficial to everyone's work.

Personal Growth:

- Develop discipline and a positive work ethic through structured rehearsal processes and group performance projects.
- Increase personal and emotional self-awareness.
- Develop an understanding of artistic creativity and aesthetic awareness to become a more informed audience member.

- Develop self-confidence and public-speaking skills (stepping outside your “comfort zone”).
- Grow more spontaneous; make the most of each moment and think “on the spot.”
- Improve decision-making skills.
- Develop the ability to empathize and communicate with others.
- Improve listening and communication skills.
- Relaxation and ability to enjoy oneself.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

*****All class readings will be posted on Blackboard under “COURSE DOCUMENTS” (no later than one week before they are due).*****

Recommended Texts:

Respect For Acting, Uta Hagan, MacMillan.

An Actor Prepares, Constantin Stanislavsky, Theatre Arts Books

Acting: The First Six Lessons, Richard Boleslavsky, Theatre Arts Books.

To The Actor, Michael Chekhov, Harper and Row.

Yale/Theatre, Vol. 8, nos. 2 and 3, Spring 1977.

A Practical Handbook For The Actor, Vintage Books, 1986

Conversations with Actors, Carole Zucker, Heinemann

On Acting: Interviews with Actors, Luckhurst and Veltman, Faber and Faber

Acting in Film, Michael Caine, Applause

Actors on Acting: Performing in Theatre & Film Today, Joanmarie Kalter Sterling

DO YOU HAVE PARTICULAR NEEDS?

Any student needing a special course-related accommodation due to a physical and/or learning impairment must bring this to the attention of the instructor with appropriate documentation within the second week of class so that learning needs can be addressed effectively. Students must contact the ASU Disability Resource Center (<http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc/#>) to document a disability. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively.

OPEN DOOR POLICY:

It is my every intention to help foster a safe environment and a comfortable learning community for everyone in the class. If at anytime you feel unsafe or uncomfortable, please feel free to address these issues with me in private ANYTIME. You may contact me at my office, or via e-mail to set up an appointment to meet outside of class during a time that is convenient for both of us.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS and GRADING POLICY:

♣Attendance Policy (25 Points):

Attendance is mandatory. You MUST come to class prepared to present your performance assignments and to work with your ensemble members. **We only meet once a week and absences will greatly hurt your overall grade.** The only excused absences for this class will be emergencies such as deaths, illnesses or religious observations. You must bring proof such as a doctor’s note, a letter from a church official, etc. if you cannot attend class. **Any and all absences must be rectified with make-up work.** Please email me with with any reason for missing class 24 hours in advance. If I am not contacted before class you will be marked with an unexcused absence and this will affect your grade. Two late arrivals or early departures equal one absence.

0 Absences=25 points--Perfect score

1 Absence=20 points

2 Absences=15 points

3 Absences=10 points

4 Absences=5 points

5+ Absences= Final grade of “E” for course

❖**Performance Projects (40 points):** Performance projects require rehearsal and work outside of class time. **Unrehearsed work will not be accepted.** Performance projects will be graded based upon individual preparation and performance. Points for scene-study will be based on each individual's work as well as overall presentation of all members. Pairs/Groups are responsible for scheduling their own outside rehearsal times and locations, keeping their scheduled dates and showing up on-time for all rehearsals. Please contact me through email **only if there are any extenuating circumstances.**

Solo Performance Project=10 points

"Open" Scenes=10 Points

Contemporary Scenes=10 points

Monologue=10

❖**Participation and Group/Partner Responsibilities (15 Points):**

Extensive and consistent class participation is fundamental to success in this class. Students are required to be active participants as well as ensemble players. Students must arrive with a positive attitude, in suitable clothing, and participate in ALL class activities and exercises (unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as physical restrictions). If reading is required, students must have done the reading with text in hand in order to participate in class discussion.

***Requirements:**

- A positive, pleasant environment (conducive to learning when everyone contributes ideas, focuses on the work to be done and respects others).
- NO ACTIVE CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, PAGERS, IPODS, TABLETS, etc.
- Professionalism at rehearsals in and out of class.
- **Dress code:**
 - comfortable and neutral clothing that does not restrict movement ((no distracting logos).
 - no hats, skirts, dresses, loose jewelry, short shorts or tops, or heels.

❖**Reading Assignments and Written Work (20 points):**

Periodically I will assign reading assignments relevant to the practical work and techniques we are learning in class. You can find these on Blackboard under "Course Documents." Students are expected to read all assignments and be prepared for possible discussions. Students are all also expected to attend an ASU Theatre Mainstage production. They will write a critique of the actors' performances (not the production elements) using terms learned in class. Finally, written responses will be assigned to reflect upon the work done in class and any discussions/questions that may present themselves.

Reading assignments=5 points

Written Responses=10 points: Due one week after they are assigned, 1-3 pages, 12 point font, proper grammar and correct spelling.

Production response=5 points: Due by Nov. 18, 2011 500 word minimum, double spaced, 12 point font, proper grammar, correct spelling.

ASU Theatre (Main Stage Only) 480-965-6447. <http://herbergercollegeasu.edu/theatre>

Zoot Suit by Luis Valdez

Oct 7, 2011

The AZ Centennial Plays

Oct 21, 2011 - Oct 30, 2011

The Misanthrope by Lauren Marshall

Nov 12, 2011 - Dec 4, 2011

NO LATE WORK IS ACCEPTED UNLESS THERE ARE EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES YOU HAVE DISCUSSED WITH ME IN ADVANCE OF DUE DATES! *Academic dishonesty of any sort, including but not limited to cheating and plagiarism, is not acceptable in this course. All students are required to follow the ASU Student Code of Conduct. Please see www.asu.edu/studentlife/judicial

❖Extra Credit (10 points)

Students may choose to attend up to (2) professional productions in the Phoenix metro area and write production response focusing on the actors' performances (5 points each, 500 word minimum, double spaced, 12 point font, proper grammar, correct spelling). **Due by Dec. 2, 2011**

Arizona Theatre Company 602-256-6995

www.aztheatreco.org

Actors Theatre of Phoenix 602-253-6701

www.actors theatre PHX.org

Phoenix Theatre 602-254-2151

www.phoenixtheatre.net

Arizona Jewish Theatre Company 602-264-0402

www.azjewishtheatre.org

Stray Cat Theatre Company

www.straycattheatre.org/ 480.634.6435

****Students may also use film practices skills to film or creatively document class performance projects or activities for extra credit. I am open to proposals from students. For example, a student may choose to film a "reality show" documentary of our process this semester from beginning to end. This will be in addition to class projects and assignments. Please discuss proposals with me through email or during office appointments by Sept 2, 2011.**

"With any part you play, there is a certain amount of yourself in it. There has to be, otherwise it's just not acting. It's lying." - Johnny Depp

THF 101 Acting Fundamentals Master Acting Teachers and their Methods

There are many styles of acting and many acting teachers who have coined specific acting techniques studied by students throughout the world. This semester we will mainly focus on realism, realistic acting, the methods of Konstantin Stanislavski and his American contemporaries. However, we will also draw upon other methods developed by many of whom were students of Stanislavski, students of his students, or others greatly influenced by his work. The important thing to understand is there is no ONE correct technique or method used by all actors or acting teachers. We will be mixing and matching, finding what works best for us as a group. It is your job to experiment, try everything, read and research different methods, and then choose the techniques and exercises that work best for you.

Major players who've influenced me and whose methods I draw upon for this class (names you should know):

- Konstantin Stanislavski
- Michael Chekhov
- Lee Strasberg
- Stella Adler
- Sanford Meisner
- Jerzy Grotowski
- Uta Hagen
- Viola Spolin
- Rudolph Laban
- Anne Bogart (Influenced by Mary Overlie)

"The thing about performance, even if it's only an illusion, is that it is a celebration of the fact that we do contain within ourselves infinite possibilities." - Daniel Day Lewis

COURSE OUTLINE:

Calendar Fridays 8:35AM-11:25AM	Scheduled Tasks
<i>Weeks 1(8/19) & 2(8/26)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Introductions and Expectations •Building the ensemble •Establishing the Warm-up: Connecting to our actors' instruments •Constructive criticism: taking and giving
<i>Weeks 3(9/2) & 4(9/9)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Solo Pieces (Performance Project #1) •Creative movement and Improvisation Skills Due: September 2, 2011 "Extra Credit Proposals"
<i>Weeks 5(9/16) & 6 (9/23)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Improvisation •Text analysis--Objectives and Actions •Introduce "Open" Scenes and choose partners
<i>Week 7(9/30)</i>	"Open" (Contentless) Scenes (Performance Project #2)
<i>Week 8(10/7)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •"Open" (Contentless) Scenes Final Presentations •Choose scenes and partners
<i>Weeks 9(10/14) & 10(10/21)</i>	Contemporary Scenes (Performance Project #3)
<i>Week 11(10/28)</i>	Contemporary Scenes Final Presentations
<i>Weeks 12(11/4) & 14(11/18)</i> (Week 13 11/11-NO CLASS Veteran's Day)	Monologue Work (Performance Project #4) Due: November 18, 2011 "ASU Mainstage Production Response"
<i>Week 15 (11/25--NO CLASS Thanksgiving Holiday)</i>	Enjoy your holiday!
<i>Week 16 (12/2--Last Day of Class)</i>	Monologue Work (Performance Project #4) Due: December 2, 2011 "Extra Credit Production Responses"
Final Exam Day	Final Presentation of Monologues and Self-Evaluations

