

ACTING I
TPST-120-20
Sarah Marshall
1:00-3:00 M-T DPAC 035
Office: DPAC 042; Office Hours: M/:12-1 pm (and by arrangement)
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Overview

Acting I introduces students to the fundamental principles of realistic acting theory and techniques based on the work of Constantin Stanislavski. Through reading, discussion, writing, class exercises, improvisation, text analysis, monologues and script/scene work students will become familiar with the vocal, physical, emotional and technical preparation required for effecting stage performance.

Course Objectives

- 1) to explore acting as a means of self-awareness and individual & collaborative expression
- 2) to develop the student actor's resources for creativity and improved communication
- 3) to solidify techniques of characterization (founded in Stanislavski, furthered in Hagen)
- 4) to expand and develop a student's rehearsal and performance potential
- 5) to acquire critical evaluation skills through written and oral critiques
- 6) to foster respect and appreciation for the art of Acting
- 7) to create an environment of trust and respect among all participants

Required Texts

Respect For Acting by Uta Hagen

Stanislavski For Beginners by David Allen (text provided in Library)

Our Town by Thornton Wilder

Supplemental materials assigned (posted on Canvas, on Library Reserve, and/or distributed in class)

Performance Viewings

As a student of Acting I you are encouraged to attend as much theater as possible. Attending theater and observing acting is an excellent way to expand your understanding of the craft.

Department of Performing Arts Website: <http://performingarts.georgetown.edu/>
League Of Washington Theaters: <http://www.lowt.org/>

Primary Assignments/ Requirements

Class Participation - substantive contribution to class discussions, exercises & performance critiques (Please be prepared to accept public evaluation of your work.)

Reading assignments – (assigned chapters from Hagen, Allen, Angels In America, Our Town, readings posted on Canvas, & Library Reserves.)

Written assignments – Performance Reports, character analyses, unit reflections, character research bio, process observations/reactions. All assignments turned in will be typed and stapled.

Rehearsals- You are required to rehearse on your own or with a scene partner outside of class in preparation for in class performances and presentations.

Notebook- You must have a dedicated notebook for Acting 1 notes. You will need your notebook and pen for every class. No tablets or computers for note taking. Turn cell phones off prior to class time.

Class Content Overview

The course is divided into 2 Units:

Unit One

The Object Exercise (Concentration, Staging, 4th wall, Objective, Obstacle, Transitions)

Unit Two

Scenes from *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder (Subtext, Interplay)

For every unit there will be at least 3 presentations. In preparation for performances there will be readings from *Respect For Acting*, with additional reading on Canvas, lecture/discussions, in class theater games and exercises. You are required to rehearse in preparation for each performance. The performances will be discussed/critiqued in class. You are required to participate in all discussions/critiques. For two of the Units there will be a Lab/Coaching session. You are expected to be thoroughly prepared for lab and on time. Take note: Acting is not for the faint of heart. Please be prepared to accept public constructive critiques of your work.

Attendance

Attendance is Mandatory. You must attend every class.

Presence and Active Participation are essential to this course. Absences and late arrivals will impact your final grade significantly.

*Two (2) late arrivals will be considered one unexcused absence.

(Students who arrive late are disruptive and disrespectful to their peers who have made the effort to arrive on time. You are considered late if you arrive after the roll has been taken and warm up or scene preparation has begun)

*Three (3) unexcused absences mandate a consultation with professor regarding continued enrollment and prospects in the course. Four unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.

(Excused absences are limited to: legal/religious holiday (w/ prior notice), a death in the family or a serious illness/medical emergency supported by a physician's documentation.)

Note: The Student is responsible for contacting the Instructor when they miss a class and for making up any missed work.

(If you are involved in any special school functions, sporting events, etc., or have a religious event or holiday, which may require you to miss a class, please inform the Professor immediately.)

Be on time. Every time.

Evaluation/Grading

3 Object Presentations : 5 points each = 15
Performance Reports: 5 points each Unit = 10
Our Town Quiz: 10
Stanislavski For Beginners Quiz: 5
Lab Our Town: 10 points
Our Town Scene Presentation 1 and 2: 10 points each = 20
Unit Reflection: 2 @ 10 points = 20 points
Our Town Character Paper: 10 points

THERE ARE TOO MANY POINTS HERE!!! RETHINK FOR NEXT SUMMER

Total: 100 pts
94-100 A
90-94 A-
87-90 B+
83-87 B
80-83 B-
77-80 C+
73-87 C
70-73 C-
65-70 D
0-65 F

Note: *Assignments/Class participation that is missed must be made up for the next class.
Late assignments, presentations and papers that are missed due to an unexcused absence will be graded for ½ credit only

Attire and Physical Requirements

Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes for complete freedom of movement.

No bare feet, no flip flops, or high heels. Gym shoes and/or tennis shoes or similar foot wear a

No hats, food, smoking or gum-chewing in class.

*(Exceptions: props and costumes necessary and approved for presentations/scene work)

Please bring bottled water if you like.

We will always ready the classroom for the next class after our use. Clean up the space before you leave.

If you have any special learning needs or a physical condition (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, prior injury, etc) that could be aggravated by aerobic/stretching activities or deep relaxation techniques please let your professors know.

CALENDAR

July 8: Intro (Homework: READ Respect For Acting)

July 9: Discuss Respect For Acting/ In Class Exercises
July 10: Present Objects 1
July 11: Present Objects 1
(Homework: Read Our Town This Weekend)

July 15: Present Objects 2
July 16: Present Objects 2
July 17: Present Objects 2
July 18: Discuss
(Homework: Read Our Town AGAIN this weekend.)
(Homework: Read Stanislavski For Beginners over this weekend. Text available in Library.)

July 22: Present Objects 3 /Stanislavski For Beginners Quiz
July 23: Present Objects 3
July 24: Present Objects 3
July 25: Performance Report Due/Our Town Quiz

July 29: Lab *Our Town*
July 30: Lab *Our Town*
July 31: Lab: *Our Town*
Aug 1: Character Research Bio due/Perform *Our Town*

Aug 5: Perform *Our Town*
Aug 6: Perform *Our Town*
Aug 7: Perform *Our Town*
Aug 8: Performance Report Due/ Discuss

THIS CALENDAR WILL CHANGE. Do not use it as an absolute reference.

Email marshals@georgetown.edu with questions regarding assignments due.
All assignments will be available on Blackboard and discussed in class prior to performances.
When in doubt email me! marshals@georgetown.edu

By agreeing to the terms of this syllabus and this course you also agree to abide by the Georgetown University Honor System which states:

In pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life I commit myself to respect and to uphold the Georgetown University honor system:

To be honest in every academic endeavor, and

To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community as we live and work together.

Link: <http://honorcouncil.georgetown.edu/system/policies>

Objects 1

You are going to present an activity in front of the class for 60 seconds that uses an object or objects and that completely absorbs your attention. This should be an activity

that you do alone. Observe yourself over the next few days doing simple activities that engage your concentration. Rehearse the activity and observe yourself doing this action. Does it completely absorb you? Try and make it do so. The activity should be active (not sleeping) and should be presentable (not offensive or embarrassing.) The activity **MUST** involve a prop or props. **NO CELL PHONES or COMPUTERS.** You should be able to execute this activity exactly as you do it outside of class. Do not do your activity in a bathroom and away from the kitchen sink as it is difficult to bring in the sink and you *may not pantomime* in this presentation. Present the 60 seconds for the class in exact detail as if you were alone . You will need to choose an activity that can be recreated in class in exact detail with all the necessary objects/props so choose your activity accordingly. If the activity you are thinking of doing involves any pantomime whatsoever ...choose another activity.

Choose an activity that interests you, that takes concentration to execute. The more interested you are in your activity the more interesting your activity will be to those watching. The more engaged you are the more engaged your audience will be. No cell phones/ texting allowed in part one..that will be incorporated into part two. No entrances and exits.Begin the performance already in action and engaged in the activity. For example..there is no need to walk in, sit down, put your bag down, pull out a guitar case, open it , pull out a guitar and start tuning. Just begin seated and tuning or playing the guitar. The activity should engage you for the entire 60 seconds.

A list of activities to choose from: Playing an instrument, painting your nails, applying makeup, shining shoes, ironing clothes, reading an absorbing book, writing in a journal, painting a picture, folding clothes, making food, making a smoothie, disassembling a piece of equipment, kneading dough for bread, making a collage, drawing a picture, sewing by hand a button on a shirt, or sewing a tear or hemming pants/skirt by hand or with a sewing machine...etc. You will need to bring in all the props/objects necessary to execute the activity.

The presentation should be 60 seconds long and will be timed. Time yourself in your rehearsals and repeat until you have 60 seconds of activity. Rehearse on your feet and with the props you will use for your performance. Actively rehearse this and all presentations. Acting takes rehearsing on your feet, not in your head.

Please do not try to entertain us AT ALL with this activity. Present the activity AS IF you are completely alone and not being watched.

Performance Report

Answer the Following questions and hand them in on the day you perform.

1: Who am I?

2: What time is it?

3: Where am I?

4: What are the circumstances surrounding this activity?

5: What is my relationship to the objects involved?

6: What do I want?

7: What is in the way of what I want?

8: What do I do to get what I want?

Include the questions with your answer. Allow at least a paragraph for each answer. Type this up and present it to me in hard copy right before you perform.