



TPP 3510C Movement for the Actor I

Fall Semester 2016: TR 3:30-4:50 T 107 Studio 1

professor: Christopher Niess **Office:** T234 **Office Phone:** 407 823-0876
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Office Hours: *

TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT, DOODLE ACCOUNT:

<http://doodle.com/poll/gmzkrstg75nu74y>
(24 hour notice needed)

Text:

Prerequisites: admission into BFA Acting program

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

This class is an introduction to the concepts of stage movement, improvisation and dramatic composition for the actor. It will be an active physical exploration of relaxation, release, and strengthening exercises designed to help the actor develop a more expressive body. The content of the class will include abstract and specific movement exercises designed to free the actor in their use of voice and body in order to promote the development of physical range and dynamics. It will also include improvisation with movement, text and vocalization.

Course Objectives

- To begin to free the actor of personal habitual movement patterns and expand the range of physical choices within a dramatic context.
- To prepare the actor for effective physical interpretation of character unheeded by personal habitual movement.
- To develop an awareness of and build proficiency at working from a physically neutral focus.
- To develop an awareness of and build proficiency at working with an acting ensemble.
- To give the student an experiential understanding of the demands of movement for the stage.
- To begin to develop a process for the physical development of character.

Course Requirements

Attire

- **Uniform.** Following this introductory meeting, students will come to class dressed in close fitting sweats (no shorts) and t-shirts. These are to be plain, solid black to maintain neutrality within the ensemble so that the outlined and framed "calligraphy of the body" of the actor can be clearly visible at all times. Jazz pants are acceptable, as long as the legs are not so wide that they mask the lower body.
- Proper supportive garments should be worn to protect the body and smooth the line. (Men must purchase dance belts, and women wear sports bras as necessary.)
- Hair must be restrained and pulled away from the face and off the neck.
- We will work barefooted in all exercises.
- No jewelry. None, except for the instructor's watch/timer.
- Street shoes must be removed at the door.
- All cell phones and electronic equipment must be turned off.

Materials

- **Journal.**

Instruction/Content

- Since Theatre requires the use of mind, voice, and body, there may be situations requiring a certain amount of physical contact between you and the instructor and other students. If this presents a problem for you, please see the instructor immediately to assess your chances for success in the course.
- There are plays and materials which may express adult or controversial themes as well as strong language. If this presents a problem for you, please see the instructor immediately to assess your chances for success in this course.

Attendance

- Punctual (on time) attendance in class – as for rehearsals and show calls -- is mandatory.
- You will not be admitted after the class begins (at the scheduled time).
- Guests will not be permitted in class (without prior consent of the instructor **and the class**).
- Students will be required to warm up 15 minutes prior to class (for the sake of themselves **and** the ensemble).
- You will be given a daily grade comprised of 1 point for attendance and 4 points for the work you complete in class. If you are not present, you will not receive those points. If we are presenting projects that day, and you are absent without an excuse (see paragraph below) you will not be allowed to make up that project and will receive a zero (0) for that project.

Lack of...

- If an absence from class is "excused", the student will not be penalized for missing that class.
 - The student must, however, make up the work assigned for that day.

- All excused absences require documentation from the student (doctor's notes, prescriptions, notification from the athletic dept or other university organization, obituaries, etc)
- If the day involves group work, the student may be required to work on an additional assignment outside of class.
- Make ups for assignments will take place during finals week.
- If you are absent (unless excused – see guidelines below) during a group scene or project involving other members of the class, you will not be allowed to make up the assignment. (The other members of the group will be given an amended list of guidelines for completing the project without you.)

The following will be counted as excused absences with no penalty.

- University functions, including participation in sporting events, teams, clubs, academic functions, scholarly conferences, etc.
- Illness that is documented by doctor's note or prescription.
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family.
- The observance of religious holy days – *you must notate in writing the dates and names of any religious holy days you must observe during the course of the semester and hand it into the instructor no later than Friday, August 25th.*

Grading

Students have the possibility of earning 500 points during the semester.

Daily Grade

250 points

You have the possibility of earning ten (10) points daily during regular classes:

These daily points will address the following:

- Compositional assignment due for the day where applicable
- Attendance, Promptness, Preparation, Focus, Effort (working at appropriate skill level); as exemplified by the following:
- A positive attitude and commitment to the work.
- Willingness to risk (nothing to gain and nothing to lose).
- Willingness to play.
- Ability to allow the *nonanalytic, nonlogical* and *noncritical* aspects of the bodymind to lead in the creative process.
- Evidence of growth during the semester.
- Ability to recognize and acknowledge strengths and weaknesses and demonstrated progress in problem areas.
- Later work in the class will "carry more weight" than earlier work.

Daily points will total 250 points.

Final Improvisational Scenework/Movement Study

150 points

At the final exam time, you will receive an assessment comprised of an improvisation/movement study and a written component, totaling 150 points.

Journals

100 points

You will be required to keep an actor's observational journal (further detail will be provided in class) which will be reviewed at the beginning of the semester. You will then give a presentation as part of the final exam that communicates your journey during the course of the class.

Grade Totals:	Daily Grade	250	Grading Scale:	A	470-500	94
	Final Improvisation/Exam	150		A-	450-469	90
	Journals	100		B+	440-449	88
				B	420-439	84
				B-	400-419	80
	Total Points	500		C+	390-399	78
				C	370-389	74
				C-	350-369	70
				D+	340-349	68
				D	320-339	64
				D-	300-319	60

The "plus-minus" grading system has been implemented to provide a specific assessment of your course grade. You will receive the grade you have earned, with no "extra credit" or negotiation.

A great deal of emphasis is placed on grades within a university community. During the semester the focus of the course will be on personal growth. Targeted areas of personal growth and achievement will be defined by the instructor (see daily assessment criteria). In the subjective world of creative endeavor, risk-taking and experimentation are prerequisites to growth. Feedback in this course will be given in terms designed to assist in that growth, whatever the absolute level of achievement of the actor may be.

Course guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Students will be notified of any changes.

COURSE CALENDAR

Proposed Calendar

DAY	DATE	WEEK	NOTES	DAY	DATE	WEEK	NOTES
T	23	1	Introductions/syllabus Go Game	T	25	10	Roller Coaster workday
R	25		Breath (always)	R	27		Roller Coaster (Rock and Roll – {Equilibrium/Disequilibrium})
LAST DAY DROP/SWAP							
T	30	2	Breath workday	T	Nov 1	11	Roller Coaster workday
R	Sep 1		NO CLASS	R	3		Roller Coaster workday
T	6	3	Breath workday	T	8	12	Breath Energy
R	8		Breath workday assignment parameters	R	10		Breath Energy
T	13	4	Breath composition due	T	15	13	Breath Energy
R	15		Breath composition due	R	17		Laban Effort Shape Theory
T	20	5	Weight Sharing	T	22	14	Laban Effort Shape Theory
R	22		Weight Sharing	R	24		THANKSGIVING DAY
T	27	6	Weight Sharing	T	29	15	Final Auto Cours assignment Laban composition due
R	29			R	Dec 1		Final Auto Cours assignment Laban composition due
T	Oct 4	7	Beginning Warm Up continued Weight Sharing composition due	T	6		STUDY DAY
R	6		Complimentary Mirrors	R	8		FINAL EXAM/JOURNAL PROJECT 1:00 – 3:50
T	11	8	Complimentary composition workday	T	13		LAST DAY FINALS WEEK
R	13		Complimentary Mirror composition due				
T	18	9					
R	20			M	19		GRADES

*** Time Permitting, these additional topics may be covered:
 Spatial Relationship, Topography and Architecture, Time
 Movement and Music (rhythm, tone)

COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Conduct

- Students must follow the University standards for personal and academic conduct as outlined in the Golden Rule.
- Students are apprised when they are accepted at the University that they must be aware of and follow these policies of conduct.
- See: <http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/> for details.

Cheating/Dishonesty

- For the purposes of this class, no monologue or scenework from another class will be permissible for use unless approved by the instructor. Double use of work as such, unless approved, will result in a zero (0) for that assignment.

Rules/Protocols of Communication

- If you would like to send me email, please add the following to the subject line: "<course prefix>: <Student's last name, first name>". Since I get a variety of email each day, I do not read all emails I receive. By having this heading in the subject line, I will read your email immediately.
- In this class our official mode of communication is through email. All communication between student and instructor and between student and student should be respectful and professional. As of 2009, Knightmail is the only official student email at UCF. Class rosters list Knightmail addresses rather than external email addresses, and all official class communications will be sent only to the Knightmail addresses. Students are responsible for checking their Knightmail accounts regularly. See www.knightsemail.ucf.edu for further information.

Disability Access

- "The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations.
- Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor."

Other:

- **PARTICIPATION, RESPONSE, AND ATTENTION:** *If you are not performing, you owe it to your classmates to concentrate on the work that's on stage.*
- **PREPARATION:** *I expect all to be ready and prepared for deeper exploration – if you have not worked on your piece for a considerable time outside of class, take an "F" and let others use the class time.*
- **CRITIQUE:** *I do not like reviews or opinions. If you like a person's work, tell me why. If you don't like their work, know how to make it better.*

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Please print, sign and bring to class by Thursday, August 25th.

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

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I understand the course guidelines listed in the syllabus, and the method of assessment used in this course. I honor the personal religious observances (beyond university observances) listed below (leave blank if there are none.)

_____/_____/_____
signature

_____/_____/_____
date