

TPP Vocal Production II

Professor - Be Boyd - Spring 17

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Office Hours – MWF– 1-2:30 or by appointment

Course Description

The focus of the class will be on the mechanics of the voice as they relate to physical relaxation, physical alignment, breath support, articulation and use of specific acting language and intentions. By the end of the term, you will have accessed an awareness and command of your voice in a relaxed body. You will have completed a collection of exercises and warm-ups that focus specifically on vocal production, articulation, vocal variety, and physical relaxation that affects the vocal instrument. You will have applied this knowledge by acting in monologues, scenes, daily assignments and other acting performances to connect your personal individual process to what you observe in a final product. The approach will combine three major techniques: vocal master Kristin Linklater, movement technique Contact Improv and Acting master Sanford Meisner.

Please be on the floor ready to go when class begins - this means not taking off clothes or walking in at the beginning of class time. Also, when we begin class, please let go of social energy, class time is about focusing on yourself and technique. Have a good time, but remain professional and focused on personal growth not fellowship with classmates. Take your love for each other and turn that into assessing technique and working together as professionals and company members so you can all leap forward as actors and human beings.

Specific Course Goals and Objectives

The “Big Ideas” for Practical Application and Success in the Class

You will be graded on your demonstration of the following Correct aspects of technique:

- **Breath awareness –I am demonstrating that I am accessing and consistently using my breath for maximum breath support while speaking and acting – consistent breath support means taking a full breath after each phrase, sentence or thought (silent moments should have breath as well), breathing while the other person/actor is talking and fully expelling the amount of breath to the end of the phrase, sentence or thought.**

- **Expression and Clarity of Text** – I am demonstrating that I know what my text means. I am demonstrating that I have made a clear specific connection to/understanding of every word of my text. I am demonstrating that I am making sense of the language in the text so the audience understands what I mean. I am enjoying language in my mouth and body.
- **Pitch (Vocal Ladder), Vocal Color, Tone-** I have eliminated a flat or monotone sound. I am demonstrating that I have a vocal ladder and vocal color (i.e a variety of notes in my sound as I speak) /vocal energy. My voice has tonal fullness, it is not breathy.
- **Physicality-** I am demonstrating that my body is open for effective and natural physicality. I know what areas of my body impede my breath and sound. I am using my body in a natural way while acting. I am making clear, committed and specific physical choices.
- **Articulation** – I am demonstrating that I am attempting to pronounce every sound in every word while speaking and acting. My diction is clear, crisp and committed.
- **Tempo** – I am demonstrating a grounded tempo. I am demonstrating that I have removed the need to speed through lines while speaking and acting. I am taking my time so that what I say resonates with me.

- **Response to Feedback** – I am focused on the instructions I am being given during feedback. I am fully committed to carrying out the instructions I receive during feedback. I have let go of my ego and pushed aside my fear of looking silly in order to carry out the instructions I receive during feedback.

Course Requirements

Attire

- Clothing in which you can move easily and which does not bind the trunk of your body- do not wear jeans or wear a belt to class
- bring a towel or yoga mat to class every day
- You must remove all loose jewelry and tie up long hair.
- Street shoes must be removed at the door.
- We will work barefoot or in a soft shoe unless there are specific shoe requirements

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://ucf.edu/goldenrule/> for details.

- All cell phones, I phones, I pods, must be turned off at the beginning of class time

- Guest will not be permitted in class with prior consent of the instructor

Attendance

- Acting training is a progressive process. **Do not miss class.** Every class is a valuable step toward altering your process.

- Punctual attendance for class - as for rehearsal calls - is mandatory – **if you are not on the floor ready to go at the beginning of class time you will be counted absent.**

- You will be given a daily attendance and participation grade that will average into your final grade.

- If you do miss class, **and you will not**, you must make up the work assigned for the day you missed and you must be prepared to participate fully in class exercises or performances upon the day of your return.

- Your first unexcused absence will lower your final grade five points, your second unexcused absence will lower your grade

10 points (which will lower it a full letter), and your third unexcused absence will result in a failure of the course. Missing class for participating in a show is not a valid excuse.

- Outside work and outside rehearsal time are **necessary** for this class.
 - It is your responsibility to rehearse/practice exercises and techniques you learn in class outside of class to come in and demonstrate your growth. Growth must be demonstrated every day you come into class.
 - For scene work, you will create a regular rehearsal schedule with your partner/s. If you continually miss this rehearsal time – it will affect the grade you receive for each project.

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 the other students.
- There are plays and materials which may express adult or controversial themes as well as strong language.

Grading

All work will be based on a 100pt grading scale - if the assignment is worth 100 points and you receive an 88 on the

assignment, it is listed as an 88. For 200 points – double the 88. For 300, triple it, and so on. Points for major assignments are listed on your syllabus. Your final grade will be based on the accumulation of points for the following areas:

- Major Assignments (see weekly schedule)
- Participation in daily assignments and exercises
- Assignment deadlines and punctuality – Preparation for daily and major assignments
- Willingness and Consistency when rehearsing with partners outside of the scheduled class time
- Professionalism (including attitude toward criticism, and respect for fellow classmates, attendance, tardiness)
- Demonstration of a clear understanding of the work covered in class – demonstration of application of feedback and technique

Major Assignments

****Syllabus may change to accommodate the needs of the class.***

***Each monologue and scene should be memorized and performance ready on the first showing.**

***As you and I are working on your pieces in class, I will give you specific feedback and side coaching - designate a person who will take specific notes on my feedback so that when you and I are finished working – they can hand you the notes**

I. Monologue

(200pts)- We will spend the first couple of weeks work shopping the monologue you perform on the first day. We will focus on the following areas for this assignment:

- Breath awareness
- Physicality
- Tempo
- What am I saying?

The final performance for the monologue should demonstrate your growth from the first showing of the monologue according to the notes given to you by the instructor. The **final grade** for the monologue will be determined by the demonstration of your growth in the **previous areas of focus**.

**Because of the large number of students in this class it might be necessary for me to finish the working sessions with this monologue outside of class.*

You will have a final performance of this monologue on or around **Jan 24 or January 26**. ***You may be called upon (without warning) to perform this piece again during the semester, so keep it fresh and apply the acquired techniques as we move along.***

Ways to approach Monologue rehearsal and performance:

- All monologues, have a strong start, discoveries during the middle and a firm end.
- Every monologue is directed toward a specific “other.” It can be a single person, a group of people, the audience, etc. It is important from an acting standpoint to have a clearly defined “other.”
- Create a personal connection with the language - every word.
- Take your time, give yourself time to respond to your own discoveries, they will be new every time if you are in the moment
- How are you different at the end of the monologue?
- Did you discover something while speaking?
- Try to keep the monologue in the present, in other words, what are you trying to say now, how are you feeling now, how do you want the other person to feel now?
- Take the audience on some sort of journey – a story told in an active way
- Have clear beat changes, transitions that make sense

II. Short Scene - (200pts)

****Note you will be working on this scene while working individually on your first monologue.***

- You will receive a short scene through email the first or second week of class. The scene will be about three minutes in length.
- Begin work on this scene with your partner as soon as you receive it (read the play, determine clarity of language of the text, general blocking, determine character behavior, etc).
- A suggested rehearsal process to create productive rehearsals:
 - although this is a short scene – plan on rehearsing for **at least** 45 minutes each time you meet
 - you have approximately four weeks from the time you get the scene til you present it the first time – you should try to meet a least three to four times a week for the first two weeks and every day for the last two weeks
- Read the play before the first rehearsal, through email, break your **scene** down into **five** major sections with your partner so you two are on the same page about

how the scene should flow before your first rehearsal.

Send your breakdown to me as soon as it is created.

- At the end of each rehearsal make sure you discuss your discoveries so you leave the rehearsal on the same page.
- **First Rehearsal** – Briefly discuss the play and your scene (what is going on in the scene, what is your relationship, what is the major conflict)
 - Read the scene all the way through slowly, then read each of the five sections individually, slowly – talk about the given circumstances, how your character shifts from each section, the conflicts in each section of the scene.
 - Discuss how you can help each other have a successful rehearsal process (what is a helpful way for you to learn lines? What have you been told about what you need to work on in class and how can you help each other spot that during the process? Divvy up the responsibilities for room reservation, bringing in props, etc, have a goal for each rehearsal)
- **Second Rehearsal** – Repeat the process of reading each section, this time sit in front of each other –try to look

at your partner as much as possible. Focus on what is coming up in them as you are delivering the line, how does it change how you say the next line? Continue to focus on discussing the given circumstances, relationship, conflicts, add to this what your character wants and is doing to try to get what they want in each section, talk about how the other person gets in your way.

- Begin to create a clear storyline for your scene (i.e. this is what the audience should see in your performance, come up with as many details about relationship, given circumstances, what you want, how you are feeling and the tone of **each section** – some this might change as you continue to work, but this will keep the two of you working on the same page)
- If there is time at this rehearsal, if not through email – make some decisions about your set design for the next rehearsal
- **Third Rehearsal** – Read the scene again sitting in front of each other – by this time you should have some familiarity with your lines so that you can try to include your partner with each line. Work together on each

moment, responding to everything that is being said and done.

- Then play around with some movement on your set design so you have a skeleton for blocking – even though you are up and moving continue to look at your partner as much possible for their reaction. Afterwards, continue to talk through and make discoveries and play with blocking
- **Fourth Rehearsal** – Focus on each section of your scene. Rehearse one section at a time, talk about what comes up and how what you are doing leads you to the next section. Be specific about what you want for each section of your scene. Include your partner in all of the lines your deliver.
 - Bring in relevant props, clothing pieces you need for the scene, continue to play with blocking and move the scene forward. Continue to talk about new discoveries. Discuss any challenges you are having
- **Rehearsals from now on until the First Showing** - move toward trying to create a performable scene, i.e, getting off book as quickly as possible, meeting as much as possible, wearing what you need for costuming, working with props, working on your set, etc.

- **Feb 14** will be the first showing of the scene. At the First Showing- you should be off book, and have a performable scene that we can discuss (fully blocked, fully scored, clean, fully prepared - with props and costumes/ set design.
- The final showing of the first scene will be on or around **Feb 21**. The final grade for the first scene will be determined by the growth you demonstrate from the previous assignment and the first showing of the scene according to the feedback you received from the instructor in the following areas:
 - Breath awareness
 - Physicality
 - Tempo
 - Articulation
 - Clarity of Language
 - Performance success – including Preparation, Clarity of Action and Text, Rehearsal Process and Listening and Responding to Partner.

III. Personal Monologue – 300pts

First Showing March 14

Personal Monologue/Narrative – A personal monologue/narrative tells the story of something that happened to you. It can be created by choosing a story from your life to write about. It could be a special memory with someone you care about or an experience you will never forget. Monologues written about a specific person or situation that comes from your life and should be something that you have some emotional attachment to: an honest response. The focus of this piece is not about creating a character – it should be a “slice of your life” that we have the privilege to view. It’s about personal connection to material and emotional depth.

Sample of a Personal Monologue written by a former Student

I still have the picture of us that was taken in your basement and even in your old age, you were so beautiful. I wanted you to teach me how to paint like you. I wish I had gotten to know you better. You were such an incredible woman..... artist who had such a zest for life until your very last day. I'll never forget the last time I saw you. Your last words to me were "Oh darling..... it's not goodbye.... it's just I'll see you later". I wish I had told you then, that day, how brilliant and inspiring you were. Even on your death bed, you still tried to be so full of life,

for me. I love you. And... I miss you. And I am so.... angry, that we didn't have more time together.

- The ideas for writing and developing the monologue will be prompted from an exercise conducted in class on **January 31 or February 1, right after we finish the first monologues.** From this exercise you and I will structure the monologue into a performable piece.
- The monologue should be no **shorter than one minute in length and no more than three minutes long.** After the initial writing, the monologue will be typed up and turned into Professor Boyd via email for feedback and approval. Shortly afterward, you will receive a return email from Professor Boyd **approving** and/or giving you suggestions for creating the script for the monologue text. Once you receive this email, create your text and begin memorizing your piece right away.
- Bring your script to class everyday – no matter what stage it is in as there might be in class time to work on the performing of your piece before your first showing. Take advantage of these opportunities should they occur as they will make your first showing stronger. You will be assessed on:
 - The initial writing of the piece, meeting the deadline for the text and success in applying the guidelines provided for you in the syllabus for the creation of the piece
 - Preparedness of the first showing – see requirements

Comment [c1]:

for first showing

- Growth from the first showing to the final performance and an apparent demonstration of addressing the notes given to you during the first showing
- Willingness to accept feedback
- A clear performance piece for theatrical viewing:
 - A Cohesive Idea and Structure
 - Clear point of view
 - Clear performance concept
 - Clear beginning, middle and end
 - Clear progression of story

IV.Final Scene - (400pts) (Final)

This will be a longer scene.

Schedule for the final scene is as follows:

- Receive scene before **March 13**
- First showing of final scene April 4
- Final Showing – Final’s Day – TBA - Sam Water’s determines spaces for finals

The expectation for the final scene is that you demonstrate a full knowledge of technique in the following areas:

- Breath awareness
- Physicality
- Tempo
- Articulation
- Clarity of Language
- Clarity of Scoring and Cadence of Language
- Clarity of Script Analysis
- Clearer demonstration of Vocal Color and use of Vocal Ladder