

# Stage Combat

Class Location: Studio 1  
T TR 3:30PM - 4:50PM  
Instructor: David Reed  
[David.Reed@ucf.edu](mailto:David.Reed@ucf.edu)  
PAC T219, 407-823-2397  
Office Hours: by appointment



## Course Syllabus

### COURSE OVERVIEW

The course is designed to develop the skills required of an actor combatant competent in the use of Unarmed and Single Sword through an overview of the historical context of the weapon, training in safe and proper technique, and performance. The class will culminate in a Skills Proficiency Certification Test through the Society of American Fight Directors. The course is primarily a demonstration/active participation class.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

#### General Goals

- The understanding and demonstration of stage combat technique.
- The use of the body with or without a prop to communicate violent intention within a scene

#### Specific goals:

- To acquire a basic understanding of acting, particularly action and believability
- To acquire an experiential understanding of physical and vocal exercises
- To diminish self-consciousness and enhance self-awareness, self-respect, and self-confidence
- To develop a respectful and cooperative ensemble approach to performance work
- To demonstrate stage combat skills and acting technique in a performance setting

## REQUIREMENTS

### Attire

- Please wear **athletic-style clothing** that allows for complete freedom of movement. Do not wear any restrictive clothing or anything which will be uncomfortable for moving. This is an acting class.
- Closed toe Athletic shoes only. No flip-flops, heels, boots, climbing spikes, bare feet, or house shoes.
- Leather palmed gloves must be brought to every class meeting are required for handling any weapons.
- No jewelry or loose accessories of any kind are to be worn in class including earrings, watches, rings, necklaces, or anything else that can get caught or cause injury.
- Failure to adhere to attire requirement will result in dismissal from class for the day.

### Note

- This class will be mentally and physically demanding. Additionally, you will be called upon to be in close physical proximity to the instructor and the other students in the class. *If these demands are of concern, please speak with the professor regarding your success in the course.*

## POLICIES

- Safety is always the number one consideration for any class participation. If you are unsure of a sequence, fatigued, physically incapable or for any reason unable to perform with complete attention to safety protocols –STOP, put down your weapon and alert your partner and instructor immediately. The safety of everyone in the class depends on your ability to be completely responsible about your ability to approach potentially hazardous situations with honesty and self-awareness.
- Any and all weapons used in class are truly dangerous and therefore must always be used in the presence of an instructor. Weapons must remain in the classroom and return to their locked storage at the end of class. Inappropriate use of weapons or “horsing around” with or in the presence of weapons will not be tolerated and can result in immediate dismissal from class or possible failure of the course.
- There will be many people with many weapons and scenes in the room at once. It is everyone’s responsibility to look out for each other and help maintain a safe environment. Report immediately to the instructor any broken weapons, misuse of weapons, slippery floors, inappropriate behavior or anything else that may jeopardize the safety and health of any participants.
- The art of acting requires taking risks, allowing yourself to be vulnerable and trusting the work. Do not be afraid of failure. This is how we learn. There is no right or wrong in the artistic process.
- Respect for all persons at all times is necessary. (Opinions, Cultural Backgrounds, Sexual Preferences, Religion, etc.). Sometimes, texts, topics or characters explored in class might use language or subjects that are uncomfortable for you personally. Understand your limits and the limits of others and be open to discover strategies for respectfully handling these situations.
- Constructive criticism of classmate’s work is necessary. Commitment to the group dynamic and respect for the ensemble.
- Warm-ups are mandatory. You should begin warming up as soon as you enter the class and finish with a group warm-up when all students have arrived.

## **Attendance is mandatory and will be strictly monitored.**

- Perfect attendance is assumed.
- A second absence will result in the dropping of a full letter grade.
- Five absences will result in your dismissal from the class.
- Lateness is disrespectful. It is not tolerated in the professional world nor in this class.
  - 3 lates = 1 absence
- The following will be counted as excused absences with no penalty:
  - Authorized UCF functions, including participation in sporting events, 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 submit 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 Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.
- ... ALL MUST BE DOCUMENTED within one week after returning to class. No late documentation will be accepted.
- All missed class work (excused or otherwise) must be made-up.
- Any missed training hours **MUST** be made up if the student wishes to take the certification test.

## **Technology**

The use of phones and other handheld electronic devices in class is forbidden unless requested by the professor.

## **Academic Integrity**

As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow:

- University's Rules of Conduct (<http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/>)
- The Golden Rule (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/>).
- **Cheating of any kind will result in the suggestion of failure for the semester**
- Make sure you understand your professor's guidelines about working with other students on assignments, receiving assistance from other students on assignments, citing sources, and using notes or exams from previous classes. If in doubt – ASK YOUR PROFESSOR!

## **University- Wide Academic Participation Verification**

As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity, Acting For Non-Majors Verification Quiz, by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than September 2. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

## Disability Statement

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, Ferrell Commons 185, phone (407) 823-2371, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

## Syllabus

- This syllabus may be modified by the course instructor.
- Notice of such changes will be made by announcement in class or by email notice.
- Any handouts provided to the student with guidelines for written or performance projects are to be considered part of the syllabus. In addition, verbal or written changes to the syllabus as announced during class, a lesson or via electronic means, are the responsibility of the student.

## GRADING CRITERIA

- This class will observe the plus and minus grade system. Realize that C is considered to be a failing grade for a BFA student.

A = 1,000-940	A- = 939-900	B+ = 899-870	B = 869-840
B- = 839-800	C+ = 799-770	C = 769-740	C- = 739-700
D+ = 699-670	D = 669-640	D- = 639-600	F = 599-0

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Daily Attendance 520
  - Tests
    - Memorization test 100
    - Parts of the Weapon 100
    - Choreography Test 100
    - Outside Rehearsal (2 @50) 100
  - Classroom Participation 80
- Undergraduate Total 1000 pts**
- Graduate Student Choreography 300

**Graduate Student Total 1300 pts**

### ***Scenes***

- Students will choose a scene from a play (not a television script, movie, webisode, or self written scene) from which to perform the choreography. The students will be required to memorize the scene and perform the work with choreography. The instructor will work with each pairing of students to sculpt choreography to the particular scene (Blocking Rehearsal). The final Rehearsal is also the Mock Adjudication. Rehearsal time will be provided in class, but to insure the optimum performance, outside preparation is encouraged.
- **Note:** Both acting and proper demonstration of technique will factor into the final grade and the adjudication.

### ***Choreography Test***

- Each student will be required to perform the Skills Proficiency Test (SPT) choreography as part of the grade in the course. The grading will be conducted at various periods throughout the semester.

### ***Parts of the Weapon Test***

- Students will be asked to apply the classroom vocabulary to a diagram of a stage weapon

### ***Scene Memorization Test***

- Students will be asked to perform a memorization test in order to insure that the final performance is reached in a timely manner.

### ***Outside Rehearsals***

- Students will be required to meet outside of Class for rehearsals leading up the SPT Two are required in the class, but students may meet with the professor as many times as they would like. Required rehearsals will be scheduled by signup sheet. First to sign up will receive their desired slots.
- These rehearsals will be as follows:
  - 2 Choreography rehearsals if needed
- Adjudication Will take place on May 6<sup>th</sup> @ TBD

**\*\* GRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY \*\***

### ***Choreography***

- Graduate students will be called upon to demonstrate their understanding of stage combat techniques and its use in dramatic acts of violence. Graduate students will choreograph three scenes at various points throughout the semester. All scenes will be chosen by the instructor. Graduate students will be asked to create scenes of dramatic violence in line with a director's conceptual approach for a production.