



## THEA 221 Acting

Austin College  
Department of Communication, Media Studies and Theatre  
Fall 2016

Meeting Days: T/Th  
Meeting Time: 1:30 p.m. – 2:50 p. m  
Location: Ida Green, Theatre

“I am convinced that the most thrilling choices are made when there is a trust in the process, in the artists and in the material. The saving grace in one’s work is love, trust, and a sense of humour.” — Anne Bogart

“Fail, try again, fail better.” —Eugenio Barba

**Instructor:** Elizabeth Parks

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**Office:** Ida Green, A114

**Phone:** 903-813-2567

**Office Hours:** T/Th 3:00 p.m. - 4:15p.m.

**Contacting the Instructor:** You are always welcome to come by during office hours, call my office, or email me. Please allow up to 48 hours for a response to any emails. To centralize emails and enhance my response time please only email me through your Austin College email. During weekends, I typically am not able to respond to emails.

### REQUIRED READING:

*Actions: The Actor’s Thesaurus* by Marina Caldarone and Maggie Lloyd-Williams

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces students to the principles and techniques of acting and the analysis of plays and characters. It approaches acting from a psychophysical perspective, exploring the work of the actor by exercising the body-mind. The four stages of this course focus on the development of one’s internal and external awareness and energy. Finally, this course empowers students with valuable life-skills needed throughout the course of their academic and professional careers. These skills include clear communication (verbal and non-verbal), self-discipline, understanding body language, self-management, time-management, and the art of seduction.

### Questions explored in this course include:

- When does “acting” begin and end?
- What is the work of the actor?
- How do you perform with your “whole body?”
- Who was Constantine Stanislavski and what were his major contributions to acting and actor training?
- What does psychophysical mean and what is psychophysical acting?
- How is the study of acting valuable and useful to everyday and professional life?

**Expected Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Develop an increasing awareness of the feeling process of the body-mind.
- Identify how the body, voice, emotion, and perception are inter-connected in acting and in life.
- Create a vocal and physical score.
- Able to analyze a script for objectives, tactics, intentions, and character information.
- Explain what it means to learn to learn.
- Describe how the study of acting is valuable and useful in everyday and professional life.

## **POLICIES:**

**Withdrawal:** Austin College has instituted a new policy this year, which requires that students withdraw from a class before the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the semester.

**Professionalism and Courtesy:** Courtesy is crucial to a positive learning experience, but the greatest tool any theatre artist has is their professionalism! That is what keeps them employed, so let us begin practicing it today!

How do we practice professionalism?

**Be on time-** This means being early, setting down your things, readying yourself to work, and circling-up to begin class.

**Be prepared-** This means that you have read the material assigned, done the work assigned, and are dressed appropriately. (See below for attire requirements)

**Be present-** This means being an *active* participant in the room; being mindful and respectful of everyone in the room. This does not mean that you always have to be talking, sometimes it means allowing time for your colleagues to speak.

**Respect the space-** Water is acceptable but you may not eat or chew gum in any room we work in. Pick up after yourselves. Leave the room in better condition than you found it.

## **Academic Integrity:**

In keeping with its educational mission, Austin College places a high value on academic integrity and does not tolerate cheating and other forms of abuse of the academic process. The faculty and officers of the college assume that entering students, in accepting admission to Austin College, are aware that they will submit themselves to a high standard of academic honesty, and agree to follow the norms and procedures by which the college observes and enforces this standard.

Cheating and plagiarism, which is a form of cheating, are primary violations of academic integrity. Cheating is defined as, but not limited to, purposely using/receiving assistance from another student or source on an assignment where such help is not permitted. Examples include copying (though not necessarily verbatim) another's work and turning it in as your own, use of "crib sheets" on an exam, or providing the material/mechanism for another student to cheat. Plagiarism is defined as, but not limited to, using someone else's work and attempting to pass it off as your own. This may be the work of another person, or information obtained from a book, journal, or internet source. Actions that create an unfair advantage by impeding the access of other course members to important information or sharing improperly received information also violate academic integrity. Recognizing that specifics of such violations may be differently defined in some course settings, the college gives instructors the authority to determine expectations and provide instructions according to particular circumstances. For more information on plagiarism, please see the website <http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/mla/plagiarism.shtml>

If you are caught violating the academic integrity policy, penalties may include anything from a zero on the assignment to expulsion from the course.

**Special note regarding academic honesty as it pertains to this class:** Students are expected to do their own work. Despite the fact that there will be group projects in this course, I consider copying your partner's work to be an act of

academic dishonesty. When collaborative projects are assigned, I expect *each* student to turn in their *own* portion of the work. It is not permissible for partners to turn in one single document for any given assignment.

- All assignments are due at the beginning of class.
- If you are absent for a class, I will only accept homework via Moodle until 5 minutes after the start time of this class.

**Attendance:** Timeliness and participation are crucial to excellence in the performing arts and in life in general.

- 1) Each student is allowed **two** absences in total for the semester. I do not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. Please use your two absences judiciously and save them for emergencies.
- 2) For each absence beyond the allotted two absences, the student's overall course grade will be reduced by 1/3 letter grade with each subsequent absence. After four absences, I reserve the right to dismiss you from the class.
- 3) Two tardies or early exits will equal one absence.
- 4) All sports and college sanctioned absences **MUST** be turned in by the Friday of the first full week of class.

**Coming and going during class:** Coming and going during class is **not permitted**. Once class begins, we are training together and we are responsible for each other's development and safety in the class. Constant coming and going disrupts the dynamic of the entire class and renders the work we are doing ineffective. Please help maintain our room as a safe and productive space.

**Rehearsal Attendance:** You are expected to rehearse outside of class with your scene partner.

**Late work:** No late work will be accepted.

**Attire:** Much of the work we do in this class is physical work. Therefore, please dress appropriately in comfortable loose-fitting clothing that allows you to move easily. The following restrictions are for your safety: no jeans, no short-shorts, no hats, and no jewelry. You may consider wearing leggings, tights, or bicycle shorts under your shorts.

**Touching:** Because of the nature of the work we do there may be times I adjust your posture, form, stance etc. I want you to feel comfortable in this class. If this type of physical contact makes you uncomfortable please let me know.

**Institutional Disability Statement:** Austin College seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all individuals with disabilities and will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines. It is the responsibility of the student to register with and provide verification of academic accommodation needs to the Director of the Academic Skills Center as soon as possible. The student also must contact the faculty member in a timely manner (typically by the end of the first week of class) to arrange for academic accommodations. For further information regarding disability services or to register for assistance, please contact the office at 903-813-2454 or visit the Academic Skills Center.

**Electronic Devices:** Cell phones are not allowed, under any circumstance. While laptops and tablets are not forbidden they are, for the most part, not necessary in class. This class is about connecting, on a visceral level, to the human experience. This type of personal engagement and investiture is completely interrupted by the use of cell phones. If there is a need to take notes, laptops and/or iPads are permitted. If I suspect that you are using your computer for anything other than course-relevant material your device will be taken away and returned to you at the end of class. I reserve the right to prohibit the use of personal electronic devices if I feel that they deterring you achieving the goals and outcomes of the course.

**Moodle** – Please see Austin College’s Moodle site for course information, assignment information, reading due dates, digital articles/readings, and email correspondence.

**Grading:**

**A** = An “A” student does much more than is required; turns in flawless work, always on time; contributes actively and insightfully to class discussion; amazes and delights the instructor with a thoughtful and imaginative grasp of the subject as evidenced in both oral and written work.

**B** = A “B” student does more than is required; turns in nearly flawless work, always on time; contributes actively to class discussion; impresses the instructor with an above average engagement with the subject evidenced in both oral and written work.

**C** = A “C” student does all that is required; turns in work when due and free of significant error; contributes regularly to class discussion, and satisfies the instructor by turning in work of average quality.

**D** = A “D” student does all, or nearly all, that is required (though errors and sloppiness are sometimes evident), contributes sporadically to class discussion, but falls short of the average in oral and written work.

**F** = An “F” student fails to turn in all required work and/or turns in late work; seldom or never contributes to class discussion, or is often absent from class; and/or falls a good deal short of the average student in both oral and written work.

**GRADING SCALE:**

A + 100-97	A 96-93	A- 92-90
B+ 89-87	B 86-83	B- 82-80
C+ 79-77	C 76-73	C- 72-70
D+ 69-67	D 66-63	D- 62-60
F 59 and below		

**Grading Determination:**

**Late work will not be accepted**

1. **Attendance and Participation: 150 points (There are no unexcused vs. excused absences)**
  - a. Coming and going during class is **not permitted**. Any time you leave the class counts as an absence. Leaving class once we have begun counts as an absence.
  - b. Students will earn between 0-5 points per day for their participation. To earn the full five points, students must:
    - a) Practice professionalism and courtesy as outlined above
    - b) Actively engage with course content, with each other, and with the instructor.
    - c) Complete all in-class assignments and explorations
2. **Journal – 130 points**
  - a. Students are expected to keep an acting journal over the course of the semester. Journals will be collected at various times throughout the semester.
  - b. Students are expected to complete two journal entries per week starting the week of August 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - c. This is an opportunity to wrestle with the concepts, materials, and exercises explored in class. Most importantly, the journal is a chance for us to dialogue about topics covered in class. If you write happen to write something very personal and would rather I not read it, simply indicate that clearly in the journal before it is turned in.

d. Students will note the day, time, and what was done during the rehearsal. This is a great place to note things that really work in rehearsal and identify problems that you will need to solve.

**3. Acting Project #1 – 100 points**

**4. Acting Project #2 - 100 points**

**5. Owing Your Education Midterm- 50 points**

**6. Final Reflection Paper- 100 points**

a. Students will turn in a final paper detailing what they learned over the course of the semester, what resonated with them, what didn't and, most importantly, why subjects, concepts or assignments did or did not resonate with students.

**Performance/Production Attendance:**

**Quizzes:** Quizzes may be given throughout the semester over content from the required reading if it becomes apparent that students are not prepared to discuss the assigned reading.

**Grading:**

Attendance/Participation:	150 points
Journal	130 points
Acting Project #1	100 points
Acting Project #2	100 points
Owing Your Education	50 points
Final Reflection Paper	<u>100 points</u>
	630 points total

**Acting**  
GRADE SHEET

Name:

Attendance/Participation: 150 pts

Total \_\_\_\_\_/150

Journal: 130pts

Total \_\_\_\_\_/130

Acting Project #1: 100pts

Total \_\_\_\_\_/100

Acting Project #2: 100pts

Total \_\_\_\_\_/100

Owning Your Education: 50 pts

Total \_\_\_\_\_/50

Final Reflection Paper 100 pts

Total \_\_\_\_\_/100

Total Points \_\_\_\_\_/510

FINAL GRADE \_\_\_\_\_



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I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understand the contents of the syllabus for this course. I therefore understand all that is expected of me and I accept the contents therein including all assignments, classroom procedures, grading policies and procedures.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_