



# Theatre 2811: The Craft of Acting (23775)

## SYLLABUS

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<b>TERM:</b>	Spring 2017	<b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>	Joe Kopyt
<b>CREDITS:</b>	3	<b>OFFICE:</b>	Drake 2058
<b>LEVEL:</b>	U	<b>EMAIL:</b>	kopyt.1@osu.edu
<b>CLASS TIME:</b>	W/F 12:45PM – 2:05PM	<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	Available to meet by appt.
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Drake 107		

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The Craft of Acting teaches basic acting techniques in service of creation of character, the art of storytelling, and expanding the capacity to communicate physically and vocally. To develop these techniques, students will read and discuss noteworthy plays; explore those plays for performance possibilities and cultural/social impact; create character analyses; perform monologues and scenes; attend and write a written response to two productions discussing each production's interpretation and impact as a piece of staged dramatic literature; and participate in group activities including warm-ups, discussion of scripts, and offering constructive feedback to your fellow artists. No prior acting is required and non-majors are welcome.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Theatre 2811 meets the Visual and Performing Arts GE requirement under Section 2 Part C, focusing on arts appreciation and an understanding of theatre in culture. Through this course, students will develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.

- Students will learn to describe and interpret dramatic texts, and to recognize those works as significant cultural achievements in service of generating the opportunity to become enlightened observers and active participants in visual, spatial, musical, theatrical, rhetorical and written arts.
- Students will learn general principles and strategies of character analysis through which they can appreciate and begin to understand the intersection of art and craft in performance, including works from historical and cultural contexts other than the ones covered by the course itself.
- Students will develop an ability to engage in cross-cultural comparison, not only among those cultures covered by the course, but also between them and our contemporary context in order to investigate how works of art and literature express social and cultural issues.
- Students will acquire an understanding of the fundamental elements of acting, primarily through an exploration of acting technique, script analysis, storytelling and ensemble-building.
- Students will develop their critical and analytic abilities, as well as the clarity, depth and precision of their writing in order to illuminate and interpret achievement in the arts and literature.

**GENERAL EDUCATION:***Visual and Performing Arts*

**GOALS:** Students evaluate significant works of art in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students analyze, appreciate, and interpret significant works of art.
2. Students engage in informed observation and/or active participation in a discipline within the visual, spatial, and performing arts.

In this course, students will have the opportunity to watch, analyze and interpret performances, both during class and in the two required Departmental productions. Students will also engage and participate in the creative process through monologue and scene performances in class, as well as various exercises to strengthen character analysis and performance skills.

**TEACHING METHOD:** Lab, Lecture, Discussion

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

No required texts. All readings and plays posted on Carmen.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA:****Attendance**

Given the collaborative nature of acting and theatre-making, attendance and participation are vital. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in the reduction of your final grade. Each additional absence will reduce your final grade by 5pts. As per the Department of Theatre policy, you will fail the course on your 6<sup>th</sup> unexcused absence. **Two tardies will equate to one unexcused absence (arriving more than 5 minutes late to class).** If you incur an unexcused absence on the day you are scheduled to work your monologue or scene in class, your grade for that assignment will be reduced by 5pts.

For all absences, excused or unexcused, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed in class, and to make up work. Any work missed during an excused absence must be made up within one week of the absence. You will not receive credit for work missed during unexcused absences, but making up the work may be necessary to continue on with future assignments.

**If any student misses four classes (excused or unexcused), s/he will be required to have a meeting with the instructor to discuss possible withdrawal from the course.**

**Excused Absences**

**Illness:** You must provide a valid doctor's note that specifically covers all the days you missed. You must present your note on the day you return to class.

**University-sponsored activity (such as athletics):** Present an original letter on University letterhead, written by the person excusing you. This letter must mention you by name, mention the dates that you will be missing, and must be signed. Present this documentation well before you are scheduled to miss class.

**Civic duties (such as National Guard):** Provide official documentation that specifies your name and the dates of your absence. Present this documentation well before you are scheduled to miss class.

**Religious Holidays:** Provide written notification of date/event at least two weeks prior to anticipated absence.

## The Warm-Up and Other Active Learning Exercises

Students will participate in an instructor-led physical, vocal, and/or mental warm-up at the beginning of each class session. Warm-ups are designed to give students a basis of concentration, and to provide the emotional, physical, vocal, and mental acuity to be productive and creative.

## Participation

Participation is a fully engaged activity. In this course, you will be expected to risk your point of view, to listen to others, question your peers and instructor, and help keep the conversation moving in a democratic direction where a variety of ideas, theories, and interpretations coexist and inform one another. **True participation includes being present, prepared, and offering thoughtful comments throughout the course.**

Active engagement and the content of your comments will be continually assessed each class session. Failing to pay attention, choosing not to contribute to discussions, or exhibiting distracted or distracting behavior during class (including but not limited to: tardiness, leaving class early, using electronic, reading or engaging in discussion about non-course related material, or acting inappropriately towards other students or the instructor) will negatively impact your grade.

## Reading Assignments

Throughout the semester, you will be assigned various readings, both from plays and from practitioners who have written about the craft of acting. The readings must be completed by the beginning of class on the date listed on the course outline.

## Homework

Various assignments pertaining to readings, monologue, and scene work will be assigned throughout the semester.

## Journal

Students are required to keep an **in-class** journal in which they will document thoughts, observations, insights, and discoveries made when observing classmates working in class. Students are expected to journal about each in-class work session, including their own. Please utilize a Marble Composition Notebook for journaling.

## Scene Monologue Performances

Each student will perform one monologue and two scenes assigned by the instructor. Students must rehearse, research, and explore alone and with their scene partner outside of class meeting times. **Outside rehearsal is required for successful fulfillment of class requirements. You are expected to rehearse a minimum 2 hours/week for scene work and 1 hour/week for monologue work.** There will be at least one in-class rehearsal for each performance project, during which all students will observe and provide feedback. Students are expected to have incorporated instructor comments (from in-class rehearsal) by the time of final performance. These performances will allow students the opportunity to develop poise and confidence, as well as an understanding of the creative process and the craft of acting.

For each acting assignment, students are expected to come to class **with lines memorized**, wear clothing that is appropriate to the character, **have analyzed and rehearsed outside of class**, have all props present, be open to constructive criticism, and be willing to try potential adjustments suggested by the instructor. When observing the work of others, students will respect and support the performers by watching and listening attentively and offering constructive feedback when asked to do so by the instructor.

## Character Analyses

Three **Character Analysis** assignments will be completed throughout the semester. Guidelines TBA.

## Required Productions

Students are required to attend two live theatrical productions this semester: **7 Ways to Say I Love You** (February 8 – 18 @ Drake Riverview) and **Heathers: The Musical** (April 13 – 21 @ Thurber Theatre). Each production is \$15 with your BuckID at the Department of Theatre Ticket Office, or free if you usher (details available at the ticket office).

## Papers

All papers must be typed (double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman, 1 inch margins). The papers will follow MLA style guidelines. **Assignments must be submitted digitally by syllabus-specified deadline. There will be a 3-hour grace period for each assignment. Assignments submitted between 3-24 hours after the deadline will be graded out of ½ points. Assignments submitted more than 24 hours after the deadline will receive a score of 0.** No additional time will be granted for technical issues.

For **7 Ways to Say I Love You** and **Heathers: The Musical**, students will write a **Production Response**, focusing on specific performances in each show. Guidelines TBA.

At the end of the semester, students will be required to write a **Self-Reflection Paper**. Guidelines TBA.

## Extra Credit

Students may choose to see a show within **The Lab Series** or at **The Wexner Center** (details TBA) and turn in a one-page critically narrative response for extra credit. Each paper is worth 3 points with a maximum of 6 points available. Extra Credit papers are due no later than last class.

## ATTIRE:

This will be an active classroom, and each class session will begin with a physical warm-up. You are required to wear clothing that doesn't inhibit movement. For your scene work and monologues, you are expected to dress as you see your character.

## HYGIENE:

This class may bring students into close proximity with others. Students will practice good hygiene habits, wear clean movement clothes, and refrain from pungent colognes, perfumes, and body sprays.

## ELECTRONICS POLICY:

Unless specifically approved by the instructor, use of cellphones or laptops is prohibited during class.

## FOOD POLICY:

No food or drink is to be consumed in the studio other than water.

**GRADING:****Grading Scale:**

Attendance/Participation.....	15%	93-100.0	<b>A</b>
Character Analyses (3).....	15%	90-92.9	<b>A-</b>
Production Response Paper #1.....	10%	87-89.9	<b>B+</b>
Production Response Paper #2.....	10%	83-86.9	<b>B</b>
Scene 1.....	10%	80-82.9	<b>B-</b>
Monologue.....	10%	77-77.9	<b>C+</b>
Scene 2.....	10%	73-76.9	<b>C</b>
Self-reflection.....	10%	70-72.9	<b>C-</b>
Journal/Homework .....	10%	67-69.9	<b>D+</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	60-66.9	<b>D</b>
		0-59.9	<b>E</b>

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>)

**TITLE IX:**

*“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational programs or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”* -- From the preamble to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as an Ohio State employee. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussion or in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct with the University’s Title IX Office. If I can be of assistance in helping you to make a report or in finding campus and community resources, please let me know.

If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at [titleix@osu.edu](mailto:titleix@osu.edu). Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting Counseling & Consultation Services at 614-292-5766 or the 24-hour helpline from the Sexual Assault Response Network of Central Ohio (SARNCO) at 614-267-7020.

Students with documented disabilities who have registered with the **Office of Student Life Disability Services** will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. SLDS is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Ave; Tel.: 614-292-3307; VRS: 614-429-1334; Email: [slds@osu.edu](mailto:slds@osu.edu); Web: [slds.osu.edu](http://slds.osu.edu)

**FOR YOUR SAFETY**, the OSU Student Safety/Escort Service is available after 7 p.m. by dialing 614-292-3322.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

*The instructor reserves the right to modify or alter syllabus assignments with prior notice. Each student is responsible for fully reading and following syllabus over the course of the semester.*

### Week 1

1/11 Ensemble Building & Syllabus  
1/13 Theatre Games/Improvisation & Ensemble Building

### Week 2

1/18 Theatre Games/Improvisation & Ensemble Building  
1/20 Ensemble Building & Given Circumstances

### Week 3

1/25 Given Circumstances, Moment Before, & Objectives; Uta Hagen's First Exercise  
1/27 Imagination/Starting with Text

### Week 4

2/1 Introduction to Script Analysis/Rehearsal Techniques  
2/3 In-Class Scene 1 Work

### Week 5

2/8 In-Class Scene 1 Work  
2/10 In-Class Scene 1 Work

### Week 6

2/15 In-Class Scene 1 Work  
2/17 In-Class Scene 1 Work

### Week 7

2/22 In-Class Scene 1 Work  
2/24 Scene 1 Final Presentations  
**DUE: Production Response #1, Journals, & Character Analysis #1**

### Week 8

3/1 In-Class Monologue Work  
3/3 In-Class Monologue Work

### Week 9

3/8 In-Class Monologue Work  
3/10 **NO CLASS**

### Week 10

3/15 **NO CLASS – Spring Break**  
3/17 **NO CLASS – Spring Break**

### Week 11

3/22 In-Class Monologue Work  
3/24 In-Class Monologue Work

**Week 12**

3/29 In-Class Monologue Work  
**DUE: Journals**  
 3/31 Monologue Final Presentations  
**DUE: Character Analysis #2**

**Week 13**

4/5 In-Class Scene 2 Work  
 4/7 In-Class Scene 2 Work

**Week 14**

4/12 In-Class Scene 2 Work  
 4/14 In-Class Scene 2 Work

**Week 15**

4/19 In-Class Scene 2 Work  
 4/21 In-Class Scene 2 Work  
**DUE: Self-Reflection Paper & Journals**

**FINAL SCENE PRESENTATIONS:** Thurs, April 27 @ 12pm

**DUE: Character Analysis #3 & Production Response #2**

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE:** The course schedule, including reading and assignment dates, is subject to change based on class needs.

*"Acting is living truthfully under imaginary circumstances"*  
 -Sanford Meisner