THEATRE VOICE I (THEA 2051.002)

Schedule: Tues/Thurs 11:10AM – 12:50PM

Location: DATH 131

Instructor: Jake Blakeman

Email: jacob.blakeman@unt.edu

Office Hours: Tue/Thurs 9:30AM – 10:30AM | DATH 103G

(by appointment; other times available by request)

Email Policy

You may contact me via Canvas or my UNT email. I will respond within 24 hours (or by Monday if the message is sent after 3:00 PM on Friday).

When emailing, include your course and section number in the subject line. Please only use your UNT email or Canvas. Messages from other email accounts will not be answered.

Prerequisites

For **THEA 3050 – Acting: Realism I**, students must complete the following courses:

- THEA 1050 – Acting: Fundamentals
- THEA 2051 – Theatre Voice I
- THEA 2351 – Theatre Movement I

Students who earn a “C” or lower in any prerequisite (including transfer credits) must audition to be considered for enrollment in THEA 3050. Auditions are held the Monday before the first week of classes and require two contrasting one-minute monologues.

If a student earns a “C” or lower twice in THEA 3050, they will be dismissed from the Acting Concentration.

Course Hours: 3;1

Course Description

This course introduces the mechanics and expressive potential of the actor's voice. Students will develop foundational techniques for vocal preparation and performance, focusing on quality, range, resonance, energy, and freedom. Through anatomy, breath, relaxation, and physical awareness training, they will gain a deeper understanding of their vocal instrument. This work will be applied to a variety of texts with an emphasis on specific, embodied acting choices. Students will also be introduced to UNT Theatre's core acting vocabulary: **Text Work, Magic If, Given Circumstances, Objective, Obstacle, Action, Emotional Life, and Subtext.**

Course Objectives

Part I: Training the Instrument

- Develop a literal understanding of how breath and voice function in the body through anatomy and physiology.
- Practice effective and supportive breathing to increase capacity and improve breath recovery.
- Observe and analyze personal body/voice habits to identify areas of growth.
- Deploy targeted exercises to correct breathing/vocal habits that impede performance or vocal health.
- Explore resonance and placement to expand vocal range and flexibility.
- Apply relaxation, breath, articulation, and resonance in ways that connect to character development.
- Learn vocal care strategies to sustain long-term vocal health.

Part II: Using the Instrument

- Explore dramatic texts (contemporary monologues, sonnets, poetry, speeches) to test and apply vocal skills.
- Practice script analysis using foundational performance vocabulary.
- Perform memorized texts (sonnets and monologues) to demonstrate vocal and emotional connection.
- Investigate personalization and emotional strength to bring depth to monologue work.
- Develop audition technique through cold readings.

Required Texts

- **The Right to Speak: Working with the Voice** – Patsy Rodenburg
- **Anatomy of the Voice: An Illustrated Guide for Singers, Vocal Coaches, and Speech Therapists** – Theodore Dimon

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Attendance & Punctuality Policy

This policy is consistent with all Department of Theatre acting courses:

- Maximum of **3 absences** allowed per semester.
- **4th absence = automatic F** for the course.
- **Tardy = arriving less than 30 minutes late** (Four tardies = one absence).
- **30+ minutes late or leaving early = absence.**

Attendance Procedures

- Sign in at the start of class.
- No sign-in allowed after 30 minutes.
- Daily Work grade will be impacted by tardiness/absence.
- Students may check their attendance record on Canvas at any time.

What to Bring to Class

- Notebook or paper
- Writing utensils
- Water bottle
- Comfortable, movement-appropriate clothing (no jeans, tight/restrictive clothes, or outdoor shoes)
- Assigned texts and materials

Expectations

- **Respect the space:** Treat the classroom as a rehearsal hall. Keep food, gum, and messy drinks out of the working area. Water bottles are encouraged.
- **Be prepared:** Arrive in movement-appropriate clothing, with notebook, texts, and materials ready to go.
- **Warm-up readiness:** Be ready to begin physical/vocal work at the scheduled start time. Use early arrival to transition out of "outside life" and into rehearsal focus.
- **Full participation:** Engage fully in all exercises, whether individual or group. Voice training requires consistent, active involvement.
- **Respect peers:** Give full attention when others are performing or sharing work. No side conversations, phones, or distractions.
- **Constructive feedback only:** Offer feedback thoughtfully and respectfully when invited.
- **Professional boundaries:** Physical contact may occur in partnered exercises. Always ask permission and respect boundaries.
- **Confidentiality:** What is shared in exercises or performances stays in the room. This ensures a safe, supportive environment.
- **No recording devices:** Unless explicitly permitted, recording of class work or performances is not allowed.
- **End-of-class responsibility:** Help return the space to order (props, chairs, music stands, etc.) before leaving.

Grading Breakdown

Assignments	Point Value
Daily Work - (30) 15 points per class day	450
Shakespearean Sonnet	100
Terminology Midterm	100
Terminology Test	150
Final Performance	200
Total Points Possible	**1000**

TOTAL Points Scale:

A: 900 - 1000
B: 800 - 899
C: 700 - 799
D: 600 - 699
F: 0 - 599

Assignment Descriptions

Daily Work — 450 Points

Consistent engagement is essential to developing the actor's voice. **Daily Work** reflects your preparation, participation, and application of course concepts. There are **15 Daily Work points available each class meeting**.

Daily Work may include:

- **Quizzes:** Short assessments based on assigned readings, podcasts, videos, terminology, or other course materials.
- **Journals:** Brief written reflections connecting course concepts and materials to your development as an actor. **Missing or incomplete journal entries will affect your Daily Work grade for that class.**
- **Daily Participation:** Active engagement in warm-ups, exercises, discussions, text work, coaching, and other in-class activities.

Your 15-point Daily Work grade reflects your work for the entire class period. Completing a journal or earning a perfect quiz score does not automatically earn 15 points. **Attendance, punctuality, preparation, and active participation are always part of the Daily Work grade.** A lack of participation, an absence, or significant tardiness will affect your score even if all written work for that day has been completed.

Quiz Process

1. **Individual Quiz:** Complete the quiz on your own. You will not immediately see your score or the correct answers.
2. **Team Quiz:** Take the same quiz again with your team. A **perfect score on the team quiz can earn you bonus points** toward your individual quiz grade.
3. **Team Appeal:** If your team believes an answer marked incorrect can be supported, the team has **24 hours to email me a written appeal**. The appeal must include a **clear argument and specific evidence cited from the assigned course materials** supporting the team's answer.

Shakespearean Sonnet — 100 Points

Students will select, memorize, rehearse, and perform a Shakespearean sonnet as their first major application of vocal technique to classical text.

Through class exercises and coaching, students will explore **breath, phrasing, thought, articulation, resonance, range, rhythm, and connection to language**. Students will also investigate how vocal choices can support character, circumstance, and intention.

The goal is not to develop a "Shakespeare voice," but to use the vocal instrument freely and specifically while communicating the language and thought of the text.

Terminology Midterm — 100 Points

Students will complete an assessment covering the foundational vocabulary and concepts introduced during the first portion of the semester.

Material may include **vocal anatomy, breath, articulation, resonance, placement, range, phonetics, and other terminology discussed through readings, lectures, and practical exercises.**

Students should be prepared not only to recognize terminology but also to demonstrate a basic understanding of how these concepts relate to the actor’s voice.

Terminology Test — 150 Points

Students will complete a second terminology assessment later in the semester. This assessment will build upon earlier material while incorporating concepts introduced during the second half of the course.

Students should be able to identify, define, and apply important vocabulary related to **vocal technique, text, speech, and performance**. Specific material covered on the test will be communicated in advance.

Final Performance: Storytelling — 200 Points

For the final performance, students will select and perform a **fairy tale, folk tale, children's story, or other approved narrative containing at least three distinct characters**.

Students will perform the story individually, using their own voice and body to bring the narrator and characters to life. Each character should be clearly distinguishable without relying on exaggerated or unsustainable vocal choices.

The performance should demonstrate the student's ability to integrate the vocal skills developed throughout the semester, including:

- Breath and vocal support
- Resonance and placement
- Pitch, range, and vocal variety
- Articulation and clarity
- Phrasing and connection to thought
- Vocal and physical characterization
- Connection to text and audience
- Healthy and sustainable vocal choices

Students should use **specific vocal choices** to distinguish at least three characters while maintaining clarity, freedom, and connection throughout the performance.

The goal is not simply to create "funny voices." Students should explore how **placement, pitch, rhythm, tempo, resonance, articulation, energy, and physicality** can create distinct characters while keeping the voice healthy and connected.

The final performance serves as the culmination of the semester and should demonstrate the student's ability to **apply and adapt their vocal technique to the demands of performance.**

Academic & Production Commitments

Dance & Theatre students are expected to balance both academic and production responsibilities with professionalism and timeliness. While the faculty recognize that outside employment and other obligations can create pressures, it is each student's responsibility to

manage their commitments effectively. Please note that neither production work nor outside obligations are considered excused absences from classes or reasons for incomplete assignments.

Accommodations for Disabilities

The University of North Texas is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation: reference Public Law 92-112—The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

SPOT – Student Perceptions of Teaching

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT.

The Department of Dance and Theatre also offers face-to-face SPOT evaluations, if the student wishes. Ask your professor for details if you wish to pursue that option.

- Website: www.spot.unt.edu
- Email: spot@unt.edu

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom, and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

Fall 2026 Course Calendar*

Unit	Weeks	Focus / Major Topics
Unit 1: Foundations of Voice	1–3	Course introduction; vocal self-awareness; active breath and impulse; vocal anatomy; articulators; warm-up development; connection, capacity, and recovery; vowels and consonants; vocal qualities
Unit 2: Vocal Identity & Phonetics	4–5	Ideolect and vocal identity; IPA introduction; vowels, consonants, diphthongs, and triphthongs; placement; pitch; resonance; range and dynamics
Unit 3: Voice & Classical Text	6–9	Expanded vocal warm-up; introduction to sonnet work; iambic pentameter; alliteration and assonance; breath and phrasing; sonnet memorization; archetype and character voice; individual sonnet coaching; sonnet performance
Unit 4: Applied Voice & Performance	10–12	Performance feedback; introduction to final performance work; vocal health; voice under duress; maintaining breath and connection during physical activity; audition and callback applications
Unit 5: Integration & Final Performance	13–15	Individual coaching; integration of breath, resonance, placement, articulation, range, and text; final preparation; final terminology assessment; final performance

***Course Calendar Disclaimer:** The course calendar is subject to change based on the needs and progress of the class. Any changes to assignments, due dates, or scheduled activities will be communicated to students in a timely manner through class announcements and/or Canvas.

Syllabus Updates

This syllabus is a living document and may be updated at any time at the instructor's discretion. Students will be notified of any changes through Canvas and/or class announcements.

Syllabus Acknowledgment

I, _____ (print name),
have read and understand the requirements and policies of:
THEA 2051 – Theatre Voice I

and have a thorough, clear understanding of the course requirements, standards, and policies. This includes class assignments, the attendance/lateness policy for UNT acting classes, grading criteria for the course, and classroom protocol.

Signature: _____
Date: _____