

AUDITION FOR THE STAGE

THEA 3700-001

Spring 2026

THEA 3700-002

DAYs: Monday/Wednesday 8:30a – 10:50a

HOURS: 3:2

RTFP 132 (Studio Theatre)

3 Units

Professor Bob Hess

RTFP 231

Office Hours: Mondays - Thursdays 11:00a - 12:00p (by appointment, please)

For Class Correspondence: UNTMovement@aol.com

PREREQUISITES

THEA 3050 ACTING: REALISM I with a grade of B or higher. The student must also be a Theatre Major with a Concentration in Acting *unless special permission has been requested by the student and given by the professor.*

This course is a CORE COURSE REQUIREMENT for a Degree in Theatre with a Concentration in Acting.

Students should note that THEA 3700 Audition for the Stage also serves as a prerequisite before taking:

- THEA 4050 Acting: Realism II
- THEA 4700 The Business of Acting

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction of foundational skills that can be used in the process of auditioning for the stage. Focus on the diverse constructs of the theatre audition in order to expand confidence, practice techniques, create a positive impression in the audition scenario, and devise strategies for navigating the process of a live, in-person audition.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

Students in this course will, through lecture and repetition of the process, explore and gain insight into the following aspects of the theatre audition:

- The specifics of procedures, preparation, strategies, protocol, and best practices of live, in-person auditions for the stage
- Examining what makes for an effective and appropriate audition monologue
- Creating a positive and memorable personal impression in the room as an actor
- Coping with the inevitable anxiety and rigor of the face-to-face audition process
- Auditioning with a scene partner using prepared sides, both with an assigned audition reader and a fellow actor
- Time management, preparation, and organization skills for the professional actor
- The videotaped audition submission
- Cold reading

CONTENT OF MATERIAL

Please be advised that this class contains the development of texts from both classic and contemporary theatre which may offer situations and language that may be considered triggering or offensive to some. As artists, we often tell difficult stories, and playwrights frequently embrace that. If you choose to take the course, you must perform the roles in which you are cast, and you are required to speak the text as written. If there is any issue with this, please reach out to the professor privately.

CLASS CALENDAR

Students will receive a class calendar outlining the semester work plan. There is a lot of material to cover in this class in a very short period of time---adjustments to the original class calendar may need to be made as the class progresses and unexpected circumstances, such as inclement weather, arise. Students will always receive as much notice as possible of changes and an updated calendar reflecting any adjustments.

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

The course will be taught through a combination of lectures discussing the process of auditioning for a theatrical production and analysis/execution of audition monologues and scenes.

At times it may be necessary to ask the students to demonstrate or find a more appropriate physical movement or posture for a scene, to observe the instructor demonstrating a more appropriate physical movement or posture, and/or for the instructor to assist the student in developing that physical movement or posture. Students should be prepared for an appropriate degree of physical contact with other students in the context of the work for a particular scene. Any student with concerns about being touched must notify the instructor immediately following the first class meeting. A request for any sort of physical touching will always be discussed beforehand and only occur with permission.

TEXT

Shurtleff, Michael. *Audition: Everything an Actor Needs to Know to Get the Part*. Walker and Company. ISBN: 0-8027-0590-1

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- A notebook
- A camera for recording preparation work (a cell phone camera is just fine)

CLASS PROCEDURES

PROTOCOL

It is critical, in a class of this nature, that you give your undivided attention and support to your classmates during exercises and presentations. Skilled, focused observation of detail and nuance is a key element of the course. Focus is pivotal in the success of your growth this semester, so the class atmosphere must lend itself to that as much as possible.

You are to turn OFF your phones, iPads, and laptops before class begins. Remove headphones. If you turn devices on at break, you must turn them off again before we resume. It is very distracting and disrespectful if a student's cell phone rings or vibrates during class, or if a student sends, receives a notification of (or reads) texts and Facebook messages, or if a student studies for other class work. So let's set a tone for the level of respect for the craft and focus in the class. Your message can wait till the break.

If you prefer to TAKE NOTES on an IPad, laptop, or cell phone, this is acceptable. You must inform me in advance and understand that you may forfeit this privilege if I observe you sneaking alternate uses of the device in between the note taking.

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER STUDENTS THAT I DO NOT LIKE SEEING STUDENTS CHECKING THEIR CELL PHONES DURING CLASS. THIS IS VERY TRUE. PLEASE DO NOT CONVINCE YOURSELF THAT THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO YOU. IT DOES. I DON'T LIKE IT. I FIND IT DISRESPECTFUL.

Video or audio recording of all lectures is permissible. Video or audio recording of student performances ***must be requested in advance and approved by the individual student(s).***

COMMUNICATION

Information regarding the course will be distributed in class, via email (which is to be checked regularly—YOUR responsibility) or Canvas. Again, it is YOUR responsibility to be informed. Your instructor is ALWAYS available to you through emails or scheduled appointments to discuss any specific issues or questions you may have about the class. I can promise you a swift reply (within 24 hours) to any inquiry or comment you have.

A student in the class will be serving as Communication Liaison for the semester to facilitate any direct, immediate communication that is necessary. They may contact you as a group or individually.

Pretty much every single class will be followed by a summary email explaining what is expected of the student for the next class meeting, so “I did not know about that” will never really be an option.

ATMOSPHERE OF SUPPORT & RESPECT

The most critical element of the course rests in students’ ability to observe closely and carefully what is going on with their own work as artists. In addition, observation of both your instructor and your peers, as well as your own practices as an aspiring professional, will provide valuable insight. This requires a safe, non-threatening, nonjudgmental environment of sensitivity, honesty, support, and openness. Each student is at a different place in their journey as an artist.

Consequently, the instructor will always phrase observations in an appropriate light for where YOU are in your growth as an artist. Likewise, every student is expected to show exactly the same respect in their own observations. Only in building this atmosphere of complete artistic empathy, safety, and trust can we grow. We must act as a supportive company of actors to maximize our success and growth.

OFFICE HOURS

The professor’s office hours are there for discussion of course work, career guidance, and any other questions the student may have.

Office hours are not available for private acting coaching or notes. Please do not ask. Coaching and notes are given during class hours. Additional notes are given via email.

GRADING

Your grade for the semester will be determined by the number of points (out of 100) achieved from the following sources:

- **QUIZZES ON THE CLASS TEXT**
- **MONOLOGUES**
- **AUDITION SCENES**
- **AUDITION DEMONSTRATION**
- **FINAL WRITTEN SELF-EVALUATION.**

QUIZZES ON THE CLASS TEXT

Students are expected to complete all reading assignments from the course text and complete a quiz on each of these. These quizzes are not particularly difficult, and a student who has thoughtfully read the text (and gone over the class notes on the reading assignment) will usually have no difficulty at all in succeeding on these. A student who receives a grade of B or better on any of the quizzes will receive **TWO (2) POINTS** per quiz for a total of **TWELVE (12) POINTS**.

If a student misses any quiz due to absence, they may take it at the next class meeting.

MONOLOGUES

We will be exploring two one-minute monologues during the first part of the semester, one of which you are already familiar with (MONOLOGUE #1) and a second one that is brand new to you (MONOLOGUE #2). Thoughtful preparation and effort on these will earn the student **FIVE (5) POINTS** for the first monologue and **TEN (10) POINTS** for the second, for a total of **FIFTEEN POINTS**. The second monologue will involve a self-evaluation, due by midnight on the Sunday after a mock audition for our Guest Artist. A rubric of how these monologues will be graded is available to you on Canvas.

AUDITION SCENES

Without question, the best way to gain confidence and skill in the audition process is by repeating the process over and over as it would happen in a real-world context. Our class will complete a total of **SIX** audition scenes using sides from the scripts we have read in class. Since the element of having your peers watch your audition is NOT consistent with what you will experience professionally, we will record our audition scenes in scheduled, private appointments (for which you will, per the professional construct, sign up) and then review them all together in the succeeding class to discuss preparation, professionalism, effectiveness, and student growth. Your Final Exam audition scene will be done as a **Taped Audition Submission**. Auditions scenes are worth **TEN (10) POINTS** each, and, except for the Final Exam, will be broken down as follows:

- Reading the Play and grade of B or better on quiz (2 points)
- Completion of Text Work, submitted no later than midnight before the audition (1 point)
- Video of Recorded Line Rehearsal, submitted no later than midnight before the audition (1 point)
- Execution of Audition at scheduled appointment time (4 points)
- Self-critique, submitted no later than midnight on the Sunday FOLLOWING viewing of all auditions (2 points)

A total of 60 points.

The Final Exam scene will have its own rubric which will be made available on Canvas.

These auditions scenes will, as is evident, constitute over **HALF** of your course grade.

You will be introduced to a number of new skills and strategies for audition preparation. If you are not in the habit of reading scripts carefully and thoroughly for content, this is a good time to improve that skill. Actors who audition for plays and are serious about getting cast read the plays beforehand and **PREPARE**. Those who choose to enter the process unprepared are rarely even called back (let alone cast) because the lack of preparation (which the auditioner reads as either a lack of experience or apathy on the actor's part) is **OBVIOUS**. This is simply a reality of our business that the aspiring professional has to get used to. If you want the role, you have to work for it. You cannot passively wait for it to come to you.

Every actor's process of preparing for an audition differs. You will, over time, develop your own process as far as how you prepare for auditions and execute them, using strategies and methodologies that will be implemented in the course.

AUDITION DEMONSTRATION

With all six scenes we do, we will use one class as a **DEMONSTRATION DAY** in which we explore the text and all its possibilities and nuances. Every actor in the class will be assigned ONE scene in which they will be designated as an **AUDITION DEMONSTRATION ACTOR**. These actors will be required to prepare with a partner and to work the scene **OFF BOOK** on Demonstration Day. This will be worth **EIGHT (8) POINTS** toward the semester grade. Not being prepared for the demonstration assignment will result in a forfeiture of those points. A rubric for how this assignment is graded is available to you on Canvas. **Everyone does this ONCE**. You will need to bring your very best effort to this task, or it will serve no use for your classmates.

Others in class that day who wish to take extra advantage of the Demonstration Day and get on their feet for a cold reading (using the work they have just observed from the AUDITION DEMONSTATION ACTORS) can do so, if class time allows. This is not required, but seizing that opportunity has proven, in the past, to have a profound effect on the student's final audition. But it does mean being confidently OFF BOOK (not "sort of" or "for part of it").

WRITTEN FINAL SELF-EVALUATION

At the completion of the semester, all actors will do a reflection over their work and complete a written self-analysis. The professor will provide prompts for this work on Canvas. These are to be submitted by **5:00p on the Friday of Finals Week** (a university deadline). This assignment is worth **FIVE POINTS**. This assignment cannot be accepted late.

GRADING FORMULA

Your final grade will be based upon the following assignments and point values:

<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>POINTS</u>	
• Textbook Quizzes (6 @ 2 points each, earned with a grade of B or better)	12	24
• Monologue #1	5	
• Monologue #2	10	
• Play Quizzes	12	
• Text Work	5	
• Recorded Audition Preparation	5	
• Self-critiques	10	
• Audition Demonstration	8	
• Audition Scenes (5 @ 4 points each)	20	
• Final Exam (Self- Taped Audition)	8	
• Final Exam (Written)	5	
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	100	

Corresponding Letter Grades:

- A (90 – 100)
- B (80 – 89)
- C (70 – 79)
- D (65 – 69)
- F (below 65)

ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Punctual attendance is critical for your success in the course. Thus, students are expected to be present and punctual for all classes. Simply put, this is a medium that requires physical presence.

Furthermore, punctuality, presence, and timely adherence to deadlines **are part of the course content**, as these are all critical elements to be mastered for the process of an effective audition for the stage.

The following is the official policy for all acting courses that meet two days a week in the UNT Department of Dance and Theatre:

- Students are allowed no more than a total of THREE excused (3) absences during the semester **for any reason**.
- Students are considered tardy if they arrive for class no more than 30 minutes late. Arriving more than 30 minutes late for class is considered an **ABSENCE**.
- Students are expected to attend class for the duration of the period. Leaving before the class concludes is considered an **ABSENCE**.
- An occurrence of tardiness for the class FOUR (4) times is the equivalent of ONE (1) **ABSENCE**.
- A total of FOUR (4) absences means that the highest grade the student can earn in the class is an F.
- ***If the student accrues the fourth absence AFTER the last date on which a student may withdraw from the course (FRIDAY, APRIL 10), that will result in a lowering of one letter grade in the class. If yet another absence occurs in that time period, this will result in a lowering of yet another letter grade.***

If a student's absences have resulted in a grade with which they are not pleased, they may choose to withdraw from the class by the university deadline.

The policy is NOT negotiable, as that would constitute holding one student to a different standard than all other students in all acting classes. Please do not ask. I will, in fact, go so far as to notify you directly if you are on the verge of meeting any of the course limitations so you will have sufficient time to be vigilant about the issue.

The professor's roll is the official record of absences and tardiness. **Students are also welcome to check with the professor AT ANY TIME to make sure that their attendance/punctuality record is accurate.**

KEEPING IT REAL ABOUT PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE...

I am very aware that the unexpected comes up in life, and many times it is beyond your control. The attendance policy of acting classes in the Department of Dance and Theatre at UNT is set up to ALLOW for and EXCUSE those occasional issues that may come up (illnesses—these are not just waived; they count toward your total absences, deaths in the family, emergencies, traffic, difficulty finding a parking space, doctor appointments, car trouble, unavoidable commitments, weather, etc.). All of these things could occur during the semester (maybe even a couple of times). Please DO NOT ask for further leeway on this, because there is none. The grace for these unexpected occurrences is already BUILT IN to the attendance policy.

Do not ask me if there is any extra credit you can do to make up for excessive absences. Changing the policy for you means that it must, in the interest of fairness and consistency, be changed for students in all acting classes.

There is NO NEED to bring me a doctor's note when you are sick. If you tell me you were ill, I absolutely believe you, and this would count as one of the EXCUSED absences you are allowed during the semester. Your absences and tardiness will be treated as the industry would treat them—they are expected and permissible, but only to a point.

There have to be limits. If you are ill and/or absent excessively, it means you are missing the actual content of the course. You are seeking to be a young professional actor—get used to the fact that professional actors who are cast in plays simply have to BE THERE, and they have to be there ON TIME, if they wish to get or keep a job in our business.

Putting it frankly, the industry will NOT accommodate your life, no matter how much you would like it to. You must manage your time and life to accommodate the demands of the industry.

EXTRA CREDIT

There is NO extra credit available in the class. Please do not inquire if there is some “additional work you can do to boost your grade.” Do not ask me if I can “work with you.” Your grade is based on the criteria set forth in this syllabus. **Do not attempt to negotiate this, please.**

INCOMPLETES

Only under extraordinary circumstances that suddenly render the student unable to continue the classwork will an INCOMPLETE be given. Please see your instructor if you feel you may qualify for a course grade of INCOMPLETE. Circumstances have come up in the past which made this appropriate. This has usually involved a scenario where a student had completed the work in excellent standing up to a certain point and then had to suddenly leave school for some personal reason, such as a serious illness or family emergency. The terms for making up the INCOMPLETE are negotiated between the student and the professor, and these terms must be signed by both parties and submitted to the departmental office for approval. The earliest date for the student to request an INCOMPLETE is April 11, 2026.

WITHDRAWAL

Should you choose to drop this course, YOU must initiate the drop before the deadline and acquire all proper signatures and paperwork. The last day for the student to elect to drop the class with a grade of “W” is Friday, April 10, 2026.

CLASS CANCELLATION

Because I continue to work as a professional actor in the Resident Acting Company at the Dallas Theater Center and with a broadcast agent (and am expected to do so by the UNT Department of Dance and Theatre as part of my research requirement), I might occasionally have to cancel class for projects on which I am working—sometimes on short notice. If I need to cancel a class meeting, you will be notified by both text and email. I can promise you that you will not show up to class only to find a “class canceled” sign on the door.

LAST DAY OF CLASS/FINAL EXAM DATES

The last regular class meeting is Wednesday, April 29. The Final Exam will take place on Monday, May 4 from 8:00a – 9:30a. Sorry for the early start. That is a university call and not my own.

POST MORTEM

Immediately after our Final Exam, an informal *post mortem* discussion to reflect on the semester’s work will possibly be conducted at an off-campus location, **but only if 12 or more students have engaged in the course feedback and expressed a desire to attend.**

Attendance at this *post mortem* is NOT mandatory and will have no effect on the student’s grade.

As I need to make a reservation for this event, please make every effort not to approach me on the day of the *post mortem* to tell me you suddenly have a change of plans and cannot attend.

STUDENT OBLIGATION TO ACADEMIC/PRODUCTION WORK

Dance & Theater students are expected to budget and organize their time and efforts in order to meet both their academic and production commitments satisfactorily and on time. The faculty and staff recognize that the academic and production assignments within the department, as well as outside employment and other obligations, sometimes impose conflicting pressures on DT students. One of the main responsibilities of each student is to identify carefully and monitor the commitments that comprise his/her departmental assignments and outside obligations. It is also important to keep in mind that production work and outside obligations do not constitute an excused absence from DT classes or from the completion of any required class assignments.

ACCOMMODATION 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.

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING (SPOT)

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. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

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.

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.