

THEA 2351-002

Theatre Movement I: Fall 2026

Monday/Wednesday 9:35am – 11:30am

DATH 129

Instructor: Sarah Rutan

Office Hours: 11:30am-12:30pm Monday/Wednesday RTFP 232 (or by appointment)

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Description:

Freeing and grounding of the body is the primary focus of this class, which includes developing warm-up techniques for the actor, cultivating creativity in form, exploring all aspects of movement and story-telling with the actor's own instrument. This study will include Mask work, Animal, Art Interpretation, Dance and Prop Work.

Objective:

At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- *Apply the fundamentals of physically warming-up and the freeing and grounding of their physical instruments

- *Apply the beginning processes of story-telling through mask, animal, art interpretation, dance and style work

- *Enhance their observation and self-reflection/analysis of their physical instrument using The Viewpoints as a structural reference.

Attendance:

Class begins at 9:35am Sharp. You will be counted as tardy if you are not at the top of the warm up & READY TO MOVE. There are two absences allowed for this semester. An additional absence will drop one letter grade on your final grade of this semester. (A to A-, A- to B+, B+ to B, etc) Two tardies equal one absence. One can only learn movement by DOING. Therefore, it is imperative to your success in the class that you are present, on time, and ready to work.

Dress Code for DATH 129:

No street shoes on the studio floor (change at the door).

No food or colored drinks (water in closed containers only).

Jewelry & Hair: Long hair tied back, dangling jewelry/watches removed for safety during rolls, floor work, and mask work.

Students are required to wear clothing that allows for unrestricted movement to each class. The main focus of our work takes place on our feet, on the ground and in motion. Therefore students must feel comfortable and able to move without restrictions. Try to avoid: skirts, dresses, platform soled shoes, and tight fitting clothing. Examples of appropriate clothing include, but are not limited to: workout clothing, dance attire, and sweatpants. Be ready to sweat.

Physicality & Touch Policy:

Movement for the actor involves physical exploration, partner work, and spatial awareness. All physical contact in this course will be professional, consent-based, and staged with safety as the priority. Students will always have agency over their physical boundaries during exercises.

Disability Accommodations:

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 accommodation anytime, 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 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

Assignments:

In Class Participation:

One can only learn Movement by DOING. Therefore, it is imperative to your success in the class that you are present, on time, and ready to work. You will be graded on your willingness to participate, both in discussion and in exercises, on your personal improvement in your instrument, your work in the warm ups and on your willingness to work as part of a larger ensemble.

Grading:

Midterm:	100pts
Neutral Mask Unit:	50pts
Animal Unit:	200pts (Solo- 50pts, Environment- 100pts, Mono- 50pts)
Partner/Dance Unit:	50pts
Painting Piece:	100pts
Clown Unit/Final:	300pts
Weekly Reading Quizzes:	50 pts (Best 5 of 6)
In Class Participation:	100pts
Warm-up/Grounding work:	50pts

TOTAL POINTS: 1000

A- 1000-900

B- 899-800

C- 799-700

D- 699-650

F- 650 or Below

Weekly Schedule*:

- Wk 1: M-Syllabus & Introduction to Movement
W- Warm-up/Grounding/Play (*Reading Due: Chapters 1 & 2*)
- Wk 2: M- Warm-up/Grounding/Leads
W- Warm-up/Grounding/Terminology (*Reading Due: Chapters 3 & 4-quiz 1*)
- Wk 3: M- Neutral Mask - Stillness & Waiting
W- Neutral Mask- Elements/1st Viewpoints (*Reading Due: Chapters 5 & 6-quiz 2*)
- Wk 4: M- Labor Day (NO CLASS)
W- Animal Unit Introduction (*Reading Due: Chapter 7-quiz 3*)
- Wk 5: M- Animal Unit- Mask Build
W- Animal Unit- Mask Build (*Reading Due: Chapter 8-quiz 4*)
- Wk 6: M- Animal Unit- Discovery Day & Mask Tweaks
W- Animal Unit- Solo Action (*Reading Due: Chapter 9-quiz 5*)
- Wk 7: M- Animal Unit- Environments
W- Animal Unit: Enviro/2nd Viewpoints (*Reading Due: Chapters 10 & 11-quiz 6*)
- Wk 8: M- Animal Unit: Environments Performance
W- The Viewpoints Book Midterm (Parts I, II and III)
- Wk 9: M- Animal Monologue
W- Painting Piece Work Day
- Wk 10: M- Painting Piece Work Day/3rd Viewpoints Exercise
W: Painting Piece Performance
- Week 11: M- Partner Work
W- Partner Work/Dance

Wk 12: M- Dance Unit- Improv
W- Dance Unit- Stage Choreography

Wk 13: M- Clowning Unit Introduction
W- Clowning Unit- Play Day

Wk 14: M- Clowning Unit- Name Day & Brainstorming
W- Clowning Unit- Build

Wk 15: M- Clowning Unit- Build
W- Clowning Unit Dress Reh. for Notes

Wk 16: Finals Week- Clowning Piece Performance

*Schedule subject to change and all changes will be communicated in a timely manner.

Out-of-Class Reading Schedule: *The Viewpoints Book*

(Required Reading to be completed before Wednesday's class each week)

- **Week 1: Introduction to Framework**
 - **Read for Wed:** Chapter 1: *Questions* & Chapter 2: *Story* (pp. 3–14)
 - *Focus:* Shifting mindset from traditional text analysis to physical, spatial awareness.
- **Week 2: The Viewpoints Defined**
 - **Read for Wed:** Chapter 3: *Viewpoints* & Chapter 4: *The Viewpoints Defined* (pp. 15–33)
 - *Focus:* The core 9 Viewpoints (Spatial Relationship, Kinesthetic Response, Shape, Gesture, Repetition, Architecture, Tempo, Duration, Topography).
- **Week 3: Soft Focus & Physical Awareness**
 - **Read for Wed:** Chapter 5: *Soft Focus* & Chapter 6: *Introducing the Viewpoints* (pp. 35–48)
 - *Focus:* Releasing physical tension and opening peripheral awareness for Neutral Mask work.
- **Week 4: Composition & Group Dynamics**
 - **Read for Wed:** Chapter 7: *Viewpoints Training* (pp. 49–64)
 - *Focus:* How individual physical choices build ensemble awareness as you transition into the Animal Unit.
- **Week 5: Applying Viewpoints to Character & Form**
 - **Read for Wed:** Chapter 8: *Composition* (pp. 65–80)
 - *Focus:* Using space, shape, and tempo as tools to construct character (aligns with Animal Mask builds).
- **Week 6: Working with Props and Space**
 - **Read for Wed:** Chapter 9: *The Practice of Composition* (pp. 81–98)
 - *Focus:* Kinesthetic response to environments and physical objects during animal solo actions.
- **Week 7: Synthesis & Midterm Prep**
 - **Read for Wed:** Chapter 10: *Viewpoints in Action* & Chapter 11: *Frequently Asked Questions* (pp. 99–120)
 - *Focus:* Integrating Viewpoints vocabulary into performance reflection and self-analysis.
- **Week 8: Midterm Week**
 - **Monday:** Animal Unit: Environments Performance
 - **Wednesday: MIDTERM EXAM** (Covers Chapters 1–11 / Parts I, II, and III)