

PERFORMANCE IV:
Acting Shakespeare
Spring 2012
3 Units

Instructor: Sally Vahle
Office: RTFP 221
Office phone: 940-565-4121
Cell Phone: **214-597-2140**
Email: perf4@hotmail.com

Course #: 4140.001/301

RTFP 127
T/TH 9:30am-11:50am
Office Hours:
By Appointment or
Tues: Noon-1:30

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES

Completion of: Performance I: Introduction to Acting; Performance II: Scene Study; Movement for the Theatre; Voice and Speech for the Theatre; Play Analysis; Suggested: History of Costume and Decor; or the consent of the department.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A combination of both lecture and performance-based studio work, this course will endeavor to expand and refine the actor's skills through the intensive study of techniques, exercises and ideas developed by the RSC, Patsy Rodenburg and other influential and respected artists in the field. This study will include the performance of monologues and scenes from the plays of William Shakespeare, placing emphasis on the following: heightened language with believable, appropriate characterization, articulate and powerful speech, and with physical vibrancy. In addition to exploring the works of Shakespeare in performance, students will be required to engage in a research presentation, historical and cultural research, and both verbal and written critical analysis.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop a working and/or conversant knowledge of any number of Shakespeare's greatest works.
- To develop the student's ability to achieve the verbal, physical and emotional "size" necessary for Shakespearean performance.
- To develop the knowledge, attitude and skills necessary for making verse the "natural" language of the character.
- To gain a working knowledge of scansion, and reference/preparation skills necessary for the building of any particular role in Shakespeare.
- To continue reinforcement of the principle of actor "belief" through character objective/intention.

COMMUNICATION

Ongoing information regarding class will be distributed via email. CHECK YOUR EMAIL EVERY DAY! I will use this address to communicate announcements and support material to this class. I spend most of my time NOT in front of a computer, so please, if you absolutely need to reach me, call my cell phone.

perf4@hotmail.com

If you need to communicate with me please use this address exclusively—do not use my UNT address. You are also always welcome to call me on my cell: 214-597-2140.

Please remember that if your email address changes during the semester it is your responsibility to let me know. It is your responsibility to be informed.

Because I continue to work as a professional actress and am expected to do so by the UNT Department of Dance and Theatre, I will occasionally have to cancel class for projects I am cast in—sometimes on short notice. Please always check your email the night before class. While I am teaching I turn down more work that I accept---teaching is my first priority. However, conflicts are sometimes unavoidable especially do to re-shoots and clients I have ongoing contracts with.

Course Texts:

- You will receive via email a recommended text list.

Major Projects:

- Each Student will be assigned, rehearse, and present TWO (2) Contrasting Shakespearean Monologues.
- Each Student will be assigned, rehearse, and present no less than ONE (1) Shakespearean Scene.
- Research Project Presentation.
-

Other Course Work:

- Viewing assignments and discussions on relevant course support materials.
- Testing and/or quizzes on scoring, IPA and content areas.
- Homework, i.e., memorization, scoring, etc., attached to performances and class work.
- Participation in class exercises, lectures, viewing, discussions, performance assignments and attendance.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The university and the Department of Dance and Theatre Arts regulate attendance. The following policy is consistent with all performance-oriented classes in the department.

- Attendance is mandatory.
- You may receive two (2) excused absences for family emergencies, serious illness, or official UNT business. **Students must show written proof in order for absence to be officially considered “excused”.**
- Absence is permitted for religious holiday with advance notice.
- If you choose to leave class early, without prior consent from instructor, you will be counted absent. Please understand this is your choice.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

- If you accrue 3 unexcused absences you **cannot** earn an “A” •
- If you accrue 4 unexcused absences you **cannot** earn a “B”
- If you accrue 5 unexcused absences you **cannot** earn a “C” •
- If you accrue more than 5 unexcused absences you **cannot pass the course.**
- If you are more than 15 minutes late to class you are counted “absent”.
- Please note that the teacher/director’s roll book is the official record of absences and tardies. Ask the teacher/director to check the roll book to be sure that your attendance record is correct.

Please be reminded that university policy states that any instructor who informs students in writing about the necessity of class attendance may request that the registrar drop a student from the course with a grade of WF or F upon the accumulation of the stated number of absences.

CLASS CALENDAR

Students will receive a class calendar outlining the semester work plan. It will be updated throughout the semester if illness or other circumstances change our class plan. Do not lose this calendar---it is your guidepost for the entire semester. There is a lot of material to cover in this class in a very short period of time---adjustments to the original class calendar will almost certainly be made as the class progresses. Students will always receive plenty of notice of changes and an updated calendar reflecting any adjustments.

GRADING CRITERIA

Your grade will be based on the quality of your performance in the following areas:

- PARTICIPATION, PARTICIPATION, PARTICIPATION! Did I mention Participation?
- The level at which you comprehend master the material presented
- Your attitude and commitment in the work
- The quality of your work in relation to your peers
- The significance of your growth throughout the course of the semester
- The quality with which you complete specific assignments

GRADING SYSTEM

*****The grading scale is:**

A: 1000-900pts
B: 899-810pts
C: 809-730pts
D: 729-656pts

Your final grade will be based upon these criteria with approximately this weight:

Unit 1: What Makes Shakespeare “Shakespeare”?	200 pts
Unit 2: The Monologue	200 pts
Unit 3: The Soliloquy:	200 pts
Unit 4: Scene Work:	200 pts
*Participation/Preparation/Work Ethic:	<u>200 pts</u>
	1000 pts possible

Unit grade point value break down:

Point values include written work associated with projects, outside preparation and artistic growth:

First Pass:	50 pts
Second Pass:	50 pts
Final Pass:	100 pts

*Participation includes all work outside of performance work.

******Please read the “unexcused absences” attendance policy**

FINAL EXAM/PERIOD

Spring 2012: Thursday, May 5th, 8a-10am

GENERAL PARAMETERS FOR LETTER GRADES:

Please note that the “descriptions” listed below are extremely general and designed only to be a basic guide to help students understand the expectations of the instructor when assessing work in class. Hopefully this little bit of context will help you set personal goals to work toward over the course of the semester.

‘A’ grade:

Work is committed, focused and sustained, with obvious growth. All assignments and deadlines satisfactorily completed on time. Student shows clear excellence in mastering the objectives of the assignment, both individually and in partner work. Instructor’s critiques generally focus on strong aspects of the work. The work shows careful preparation and commitment.

‘B’ grade:

The basic fulfillment of all requirements is met with some growth. Student shows strong competence in fulfilling objectives of the assignment. Instructor’s critiques generally focus primarily on strong areas of work, with several specific areas of improvement suggested for subsequent work. The work is strong, has been well prepared and shows good potential for improvement.

‘C’ grade:

Student satisfies the requirements of the assignment. Critiques generally focus on weaker areas of work, with stronger aspects identified and reinforced. Any student at this level of training considers the objectives in this work obtainable. Student generally has consistent difficulties with memorization; sense of staging and ability to meet self generated deadlines (rehearsals with scene partners, etc...). Instructor’s critique acknowledges that student’s work generally needs further preparation and attention.

‘D’ grade:

Student produces minimum requirements for project, which generally includes presentation of work. Critiques focus on lack of preparation, lack of understanding of assignment and unwillingness to give maximum effort. This work may have significant memorization problems, poor attitude displayed in class resulting in a below average performance. This work needs much more preparation and commitment.

IN CLASS PERFORMANCE AND WORK EXPECTATIONS:

As applicable, you will receive a grade or “points” for each in class presentation and the final performance. Here is a breakdown of what is expected—as applicable to each particular project—for each in class “pass”/presentation. Engaging in these “steps” as an actor helps you cultivate work ethic and a working process.

FIRST PASS REQUIREMENTS

1. Bring a blank copy of the scene for the teacher (not returned)
2. Read through play critiques, reviews, and criticism in books, periodicals and the web to enhance your script/text analysis skills.
3. Written script/text analysis ready for oral defense. Receive suggestions for future research.
4. Verbally demonstrate your play/scene analysis in class.
5. Give an informed and impassioned reading. This will require rehearsal with your partner. Show:
 - a. beginning character analysis,
 - b. beginning physical and vocal characterization,
 - c. knowledge of all words and meaning of phrases,
 - d. use of the language,
 - e. ability to mean what you say,
 - f. awareness of builds, topping and cutbacks and
 - g. emotional commitment to the actions and objectives.

SECOND PASS REQUIREMENTS

1. Demonstration of a fully memorized script.
2. Demonstration of 70% performance commitment to the character, “given circumstances” and style of the play.
3. Updated script/scene analysis in written form ready for oral defense.
4. Wear appropriate clothing to allow you to feel and move like the character.

FINAL SHOWING REQUIREMENTS

1. Demonstration of a fully memorized script.
2. Demonstration of bold performance level physical and vocal characterization.
3. Demonstration of bold performance level emotional commitment to the situation.

Mid-Semester Meetings:

At the mid-point of the semester (Tuesday, March 12th)-- I will meet with each student individually to discuss class progress and other pertinent information. Each student will receive a mid-semester written assessment/observation of their work, as well as a mid-term point total.

ORAL/WRITTEN PRESENTATIONS:

- Each student may be given a topic to research, write a paper on and do an oral presentation for the class. It may also be a group or partner project, or oral presentation for the class followed by a demonstration of the topic.

Relevant Information regarding grading of work:

- Any and all assignments must be learned and delivered effectively, and, when applicable, full and constructive engagement in the team dynamic.
- Students are not graded on talent or experience. You will always be evaluated on individual growth and execution of assignments. REMEMBER: Your attendance, initiative, enthusiasm, team play and willingness to explore unfamiliar ground will go a long way in the determination of your final grade. Be fully prepared. Prepared means the material must be thoroughly rehearsed; "performance ready".
- Each assignment must be ready on the date assigned. Inadequately prepared material may be stopped and no credit will be given for that assignment. Unprepared students will be given no credit for that assignment. It is NOT POSSIBLE to make-up in class work time and final pass performance assignments.

PARTICIPATION

- It is expected that you give your undivided attention and support to your classmates during their in class work time. You will learn a great deal from watching others work. It's worth noting that, if you intend to enter the professional arena you will spend LOTS of time watching other actors work. Now is the perfect time to learn how to make time spent observing others productive for you. Please do not enter or leave the room while others are working. Treat others the way you expect to be treated while you are working.

- Most of your homework will require you to work with other people. You will have to organize rehearsals outside of class. You are responsible for finding rehearsal space. You reserve space in the DTA office. Make sure that times and places are clearly decided upon. Once a plan is made, you must be there, as other people are involved. It is incredibly inconsiderate to make a rehearsal and then not show up or be grossly late. If a problem with missing rehearsals occurs do not let your work suffer, contact the instructor immediately.

CRITIQUE

Please understand that after you have presented work in class you will receive verbal constructive criticism from your classmates and the course instructor. One aspect of the profession is learning to publicly receive constructive critique. If you are unclear as to the meaning of your in-class critique, please make an appointment with the instructor to discuss your work.

SCENE STUDY PROCEDURES

In large acting classes, as unfortunately we must conduct; we have precious little time together. To insure the best possible use of that time, let's clarify what we need to accomplish for each in-class rehearsal. It is extremely difficult to coach your acting when the full play has not been read and understood or when dialogue is not memorized. Thus, it is essential that this homework be completed before coaching begins. Also unfortunately, because of the tight schedule of the class if you miss a class presentation no make-up date is guaranteed.

If a scene is not prepared sufficiently for in-class coaching and work time we will move on to another scene instead. Your in-class work time scheduled for that particular day will be forfeited and will very likely not be re-scheduled due to our limited class time.

MEMORIZATION

Each of you knows that memorization is the first major step to characterization. It requires extensive script analysis to develop sufficient understanding so that you can hold the words in your mind. For some, classical plays are much more difficult to memorize than contemporary material. I encourage each of you to attempt to get off book as soon after receiving your scene as possible. If your trigger response (cue) is visual (off the book) rather than aural, there will be an added step to memorization, as your mind must transfer from visual to aural stimulus.

REHEARSING YOUR PROJECTS:

After your first work-through in class you should work to be off book as quickly as possible. Decide with your partner, when you will both be off book. Prior to the date you choose you should each be able to easily recite your lines as you do an unrelated activity, i.e. wash dishes, vacuum, play basketball.

Lack of memorization, knowledge of your text or of the given circumstances of the play is sufficient cause for an "f" for that pass (in-class rehearsal).

It is expected that you will rehearse for at least four hours between each pass. Because of our busy schedules it is expected that you *will* have rehearsals at 7am or 11pm. Heavy school or work schedules are not an excuse for missing rehearsals. If any problem with arranging rehearsals develops, please contact the professor for assistance immediately.

GENERAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- Acting is a Discipline!
- There are NO excused absences unless the instructor finds extraordinary circumstances.
- You WILL NOT be allowed to make up any Performance assignment.
- Do not miss rehearsals with your partner; be respectful of other people's time. Be available.
- Wear clothing suitable for movement and rehearsal work, unless notified otherwise in advance.
- Assignments are due on the dates outlined in the calendar. Verbal and written notice will be given by the instructor for any changes in project due dates.
- The nature of acting and this course requires that physical contact occur from time to time with fellow students. On occasion, the instructor may have to adjust parts of your body for proper alignment and to release tension. Please see the instructor privately as soon as possible if this presents a problem.
- If you have a learning difference or physical injury that hinders you from participating in class activities, please see instructor so we can make arrangements to accommodate you (See ADA paragraph below).
- Production values in performance work are de-emphasized. Elaborate sets/costumes are unnecessary. Emphasis is always on "process" not "production."
- NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE TIME NEEDED TO MEMORIZE AND DEVELOP YOUR PIECES—ESPECIALLY WHEN WORKING WITH CLASSICAL MATERIAL!!!

- Any written work which may be assigned must be typed or it will not be accepted. No exceptions.
- The course syllabus/calendar is only a general plan, deviations or changes may be made at any time without notice.

INTERNET RESEARCH SOURCES

The library web pages have a great deal of addresses for your research. Go to www.unt.edu and find the library and look for the theatre resource page:

<http://courses.unt.edu/antonelli/bibliographies/dramabib.htm>.

Electronic versions of newspapers are available at

<http://emedia1.mediainfo.com/emedia/usimagemap.htm>.

Also, there is an unbelievable amount of information available to you everywhere on the Internet---be resourceful---use it! Share useful sites when you find them!

POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE MATERIAL

Please be advised that this class contains the development of text and actions that may be considered offensive by some. You may encounter literary and directorial points of view that differ from your own. If you choose to take this course you may be required to represent life as the author depicts it and the director interprets it. In theatre we seek to explore all possible forms of human behavior and we may at times give "voice" to characters that hold different views than our own.

INCOMPLETES

Only under extraordinary circumstances will an incomplete be given.

ATTENDANCE AT ALL UNT THEATRE SEASON PRODUCTIONS

Be prepared to verbally state your critique of the acting in the Spring '12 UNT Theater Productions.

Spring D&T Play Production Schedule:

- The Devil's Sonata By Mark Glinski
February 24, 25, 26 Studio Theater
- Reefer Madness

FITNESS

This course is designed to accommodate all levels of physical ability and fitness. As with any physical training, there will be some soreness and muscular fatigue as a result of a new use of the body. This is normal and healthy. However, *you are responsible for your own health*. If you are in doubt as to whether you can perform some aspect of the exercises, please refrain from doing so until you can consult a physician. If you need to refrain from doing significant portions of the coursework due to this condition, you must get written verification from a physician and be prepared to do alternative assignments.

Departmental Policy:

Open flame of any sort (smoking, candles, lighting matches or lighters) in scenes, monologues, improvisations or productions is not allowed. Any action of this sort must be pantomimed or cut.

Withdrawal:

Should you choose to drop this course, you must initiate the drop and acquire all of the proper signatures and paperwork. If that process is not completed, you will be subject to a WF or an F at the close of the semester

American with Disabilities Act Notice

The UNT Department of Dance and Theatre does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment or admission of students. The content of this class requires each student to (a) actively participate in a safe manner and (b) spontaneously process visual and verbal cues. The student has the responsibility of informing the instructor of any disabling condition that will require modification in assignments or exercises. If you have a disability and feel you are unable to meet the requirements of this class without reasonable accommodations, please contact the instructor to discuss your particular disability.

Student Obligations to Academic/Production Work

D/T 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 principal responsibilities of each student is to carefully identify 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. Homework and papers must be your original creative or scholarly work.

SETE:

The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class. The spring administration of the SETE, will remain open through the week of finals.

Calendar
PERFORMANCE IV:
Acting Shakespeare
Spring 2012

Week 1:

T: 1/17

Unit 1: What Makes Shakespeare, “Shakespeare”?
Iambic Pentameter

TH: 1/19

Shakespeare and Language

Week 2:

T: 1/24

Bob Hess today

TH: 1/26

First Folio and investigation

Week 3:

T: 1/31

Bob Hess today

***Email sally comedic and dramatic monologue choices (both monologues 4 minutes total) to sally for approval by today:**

TH: 2/2

Bob Hess today

Week 4:

T: 2/7

Presentations: ALL

TH: 2/9

Monologue Exercise work—Bring (2) hard copies of your monologue to class today

Week 5:

T: 2/14

Unit 2: First Pass MONOLOGUES

***Written analysis due for ALL today.**

TH: 2/16

First Pass MONOLOGUES

Week 6:

T: 2/21

Second Pass MONOLOGUES

TH: 2/23

Second Pass MONOLOGUES

***Email Soliloquy choice to sally by today for approval**

Week 7:

T: 2/28

Final Presentation: MONOLOGUES

TH: 3/1

Unit 3: THE SOLOLIQUY: Exercises in class

Week 8:

T: 3/6

First Pass: Soliloquy

****Written analysis due for ALL today.**

TH: 3/8

First Pass: Soliloquy

Week 9:

T: 3/13

Individual Meetings Today

***You will receive your scene/scene partner at your meeting.**

TH: 3/15

Independent work day:

*******Class will not meet formally today—
Classroom will be available for your Use.**

SPRING BREAK 3/19-3/25

Week 10:

T: 3/27

Unit 3: SOLILOQUY: FINAL PERFORMANCE

TH: 3/29

PLAY PRESENTATIONS: ALL

Week 11:

T: 4/3

Scene work in class: Table Work Group I

TH: 4/5

Scene work in class: Table Work Group II

Week 12:

T: 4/10

First Pass: Scene
***Written analysis due today: ALL**

TH: 4/12

First Pass: Scene

Week 13:

T: 4/17

Second Pass: Scene

TH: 4/19

Second Pass: Scene

Week 14:

T: 4/24

Second Pass: Scene

TH: 4/26

Second Pass: Scene

Week 15:

PRE-FINALS WEEK

Monday, April 30th: Scene Night???????

T: 4/29

TBA

TH: 5/1

TBA

WEEK 16:

FINALS WEEK: MAY 5th-9th

Our final exam: Thursday, May 8th from 8am-10am

Project: Second Set of Audition Monologues

1 comedic / 1 dramatic: 4 minutes total

***Written analysis is due for each.**