

THEA 2351: Theatre Movement I

Fall 2026

TR 8:00-9:40 am, DATH 131

Instructor Contact

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Course Description

Expansion of physical skills with reference to body alignment, strength, flexibility, endurance, coordination, and balance. Development of a practical understanding and application of fundamental principles of movement in individual, partner, and group exercises as they apply to the craft of acting.

Students majoring or minoring in Theatre who have received a grade of “C” in any of the pre-requisite courses, even if they are transferring that course in, will be required to audition for consideration for enrollment in THEA 3050 Acting: Realism I.

Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Examine individual restrictive physical tensions, habits, and patterns, with particular focus on the limitations they place on the actor
- Investigate the connection between emotional response and the body
- Explore the connection between the development of character using the body
- Experience the discipline required in keeping the body flexible, free, and strong, as needed for audition, rehearsal, and performance.
- Identify elements of Viewpoints and Laban with ability to demonstrate for others

Course Expectations

“Never come into the theatre with mud on your feet. Leave your dust and dirt outside. Check your little worries, squabbles, petty difficulties with your outside clothing -- all the things that ruin your life and draw your attention away from your art -- at the door.”

When in class, be present in class. You should be prepared to focus and engage with the work – please do not engage in outside work while in this space. Out of respect for your classmates, your professor, and your work, please refrain from being on your phone during class time.

Dress Code

Wear comfortable clothing that allows you full range of movement, such as leggings, basketball shorts, or sweatpants. **Absolutely no jeans, khakis, skirts, cargo pants, or dress pants.** This course is an athletic endeavor and it is expected you will be dressed in order to successfully participate in class activities. Students wearing inappropriate attire for class will be asked to leave and will be marked absent for the day.

Physical Contact: In my classroom, we are focused on creating a culture of consent. Movement may require sharing close space or physical contact at some point, but no contact should occur before a conversation is had between participants. This includes handshakes, pats on the back, grabbing, pushing, shoving, etc. This is for everyone's safety and comfort. You are always allowed to say no, and you may withdraw your consent at any time. Even in rehearsals when practicing something already blocked, it is important to check in with your scene partners each time to ensure clear and consistent communication.

Communication

Generally, I am quick to respond to emails. However, I do not look at my email on evenings or weekends. If you email during these times, I will make best efforts to reply on the next business day. I also ask that you give me at least 24 hours to answer your email prior to sending me a follow-up.

Some things to be mindful of when emailing your professors:

- To make sure that your message gets seen in a timely manner, please use my UNT email, *not* Canvas messages
- Use your resources: Make sure the answer to your question is not already on Canvas or in the syllabus. Read assignments carefully, consult a classmate, and Google your question if necessary. Then, if you still have a question, email me.
- If it is within 24 hours of a due date, please do not count on getting a reply from me in time.
- I am not tech support. If you are having problems accessing Canvas or elements in the course, please try the following before contacting me:
 - [General Canvas Help Guides \(Searchable\)](#)
 - [UNT Tech Support \(FAQ, Phone Number, and Chat\)](#)
 - [Submit a Helpdesk Ticket](#)

If you have an extenuating circumstance preventing you from attending class or submitting assignments on time, please reach out to the [Dean of Students](#) for support. They are here to advocate on your behalf.

ADA 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 Access (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, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](#) website.

Please contact me at the start of the semester to discuss your accommodation letter so that we are on the same page about how you will engage with the course.

Student Obligation to Academic and Production Work

Dance & Theater students are expected to budget and organize their time in order to meet both their academic and production commitments satisfactorily and on time. Production assignments, including tech week, are *not an acceptable excuse for missing class or failing to turn in assignments*.

Class Conduct

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 may be referred to the Dean of Students 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.

View [UNT's Code of Student Conduct](#) to learn more.

The University of North Texas prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

Please see additional UNT policies and procedures on the [Student Support Services & Policies](#) page.

Academic Integrity

UNT Honor Code: *"I commit myself to honor, integrity, and responsibility as a student representing the University of North Texas community. I understand and pledge to uphold academic integrity as set forth by UNT Student Academic Integrity Policy, 06.003. I affirm that the work I submit will always be my own, and the support I provide and receive will always be honorable."*

See UNT Policy [06.003, Student Academic Integrity](#)

Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As a student-centered public research university, the University of North Texas promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, the submission of AI-generated work is not accepted in this course. *Any violation of this will result in a full loss of points for the assignment.* See UNT [AI policy and FAQs](#)

Sexual Assault Prevention: UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648.

Sensitive Subject Matter: In this course sensitive subject matter may be discussed. Everyone is expected to treat these moments with the sensitivity and respect they deserve. Racist, misogynistic, homophobic, or any other form of hateful language is disruptive and will not be tolerated.

All discussions should be civil and courteous. Disagreement and debate is welcome; however, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom environment. Anyone who finds it difficult to act respectfully toward their classmates or professor and the subject matter being discussed may be asked to leave the class.

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

Attendance and Tardies

The following policy is consistent within the department: students are allowed no more than a total of **three** absences during the semester. Additionally, every third tardy will equate to one absence for attendance grading purposes. A tardy of more than fifteen minutes is recorded as an absence. A **fourth** absence is grounds for the student to earn an F for the course. The professor's rollsheets are the official record of absences and tardiness.

Class Participation

If something comes up that requires you to be on your device for an extended period of time, please excuse yourself to the hallway to take care of the issue and rejoin when you are able to do so distraction-free.

I encourage you all to enter class with an open mind to learning new things and experiencing different perspectives. I also hope to see a willingness to step outside your comfort zone, as well as interact with peers in an equitable and respectful way.

We are building an ensemble. Class time is everyone's time—coming to class unprepared, unable, or unwilling to work is unfair to everyone.

Grading

All work will be submitted on specified due dates. Written work must be typed.

Performances **will not be graded** without accompanying written work. AI-generated work, in whole or in part, will receive a grade of 0. As your written assignments will complement the work you are demonstrating to the class in your performance, there is **no late work accepted**.

This course is the foundation you will build upon as you continue in your acting studies. As such, attendance and participation is expected, and will account for a large portion of your final grade.

Movement I is a chance for you to learn the process of acting out to in, and build the habit of being connected to your body. As such, the work is as important as the final product. Performances are also somewhat subjective. To stress the importance of the process and ensure fairness, your classwork will be graded based on your entire process, rather than a single performance, according to the following criteria:

1. Class Participation & Effort
2. Completion of Assignments
3. Professionalism
4. Preparedness
5. Improvement
6. Collaboration with other actors (when applicable)

Notes on In-Class Coaching:

- Students not actively working are expected to take notes on what they observe in their classmates' work. Students may be called on at any point for their feedback or observations.
- You are encouraged to approach class openly and honestly. Be daring, make bold choices, and be willing to get it wrong.
- If you are scheduled to work in class that day and you are not prepared to work, you will be asked to sit down and will lose that day's points
- If you miss a class when you are scheduled to perform you will receive **zero points** on the assignment.
- Only excused medical or emergency absences will be accepted, and evidence of such must be submitted in order to have the opportunity to make up for the coaching.

Grade Breakdown

Assignments	Point Value
Warmup Leadership	15 points
Quizzes	30 points (2 @ 15 points each)
Character Movement Profiles	30 points (2 @ 15 points each)
Ensemble Composition	25 points
Kinesthetic Response Composition	25 points
Thematic Composition	25 points
Final Exam Composition	50 points

Course Assignments

Daily Work

Earn up to 10 points per class period for engaging with the ensemble by performing the daily exercises and assignments during class with other colleagues.

Warmup Leadership

You will lead your colleagues in a 10 minute warmup once during the semester. Submit an outline of your warmup on Canvas before class on the day you are assigned. Practice leading the warmup with peers, colleagues, family, or friends beforehand. The warmup can begin with a basic physical warmup I will model in class then move on to a series of curated exercises to activate axial movement (stretching, swinging, twisting, bending), then locomotor movement (dancing, jumping, walking, leaping etc.).

Character Movement Profiles

At two points in the semester, you will be asked to create a character's movement profile using the vocabulary attained in class, one for Laban and one for Viewpoints. Using the character's traits, you will translate this into physicality and then demonstrate for the class; we will attempt to guess your chosen traits based on your presented physicality. This is largely a written assignment to be submitted on Canvas. There will be examples in the appropriate module to give you an idea of where to start.

Ensemble Composition

As a class, we will choose a story for this composition. We will then divide into groups, each of which will be responsible for telling one section of the story. The Laban Effort Actions will be the basis of your movement, and within your group you will choreograph and rehearse your section. The performance will have each group share their piece in sequence in order to perform one complete story as a class.

Kinesthetic Response Composition

A key component of Viewpoints work is response to the environment. For this piece, you will give yourself a stimulus to respond to in order to form the basis of your performance. The focus is on curating authentic reactions to real-time stimuli.

Thematic Composition

As an ensemble, you will be assigned a theme to respond to with movement. You will create your own set of vocabulary to describe your movement through time and space. Focus should be on how each selection connects to your group's interpretation of the theme, and the relationship between movement and meaning. Grades will be given based on how clearly your movement sequence and vocabulary convey your ideas.

Final Exam Composition

In groups you choose, you will pick a Greek myth to bring to life via movement. Pieces should be around 5 minutes in length, and tell a clear story from start to finish. For each character that appears in your piece, you must submit a clear movement profile. What happens when characters of opposing movement profiles interact with one another? There are no restrictions on using either Viewpoints or Laban, but I ask each group member to pick a style and stay consistent for their paperwork. There will be due dates for your chosen story, your choreography rough draft, and your final performance.

Rough Course Outline

*subject to change

8/18 - Syllabus, course introductions. Why study movement?

8/20 - Exploring the Effort Actions

8/25 - Shape Sculpts with LMA

8/27 - Effort Walks and Character Movement

9/1 - Navigating Space; begin: ensemble composition

9/3 - Laban Character Movement Profile & Discussion

9/8 - Composition First Pass & Critique

9/10 - Laban Quiz, Putting on a Character

9/15 - Composition Final Showcase / Movement with Music

9/17 - Establishing the Grid (Intro to Viewpoints)

9/22 - Devising: Group Movement with Music

9/24 - Begin Kinesthetic Response Composition

9/29 - Composition First Pass & Critique

10/1 - Telling a Story: Behavioral vs. Expressive

10/6 - Composition Final Showcase and Group Feedback

10/8 - Viewpoints Character Movement Profile & Discussion

10/13 - Viewpoints Quiz, Mixing Styles

10/15 - Begin Thematic Composition

10/20 - Composition First Pass & Critique

10/22 - Scenework

10/27 - Second Pass

10/29 - Composition Final Showcase and Group Feedback

11/3 - Mini scriptwork; Assign final and select groups

11/5 - Rehearsal

11/10 - Revisit Mini Scriptwork

11/12 - Composition First Pass & Critique

11/17 - Rehearsal

11/19 - Composition Second Pass & Critique

11/23-11/27 - **Thanksgiving**

12/1 - Rehearsal

12/3 - Final Composition Showcase