

Syllabus

Acting I

**THR K110, T1 CRN 11355 Friday 2:00-4:45p.m.
Room F111 (2-3:30pm) & D102 (3:30-4:45pm)**

Spring 2010

Three Rivers Community College

Instructor: Leigh Cremin
Office Hours: By appointment before or after class
Office Location: Adjunct Faculty Office, D205
TRCC Email: LCremin@TRCC.COMMNET.EDU
Preferred email: leigh.cremin@gmail.com

Course Introduction

Welcome to Acting I! In this course, you will learn and develop approaches to creating believable behavior onstage. We will cover the fundamentals of how an actor prepares to work, creates a character, auditions, and performs. Each class will be devoted to exercise work to relax, focus, and stimulate the imagination, and then presentation and development of whatever you are working on.

The primary teaching texts I use are Julian Schlusberg's Lessons for the Stage, Uta Hagen's Respect for Acting, and Viola Spolin's Theater Game File. Together, these offer a great array of warm up and focus exercises. Spolin's game file is literally a catalogue and description of 201 theater games designed to increase skills in observation and collaboration, movement, physical preparedness, and character development.

I have yet to find a textbook for students that serves the objectives of the course in an easy to use reference-style format. So, you will create your own! Over the course of the semester, your coursework will be to record and reflect upon what you did in class that week, and compile the entries and materials used in that class in a portfolio that will be submitted at the end of the term. You will see that many of the games and exercises we do in theater translate well to many other environments and uses. Julian Schlusberg once wrote, "An actor's development parallels his growth in self-awareness."

Course Objectives

In this course, you will:
learn a standard physical and vocal warm-up for actors,

engage in exercises and theater games,
ready a monologue for performance,
work with a classmate on short scenes and a ten-minute play,
attend at least one professional production and write a review of the acting,
compile your own introduction to acting "textbook."

Texts (if the bookstore can get it in time for class)

- 1) 30 Ten-Minute Plays for 2 Actors, Ed. Dixon, et al.

Other Required Materials

- 1) An account in The Writing Studio at www.writing.colostate.edu.
- 2) Attendance at one professional theater production by the end of March.
- 3) A three-ring binder, a 3-hole punch, and unlined printer paper, if you decide to make your portfolio on paper --or-- an ePortfolio in The Writing Studio.
- 4) Loose, comfortable clothing and shoes (Please, no sleeve-less shirts, skirts, cleavage, or high heels.) Sweatpants and a sweatshirt work best.
- 5) Sharpened pencils with erasers.
- 6) Copy of whatever piece you're working on. A good source for classical monologues is <http://www.monologuearchive.com>.
- 7) Water and a snack are recommended.

Grading

You will be graded on the following three assignment categories:

- 1) 50% of grade Participation : includes in-class exercises and activities
- 2) 25% of grade Writing : includes a Theater Review and your textbook portfolio
- 3) 25% of grade Presentations : Mid-term monologue presentation and final examination scene presentation --or-- mid-term monologue presentation and different genre monologue than presented at mid-term, as pre-approved by Instructor

*In the Humanities, all papers use MLA formatting which specifies that the paper is typed, double-spaced, and in Times New Roman size 12 font in black ink. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date.

I use the check, check plus, and check minus system on all assignments. The checks are converted to points on a scale of 1-12. The scale translates to the 100 percentile as such:

12=100, 11.5=96, 11=92, 10.5=87, 10=83, 9.5=79, 9=75,
8.5=71, 8=67, 7.5=63, 7=58

√+ (11.5) equals 96 = A
√ (10) equals 83 = B
√- (8.5) equals 71 = C-

Attendance and Preparation

Please come to every class session on time and prepared. In the rare event you are not prepared, please come to class anyway. You are a vital part of this community.

If you are exhibiting flu-like symptoms (especially with a fever of 100 or greater,) please do not come to class, and arrange an appointment with me so that we may discuss make-up classes. When in school, please be vigilant about containing the spread of germs, e.g. carry tissues, wash your hands frequently, and consider using sanitizing gel or wipes on hands and work areas.

Please turn off all cell phones and other technologies before class begins, and do not use them during class. Please leave the classroom and all work areas neat and tidy for the next class that will use the space.

Late Work Policy

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Any assignments not turned in on time will have five points deducted for each day that it is late, including the day it was due, if not submitted at the beginning of class. Late work may be put in my mailbox in the Adjunct Faculty Office in D205. Any assignments other than papers are also due at the beginning of class on the due date. If you were absent when an assignment other than a paper was due, you must bring the assignment to the next class meeting. Any submission after that carries the same grade reduction of five points off per day past the due date. If you are going to be absent on the day one of the papers is due, please electronically submit the paper, by the time class starts on the due date, into the assignment drop box in The Writing Studio, and bring a hard-copy to the next class meeting.

Academic Dishonesty Zero-Tolerance Policy

Academic Dishonesty shall in general mean conduct which has as its intent or effect the false representation of a student's academic performance, including but not limited to (a) cheating on an examination, (b) collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course, (c) plagiarizing, including the submission of others' ideas or papers (whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained) as one's own, (d) stealing or having unauthorized access to examination or course materials, (e) falsifying records of laboratory or other data, (f) submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course, and (g) knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

In short, please paraphrase or cite a direct quotation giving the author credit because any other use of someone's writing is stealing, and subject to expulsion from the class. Any acts of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will be referred to the Chair of Humanities.

Inclement Weather and Class Cancellation

In the event of inclement weather, students should call the college's main number at 860-886-0177. There will be a recorded message indicating whether or not classes are being held.

I typically am in the classroom at least ten minutes before class. In the rare event that I am not in the classroom at the beginning of class, college policy requests that students wait twenty minutes before leaving the classroom if the instructor has not arrived. If I cancel class, I will send an email through The Writing Studio and also will ask the Academic Division to post a notice on the classroom door.

On occasion, class has to relocate. I will send an email if I have advance notice, and otherwise, the new location will be written on the whiteboard in the classroom.

Disabilities Statement

If you have a hidden or visible disability which may require class modifications, please notify me as soon as possible. Students with Learning Disabilities should contact the Learning Specialist, Chris Scarborough at 860.892.5751 or at cscarborough@trcc.commnet.edu as soon as possible to ensure timely accommodations. Students with

Physical Disabilities should contact Judy Hilburger at 860.892.5744 or at jhilburger@trcc.commnet.edu, or Matt Liscum at 860.383.5420 or via email at mliscum@trcc.commnet.edu to facilitate accommodations.

Special Accommodations and Tutorials

Please bring any required special accommodations to my attention within one week of today along with any documentation from medical professionals to support your request. I can make suggestions for resources to accommodate special needs for non-medically ordained special needs.

The campus writing center, services within The Writing Studio at writing.colostate.edu, and I, are available for extra help at any time and for any reason. This is your course, your education. Embrace the tools and resources available to ensure your scholastic achievement and vocational preparedness.

The Writing Studio

The Writing Studio (TWS) is free online courseware similar to what Three Rivers uses called Blackboard Vista. Special features of TWS include a "Feedback" tab where students can submit papers for critiquing and suggestions. Also, a class blog allows you to post your answers online, and an assignment drop-box is available to submit assignments in case you are absent from class. Your account in TWS allows you to send email to anyone in the class, but please remember that you can not hit "reply" to answer a message sent from TWS since it does not act as your email storage box (like yahoo, or gmail, etc.) Another great feature is a function that allows you to create an online electronic portfolio.

After each class, I recap the day's class, and indicate what is due for the next class, under the Assignments link in The Writing Studio.

In case of the Fire Alarm

In case of the Fire Alarm, or another emergency that requires us to vacate the classroom, please take only your jackets, and go directly outside to our agreed meeting place. In the event that you are out of the classroom during an emergency as such, please exit the nearest door, walk around the building, and join us in the agreed meeting place. I will take attendance outside to ensure that all are safely out of the building.

Schedule of Classes -- Subject to Revision

January 22, 2010	Course Introduction; The Apology Lesson
Jan 29	Actions
Feb 5	The Five Senses
(Feb 6 Saturday - Free Play)	TheaterWorks Hartford (need reservation with Instructor)
Feb 12	Creating Believable Environments
Feb 19	Stage areas, blocking, shorthand
Feb 26	Characterization - traits & physicality and dialogue
Mar 5	Mid-term Monologue Presentation
Mar 12 No Class	No class -- Spring Break
Mar 19	Script analysis
Mar 26 Last day to turn in Theater Review	Objectives and Beats
Apr 2 No class	No class -- Spring Recess
Apr 9	Characterization - sequential actions & dialogue
Apr 16	Subtext
Apr 23	Improvisation
Apr 30	Techniques of comedy acting
May 7 Textbook Portfolio due	Final Exam Scene Presentation
May 14 Last class	Final Exam Scene Presentation