



Syllabus: Acting I/II

Course Number: DRAM 1351/1352

Instructor Information

Name: Michael Cooper

Office: Studio 109

Telephone: 903-832-3361

E-mail: Michael.Cooper@texarkanacollege.edu

Office Hours: Mon 12:30 – 3, Tue/Thur 1 – 3, Fri 10 - 2

Textbook Information

There is no required textbook for this Course.

Student Learning Outcomes for the Course

1. Demonstrate knowledge of stage directions, stage areas, coordination of voice and body, and improvisation.
2. Develop practical experience through participation in monologues, sonnets, and scene work.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of characterization and creating a role, theories of acting and styles of acting.

Student Requirements for Completion of the Course and Due Dates

This is not a lecture class!!!

The theatre is a very social art form. It is the responsibility of this class to come to grips with this fact in both an intellectual and visceral fashion. Therefore, each class develops a uniqueness - as does every social group and especially every cast. Those of you who have been in more than one play can certainly relate to this. Each acting experience, both artistically and socially, was different.

In the same respect, no two acting classes are the same. We will not talk about this but rather **experience** it. Each of you will be asked to bring to the group the fullness of your personality. This is not always a pleasing experience. The theatre is not an arena for dishonesty. True, it is the arena of illusion, but this illusion must be based - at least so far as the actor is concerned - upon a deep and honest use of one's self and one's emotions. Building 'trust' within the group will allow you to develop this honesty with yourself, and with other members of the class.

The result of this development will hopefully be exciting and vital to some of you. To others it will relate directly to your experience and future plans. And to still others, this will be a drag. Still, there will be those of you fascinated with the process but unable to obtain fruitful results due to one reason or another. Laurence Olivier (a brilliant and famous actor) said, when he was well past eighty years of age, that when he had learned everything there was to know about acting he would find another job. He never found the need to get another job.

Therefore, I must stress that for at least four to six weeks of the semester "progress", at least insofar as you have been conditioned to measure it in other educational situations, will be difficult to ascertain. Bear with me. Slowly, what may appear as my subjective comments will also be visible and understandable to you.

Remember to stay ALERT - often, you will learn more from watching other actors work than you will when you are the one on the 'hot seat'.

I repeat: This is not a lecture class!!! Your success in the class and the true success of the class itself depends on your commitment and participation!

THE RULES OF THE GAME

I. Because this course requires active participation by all, please dress accordingly (loose clothes, sweats, shorts, tennis shoes, etc.). Be prepared for "physical activities" at every class. Inability to participate in class due to either failure to dress appropriately or lack of preparation (ex: memorization) for an assignment will result in an "F" for that class session. No hats are allowed in this class. Do not wear skirts, dresses, high heels, sandals or any other apparel that will restrict your movement (unless it is required for a specific Exercise or performance.)

II. You are required to see two theatrical productions this semester: 33 VARIATIONS (produced by the Texarkana Repertory Company, performance dates September 5 - 7, 12 - 14); and THE GLASS MENAGERIE (produced by the TC Drama Department and the Texarkana Repertory Company, performance dates November 7 - 9, 14 - 16). If you sign up to usher/hand out programs for a performance, you may see the production for free.

THE GLASS MENAGERIE auditions September 8. Scholarship students are required to audition. Everyone is encouraged.

You will hand in a three to five page TYPEWRITTEN critique of EACH production. You may earn Extra Credit with critiques of additional theatrical productions (okay them with me first).

III. Since Acting I and Acting II meet as one class (thus, some of you are here for the second, or even third time), I try to vary the material presented each semester. This semester, it's "discovering the process". We will investigate the tools an actor uses, the process of developing a role through your self, techniques for understanding and becoming your character, improvisational exercises, monologues and scene work.

IV. You will keep an ACTING JOURNAL. This is not a diary in which I get to read about your deepest and darkest secrets. Entries will be related to discovering the self through the acting process. I will make specific assignments throughout the semester. However, you should make entries in your journal following each class meeting - how the class went, what you liked and didn't like, what you learned, notes that may help you as an actor. Feel free to make other entries as you like - reactions and observations to people and experiences, e.g. Note that all life experiences and observations are ultimately very helpful in developing your capacities as an actor. Please note that the journal is worth 25% of your final grade!!!

Student Assessment

Participation, quizzes, exercises - 25%
Production Critiques - 25%
Journal - 25%
Monologues/Scenes - 25%

Grading Scale

Grade	
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59-below

Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY!!!

Theatre is a GROUP experience (onstage and in the audience). If you are not here, you can't be a member of the group. You will have partners in scenes who require your presence to do the work, so your absence will GREATLY affect other actors.

There are no retroactively excused cuts. Tardiness will be counted towards cuts. See me in advance to report emergency absence or serious illness, or call the departmental secretary to report problems.

Three tardies equal one absence. However - if you are late - **NEVER ENTER AND DISRUPT THE WORK OF ANOTHER ACTOR** (I seldom get angry - but this sort of rudeness will push me over the edge). When making presentations, the door

to the theatre will be locked at the beginning of class - you may enter QUIETLY through the back door when we are at an appropriate break.

CELL PHONES ARE FORBIDDEN IN CLASS!!! (Unless you are a medical professional on call, or have another good reason that you okay with me). First offense will be given a warning, Second offense will result in you being dropped from the class!!!

Academic Integrity Statement

Scholastic dishonesty, involving but not limited to cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion, or falsification of records will make the student liable for disciplinary action after being investigated by the Dean of Students. Proven violations of this nature will result in the student being dropped from the class with an "F".

This policy applies campus wide, including TC Testing Center, as well as off-campus classroom or lab sites, including dual credit campuses. This information can be found in the Student Handbook at <https://texarkanacollege.edu>.

Disability Act Statement:

Texarkana College complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act and makes reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact Larry Andrews at 903.823.3283, or go by the Recruitment, Advisement, and Retention Department located in the Administration building for personal assistance.

If you have an accommodation letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present it to me so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need for this class. *It is best to request these changes at the beginning if not before the start of class* so there is ample time to make the accommodations..

Financial Aid:

Attention! Dropping this class may affect your funding in a negative way! You could owe money to the college and/or federal government. Please check with the Financial Aid office before making a decision.