



DRAM – 2336 – 140CL 8671
VOICE FOR THE ACTOR
Spring 2024
T-Th 9:30am – 10:50pm / TVB 1150

Instructor Information: H. Russ Brown – hrussbrown@com.edu - 409-833-9544

Student hours and location: Mon/Wed 9am-Noon and Tues/Thurs 2:30pm-3:00pm or by appointment.

Required Textbook/Materials: NO TEXT REQUIRED. Must have a COMPOSITION BOOK instead for Journaling and Course Work. FOOTWEAR: Students will work either in bare feet or while wearing approved non-slip or yoga socks. Socks and Journal are due for a Grade by 2nd Class. You will not be considered present in class if you do not work barefoot or in socks and/or bring your composition book.

Course Description: Principles, practices, and exercises in awareness, relaxation, freedom, flexibility, and expressiveness in the actor's vocal instrument. The vocal instrument is a primal, physical tool of the professional theatre artist. This course will develop an awareness of your vocal self and potential while expanding your vocal confidence. We will awaken and train our aural-kinesthetic awareness to be sensitive to the stimuli of partnering, environments, and psychological moods.

Personal conditioning: Learn to warm-up for the purpose of improving vocal strength, flexibility, agility, confidence and endurance. These are the foundations upon which expressiveness can be built. Increase ability to center our selves, release tension and work toward a supple and open vocal instrument.

Vocal basics for theatre: Vocal production – projection, articulation, range, breath support, placement, resonance, musicality, cadence, control, etc. Creating and maintaining health of the vocal instrument.

Vocal skills for actors: Vocal violence, archetypes, neutralizing regionalisms, etc. Introduction of the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Creative expression: Letting go of your internal judges and playing with improvisations and explorations of vocal expressiveness/responsiveness.

Course requirements:

1. Full participation and regular attendance in class
2. Satisfactory completion of all graded assignments on the date due
3. Lengthening, strengthening, conditioning, and focus work at the top of each class.
4. Attendance at COM Theatre productions of LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS, THE WRESTLING SEASON, CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU, THE PILLOWMAN, HOOEY-HAHS & FOOFARAWS: The Compleat Button Man's Picket Fence Party Planner, and EVENING OF ONE ACTS.

“I GET TO...”s :

Vocal Aerobics: Development of a personal vocal warm-up routine.

Chinwags: Vocal Production/Articulation drills, improvs and vocal presentations.

Vocal Skill Sets / Projects: Vocal Centering, Naturalisms, and Laban Effort Actions as a vocal/physical technique.

Midterm Exam (Date TBD) - Leading of Vocal Warm-ups. IPA chart quiz.

Final Projects (Tuesday, May 3rd) - IPA / Regionalism / Chinwag:

- 1.) IPA analysis of short piece of text
- 2.) Unrehearsed performance of a text sans Regionalism
- 3.) Q & A session sans Regionalism

Performances

- ** LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS – Feb.1st thru 18th
- ** THE WRESTLING SEASON – Feb. 23rd & 24th
- ** CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT YOU– April 5th & 6th
- ** THE PILLOWMAN – April 12th & 13th
- ** HOOEY-HAHS & FOOFARAWS – April 18th thru May 5th

All Thursday – Saturday performances are at 7:00pm and Sundays at 2:30pm.

Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula: Your grade is based on participation, attitude, effort, attendance, growth and completion of assignments. It not based on your “talent” as an actor.

Here’s how the grading breaks down:

Attendance/participation	30%
Two Play discussions	20%
Midterm Project	10%
Weekly Projects	20%
Final Project	20%

The grading scale is as follows:

90 – 100 =	A
80 – 89 =	B
70 – 79 =	C
65 – 69 =	D
64 - below =	F

COM Theatre Performance Classes – GRADING CRITERIA

A – Clear, grounded choices; application of learned skills; clear, interesting tactics; obvious growth; vital connection to partner; truly alive in imaginary circumstances.

B – evidence of thorough preparation; objective and tactic work definite but uneven; some growth; good concentration.

C – solid memorization; evidence of some preparation; attempts at tactic work; reliance on ability over technique.

D – uneven memorization; inadequate preparation; lack of application of learned skills

F – lack of preparation; irresponsibility/no focus to scene partner

Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra-Credit Policy: Satisfactory completion of all graded assignments on the date due – you may not make up a missed or late assignment unless approved in advance of the original due date. There is no extra credit.

Attendance Policy: This is a performance class preparing you for the professional “industry”, not a lecture class – there is no performance without your physical presence in class. Absences in excess of three (3) classes over the course of the semester will lower the final grade by one letter grade. Excessive tardies (every 3 tardies) will equal additional absences. Because your scene partners relies on you for his own grade, participation is of the utmost importance. Students who are absent or who present behavioral issues that affect the work of other students may be withdrawn from the class at my discretion. In addition to your own in-class presentations, you will be required to give constructive feedback to your classmates’ performances.

Tardies: Excessive tardies (every 3 tardies) will equal additional absences.

Class Rules:

1. No food, gum permitted in class. ALL DRINKS must be in capped, plastic bottles.
2. COM policy states that there is no such thing as a “permitted number of absences.” If you aren’t going to be in class, there’s no need to inform me because the reason doesn’t change anything.
3. The Rules of Theatre Etiquette must be observed at ALL TIMES.
4. Cell phones MUST BE OFF for the duration of the class period – NO EXCEPTIONS.
5. Please be respectful of your classmates by refraining from engaging in private conversation when we are having a class/group discussion, or when a performance is in progress.
6. Students will work without shoes either barefoot or in non-slip / yoga socks.
7. NO Restrictive Clothing is permitted in class.

A Word about BOUNDARIES:

At COM Theatre we strive to champion a professional atmosphere of non-judgmental inclusion, open communication, and enthusiastic consent so that all involved can feel free to be a pro-active participant in their own artistic growth. It is crucial that you gain an ever-evolving awareness of your own personal boundaries, so that you may teach those boundaries to us – in order to assure the personal comfort and safety of yourself, your partners and the ensemble. Please feel free to inform instructors of any physical or emotional limitations that may hinder your performance of any techniques/material presented in class so that they may be appropriately adapted.

In performance-oriented classroom or production situations, it may sometimes be necessary during the use of techniques and exercises for the Instructor/Director to interact physically with students or for students to interact physically with one another. This is part of the learning process, and any contact is intended to be professional and clinical in nature. If at any time a student is uncomfortable with the idea or the practice of that physical contact, the student will be given an opportunity to voice their concern and the need for adaptation will immediately be respected without fear of reprisal, reprimand or dismissal.

How to SUCCEED in this Class and in your Art:

- ✓ Play! Imagine! Get to know yourself!
- ✓ Breath and creative impulses are everything as you learn technique. Don't ignore them!
- ✓ Embracing the spirit of exploration will take you to exciting new places.
- ✓ Focused attention to detail should coincide with a continual desire to own your innate power, beauty and imagination.
- ✓ In other words, Never be in denial of your own GREATNESS!

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via D2L or other LMS)

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Identify the anatomy of the vocal apparatus.	Communication, Critical Thinking	Daily drills, scene study and actor exploration work
2. Use techniques to aid in relaxation, muscular release, body alignment, and vocal instrument awareness.	Communication, Critical Thinking	Daily drills, scene study and actor exploration work
3. Develop articulation and diction for clarity of sound, thought, and intention.	Communication, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Creativity	Daily drills, scene study and actor exploration work and scene and monologue performance
4. Connect emotion, language, and voice as a means of expression.	Communication, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Creativity	Daily drills, scene study and actor lab work and scene and monologue performance

5. Demonstrate proficiency and safe practices in vocal production.	Communication, Critical Thinking, Teamwork, Creativity	Daily drills, scene study and actor project scene and monologue performance.
6. Identify and apply the International Phonetic Alphabet.	Communication, Critical Thinking	Daily drills, scene study and actor exploration work

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty shall constitute a violation of these rules and regulations and is punishable as prescribed by board policies. Scholastic dishonesty shall include, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism shall be defined as the appropriating, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one’s own written work.

Collusion: Collusion shall be defined as the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work for fulfillment of course requirements.

Discipline

Any student violating this policy shall be subject to discipline, including suspension, in accordance with FM. College of the Mainland Policy Manual 084503 Student Rights and Responsibilities: FLB (Local)

Student Concerns: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Paul Boyd, Fine Arts Chair, at pboyd@com.edu or 409-933-8342.

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.pdf. *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor’s professional judgment of the quality of the student’s work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Kimberly Lachney at 409-933-8919 or klachney@com.edu. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is February 28. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is April 22. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is May 1. The last date to withdraw for spring mini session is May 29.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress:

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.