Course Description:
This course is specially designed to give all students, regardless of their ability, a valuable experience on both the intellectual and artistic levels. Students will be given the opportunity to broaden and deepen their own creativity, gain a deeper understanding of human behavior and interaction, and to strengthen their analytical skills through class work and projects that are exciting and challenging. The course will focus on the basic skills of acting, which includes the ability to effectively communicate, to gain access to the full spectrum of human emotions, and increase spontaneity. Additional topics will also cover such areas as contemporary plays and playwrights, other innovators of acting theory and practice and the current state of live theatre both nationally and internationally.

Upon the successful completion of this course you will have:

- Developed the fundamental building blocks for the art of acting, including presence, emotional honesty, spontaneity and the ability to play an action.
- Developed the ability to analyze dialogue to discover such elements as given circumstances, past action, physical action, objectives, obstacles, tactics and beats of action.
- Developed a greater awareness of your physical self, including breathing, tension/relaxation, body centers, and movement.
- Exercised your own creativity through theatrical art.
- Become familiar with the basic terminology and history of acting and theatre art.
- Learn about the leading practitioners and theorists of the acting process.
- Expanded your overall knowledge of contemporary plays, playwrights, and theatrical performance.
- Gained confidence in risk taking and problem solving.
- Increased your ability to communicate effectively.
- Increased your ability to observe and understand human behavior and the dynamics of interpersonal relationships.

Required Texts (available at Durham Book Exchange):
The Great Acting Teachers and Their Methods Richard Brestoff and Deborah Stevenson (Smith and Kraus)
-Spoon River Anthology Charles Aidman (Samuel French)

Course Requirements:
- Active participation in class
- Various class projects
- Various homework assignments
- Selected reading assignments from plays and textbooks
- Quizzes on reading assignments
- One research paper on a leading acting theorist
- Practice character analysis papers
- One character analysis paper (for final artistic project)
- One final artistic project
- One final exam

PLEASE NOTE THE UNIVERSITY SUPPORTS ZERO TOLERANCE REGARDING STUDENTS WHO BREAK THE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY. The full policy description can be accessed on p. 41 of the Student Rights, Rules and Responsibilities Handbook.

If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course, please register with the Access Office in the Memorial Union Building, Room 118 (862-2607) for assistance in developing a plan to address your academic needs. Students who already registered with the Access Office and wish to receive accommodations in this course are strongly encouraged to share their Accommodation Letter with me in a timely manner.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE GRADING:</th>
<th>GRADING SCALE:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Class Work Participation: 130/130</td>
<td>A  92-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes: 90/90</td>
<td>A- 90-91%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Character Analyses: 25/25</td>
<td>B+ 88-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer Critiques: 50/50</td>
<td>B  82-87%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Actor Reviews (film + live theatre)</td>
<td>B- 80-81%</td>
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<td>Final Character Analysis Paper: 15/15</td>
<td>C+ 78-79%</td>
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<td>One Research-Based Paper: 40/40</td>
<td>C  72-77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Written Final Exam: 50/50</td>
<td>C- 70-71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Project: 50/50</td>
<td>D+ 68-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performances:</td>
<td>D  62-67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First A/B Scene 5/5</td>
<td>D- 60-61%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Scene 10/10</td>
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<td>Second Scene 10/10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spoon River Monologue (1) 10/10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spoon River Monologue Exercises 10/10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Created Performance 40/40</td>
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Points are based upon the following criteria:

- Warming up as class starts.
- Fully prepared for work due in class.
- Positive and supportive toward others in the class.
- Ready and willing to take on the day’s work.
- Willing to contribute to class discussion and feedback.
- Focused and disciplined throughout the class.

- An absence = 0 participation points for the day.
- A late arrival to class = a 2 point participation grade drop for that class.

Grading of artistic-based work: Criteria will be established for each project. The work will be broken down into content areas that relate to the subject being covered at that point in time in the class.

Attendance Policy:
Attendance (both mentally and physically) is extremely important to the success of this class. The class should be thought of as an acting ensemble, or the cast of a play. If one person is missing, OR LATE it has a great deal of impact on the rest of the members. If a student fails to attend a class on the day an assigned project is to be presented, the student will receive a zero for that assignment. NO EXCEPTIONS.

- One absence is allowed
- Entering class more than 15 minutes after the start of class equals 1/2 of an absence.
- Each full absence (after the one that is allowed) lowers the student’s grade by 1/3 a letter grade.
- 6 absences is an automatic grade of “F” for this course

Other Policies:
Homework is to be handed in at the beginning of class on the day that it is due, whether or not the student is present for the class. Grades on homework submitted late will be reduced ten points after the start of each class period thereafter. Work you submit four classes late will not be accepted.

You must wear the proper clothing to class. Loose fitting outfits that allow free movement. We will spend a fair amount of time on the floor, so wear clothes that you won’t mind getting dirty. Dangling jewelry should be removed before the start of class. Athletic shoes or bare feet will be necessary for most classes.

At times this can be a very physically demanding class. It is your responsibility to inform me about any medical conditions you have that have the potential of becoming problematic. I will gladly make any needed modifications.

Scene work will require each student to provide all appropriate costuming and props.
Class Schedule

**Tuesday, September 4**
What is Acting? What is Theatre?
The Concept of the Ensemble

*Reading Assignment for Next Class: Introduction, Chapters 1 & 3 “Great Acting Teachers…” due Tuesday, September 11.*

**Thursday, September 6**
Introduction to Forms of Performance
Introduction to the work of the actor

*Homework Assignment: reading and quiz due next class.*

**Tuesday, September 11**
Historical Perspective of the Art of Acting
Introduction Classical Theatre
Discussion of Reading Assignment
Turn in Quiz on Chapters 1 & 3

*Homework Assignment Given: Research paper on a major acting-process theorist (10 to 15 pages). Assignment due: last day of class 11/20.*

*Reading Assignment Given: Chapters 2 and 4 “Great Acting Teachers…”: due Tuesday, September 18*

**Thursday, September 13**
Greek Theatre and Archetypes
Differences between Greek, Roman, Medieval and Renaissance Theatre
Declaratory Acting

*Reading Assignment for Next Class: Chapters 8 “Great Acting Teachers…”*

*Homework Assignment: reading and quiz due next class.*

*Reading Assignment: “A Practical Guide…” Entire Book Read for Thursday, September 27.*

**Tuesday, September 18**
Honesty In Acting
Emotional Truth
Introduction to Emotional Preparation
Killing the Internal Editor: Spontaneity and the Actor
Discussion of Reading Assignment
Turn in Quiz on Chapters 2, 4 & 8

*Homework Assignment Given: Read “The Reality of Doing” Handout AND quiz due next class.*

*Reading Assignment: Complete “Practical Guide…” for Tuesday, September 27.*

*Homework for next class: Based on the lecture, review an actor’s performance on film- 2 pages, typed: Due beginning of class: 9/20*

**Thursday, September 20**
The Depth of Observation
Seeing and Identifying Behavior
The Reality of Doing: Hearing, Seeing and Doing
Discussion on Reading Assignment
Turn in Quiz on “The Reality of Doing”

*Reading Assignment Given: Read Chapters 5, 6 & 7 from “The Greatest Acting Teachers…”*

*Homework Given: quiz for Chapters 5, 6 & 7 due next class.*

**Tuesday, September 25**
Developing Your Dramatic Imagination
The Concept of Imaginary Circumstances
Discussion on Reading Assignment
Turn in Quiz on Chapters 5, 6 & 7
Open Scenes Performed
Thursday, September 27  
Working With Text  
Introduction to Character Analysis  
Introduction to Scene Analysis  
Discussion of Reading Assignment  
Scene Work Assigned  
Open Scenes Assigned  
Homework Assignment Given: With your partner, create a history for your characters. Following the guidelines laid out in “Practical Handbook…” document (typed out to be handed in) a scene analysis for your open scene: Due Tuesday, October 2.  
Homework Assignment: quiz on “Practical Handbook…” next class.

Tuesday, October 2  
Concept of Character  
Character Analyses  
A B Scene Work  
Turn in Quiz on A Practical Handbook for the Actor  
Homework Assignment Given: Open Scene Performances Next Class

Thursday, October 4  
Open Scene Performances  
Informal Peer Critiques (Partner Assignments)

Tuesday, October 9  
Introduction to “The Method”  
Meisner Exercises  
Reading Assignment Given: Chapter 9 from “Greatest Acting Teachers…”  
Reading Assignment Given: Read Spoon River Anthology; choose a monologue to memorize for 10/18.

Thursday, October 11  
Introduction to Brecht and Epic Acting  
Introduction to Physical Approaches to Acting  
Discussion of reading assignment  
Turn in Quiz on “Chapter 9”  
Homework Assignment Given: Memorize a monologue from “Spoon River Anthology” due 10/18  
Reading Assignment Given: Chapters 8, 10 and 11 “Great Acting Teachers…” due next class.  
Homework given: quiz on Chapters 8, 10 & 11.

Tuesday, October 16  
Introduction to Viewpoints  
Introduction to Grotowsky  
Acting Styles Beyond Realism  
Discussion on Reading Assignment  
Turn in Quiz on Chapters 10 & 11

Thursday, October 18  
Acting Styles Beyond Realism  
Homework Assignment Given: Memorize a monologue from Spoon River Anthology due next class (don’t plan out your movements; concentrate on what you want).  
Homework Assignment Given: Written Character Analysis (typed out to be handed in)

Tuesday, October 23  
Spoon River Anthology Performances  
Formal Peer Critiques (Groups of 4)  
Homework Assignment Given: Bring peer critique notes for discussion in class.

Tuesday, October 30  
Peer Critiques (Sharing with class)
Thursday, November 1
Discussion of Peer Critiques
Monologue Exercises
Character Development
Imaginary Circumstances

Homework Assignment Given: Second Round of Open Scene Presentations due next class; turn in (typed to be handed in) a character analysis and a scene scenario as agreed upon by both partners.

Tuesday, November 6
Second Round of Scene Presentations.

Homework Assignment Given: Bring favorite objects / CD’s for a self-created class piece

Thursday, November 8
Introduction to Self-Created Work.

Homework Assignment: Create a five-minute autobiographical performance piece (final project) due on class 16.

Thursday, November 15
Self-Created Work: In Class

Homework: Bring writings / props / costumes for Self-Created Presentation

Homework Assignment Due: Research Paper, 11/20

Tuesday, November 20
Self-Created Work: In Class

Turn in Research Paper

Homework: Self-Created Presentations

Tuesday, November 27
Self-Created Presentations

Thursday, November 29
Dana Yeaton, Playwright (start at 9:10; venue TBD)

Homework Assignment Due: Final Presentation Projects

Homework Assignment Given: Actor Review of Live Theatre Performance due

Tuesday, December 4
Self-Created Presentations continued

Final Presentation Projects

Turn in Live Theatre Performance Actor Review

Thursday, December 6
Final Presentation Projects

Tuesday, December 11
Final Presentation Projects

Thursday, December 13
Final Presentation Projects

Wednesday, December 19
Written Final Exams
ASSIGNMENTS:

**Quizzes**
- Introduction, Chapters 1 & 3 15/15
- Chapters 2, 4 & 8 15/15
- Reality of Doing 10/10
- Chapters 5, 6 & 7 15/15
- Practical Handbook 41/41
- Chapter 9 10/10
- Chapters 10 & 11 15/15

**Extra Credit**
- Attend play and post show talk back with Dana Yeaton, Playwright, *Midwives.*
- Midwives, Wednesday, 11/28, 7pm Hennessy Theatre

**Actor Reviews**
- Film Actor Review 15/15
- Live Theatre Actor Review 15/15

**Character Analyses**
- First Practice Analysis 10/10
- Second Practice Analysis 15/15
- Final Character Analysis 15/15

**Peer Critiques**
- First Scene 10/10
- Second Scene 10/10
- Spoon River Monologue (#1) 10/10
- Spoon River Monologue (#2) 10/10
- Self-Created Performance 10/10

**Research Paper**
40/40

**Perfomances**
- First A/B Scene 5/5
- First Scene 10/10
- Second Scene 10/10
- Spoon River Monologue (1) 10/10
- Spoon River Monologue Exercises 10/10
- Self-Created Performance 40/40
- Final Project Performance 50/50

**Written Final Exam**
50/50

**Daily Participation** (26 days x 5 pts) 130/130

Bibliography/Suggested Reading

PERFORMANCES:

A / B SCENES
- Take assigned scene with assigned partner.
- Determine 2 separate given circumstances.
- Memorize your lines.
- Present the scene using both given circumstances.
- Class guesses what the circumstances could be.
- Goal: be as distinct and specific as possible with your choices.

SCENE PERFORMANCE
- Choose partner.
- Choose a scene.
- Do at least 2 pages of the script (you may cut parts out, but you need to make sure you keep a clear beginning, middle and end and you don't cut out the climax).
- For the first performance (check syllabus), the goal is to be as honest as you can. *If you would feel more comfortable mostly memorizing but carrying the script for reference, you may do so. You will have to be fully memorized for the final showing, but next week you should focus on being as present with your partner as possible, acting and reacting. If carrying your script will help you do that, this will be fine.*
- You are responsible for bringing any props and/or costumes you feel will help you.
- All groups will go on the due date. For the first performance, you will receive credit for being present and doing it.
- All students will be assigned two groups to informally critique.
- Each group will rehearse and re-present the scenes (check syllabus for due date).
- All students will complete formal grading rubrics for their assigned groups.
- All students will complete the 3 question scene analysis as outlined in *A Practical Handbook for the Actor* for the first presentation.
- All students will complete a second character analysis for the second performance.

MONOLOGUE PERFORMANCE
- Choose one monologue from *Spoon River Anthology* by Charles Aidman.
- Perform this monologue in class.
- Focus on finding the honesty in the character.
- All students will complete a character analysis for the monologue performance.
- All students will have coaching during class.
- All students will complete peer critiques for assigned classmates.

SELF-CREATED PERFORMANCE
- Alone or in a group, students will choose an issue that is relevant to today’s society.
- Using techniques practiced in class, students will create an original performance.
- Students will use at least two mediums (e.g. film, slides, music, visual art, or dance) as part of the storytelling process.
- The original piece will tell a story with a complete beginning, middle and end.
- The original piece will have conflict.
- The original piece will bring some sort of resolution to the conflict.
- This piece may be done with no speaking; as long as the subject and storyline are clear, you are only limited by your own creativity.

FINAL PROJECT PERFORMANCE
- Students may choose to do a monologue or a scene.
- Scenes may have 3 or fewer actors.
- All students will complete a character analysis for the performance.
- All students will complete peer critiques for assigned classmates.
- The scenes should be at least 3-5 pages long.
- Monologues should be at least 30 lines long.
- Each performance will require outside rehearsal time.
- Students use acting techniques learned this semester as a basis for character preparation; each student should be able to articulate what techniques used and why they were most effective for this performance.
RESEARCH PAPER
Write a paper about an influential acting theorist (this may be someone we studied or someone else whom you are interested in pursuing). The paper must include the following:

- No more than 2 paragraphs on the person's biographical information.
- No more than 3-4 paragraphs on a summary of the crucial elements of this person's acting theory.
- At least 2-3 pages to explain in detail why this person is influential to her/his time period.
- At least 2-3 pages to explain any influence or change this person has created for further drama periods (this requires in-depth critical analysis and research; don't skim the surface). You may want to compare this person to contemporaries or theorists who followed.
- Bibliography and footnotes or internal citations (be consistent with either MLA or APA formats).
- At least 4 different NON-INTERNET bibliography sources (either books or academic periodicals).
- The paper MUST be grammatically correct. Mistakes will cost points in the grading.

GUEST SPEAKER
GUEST'S MASTER CLASS – DANA YEATON, PROFESSIONAL PLAYWRIGHT (Thursday, 12/3):
- Attend the session with Dana Yeaton, Thursday, November 29, 9:10-11am
  NOTE EARLY START TIME TO CLASS AND THE DIFFERENT LOCATION: HENNESSY THEATRE
- Write a reaction paper (3-5 pages, DOUBLE-SPACED).
  a. Summarize Mr. Yeaton's main points about playwriting.
  b. Extrapolate and explain how playwriting connects with the acting process.
  c. Explain why you think (or DON'T think) it's important for actors to maintain the integrity of an author's words (e.g. why you should or should not change/cut words or phrases)

WRITTEN EXAM
- Students will be given a final exam to complete.
- Exam is due Wednesday, December 19.

ACTOR REVIEWS

Film Actor
1. Choose an actor in a specific film.
2. At the beginning of your review, list the film title, character name, and actor name.
3. Evaluate the actor's performance on a range of 1-10; 10 is the most real it could be.
4. Pinpoint at least 3-4 qualities or habits the actor has that make her/him seem real or not real.
5. Explain whether you think this actor works internal to external or external to internal. Name at least 3 items of proof.
6. Using all of the acting techniques and teachers we've read about, identify whose method best suits this actor's performance. Name at least 3 items of proof that this actor's methods match a method we've already read about.
7. Identify what makes this actor appealing / unappealing; successful / unsuccessful.
8. Tell why this person is a good or bad actor.
9. Write in narrative form.
10. Include your name.
11. Write a minimum of 3 paragraphs (at least 5 sentences per paragraph).
12. As long as you prove your statements, you will be correct. Use evidence from your reading.

Theatre Actor
1. Choose a live theatre performance to attend.
2. At the beginning of your review, list the play title, the venue in which you are seeing the play, the character name, and actor name.
3. Evaluate the actor's performance on a range of 1-10; 10 is the most real it could me.
4. Pinpoint at least 3-4 qualities or habits the actor has that make her/him seem real or not real.
5. Explain whether you think this actor works internal to external or external to internal. Name at least 3 items of proof.
6. Using all of the acting techniques and teachers we've read about, identify whose method best suits this actor's performance. Name at least 3 items of proof that this actor's methods match a method we've already read about.
7. Identify what makes this actor appealing / unappealing; successful / unsuccessful.
8. Tell why this person is a good or bad actor.
9. Write in narrative form.
10. Include your name.
11. Write a minimum of 3 paragraphs (at least 5 sentences per paragraph).
12. As long as you prove your statements, you will be correct. Use evidence from your reading.