

ADVANCED ACTING

*"When an actor is completely absorbed by some profoundly moving objective so that he throws his **whole being** passionately into its execution, he reaches a state we call inspiration."*

-Constantine Stanislavski

Drama 205 Section 1

Spring 2015

MW 2:00pm – 3:20PM

Room: Performance Studio (Rm 117)

Department website: www.jsums.edu/speechandtheatre

Professor: Dr. Nadia Bodie-Smith

E-mail: nadia.c.bodie@jsums.edu

Office: Rm105 Rose E. McCoy Aud.

Office Hrs: TRF 9-12pm or by appt.

Number: (601) 979-4309

Main Office: (601) 979-2426

Required Course Materials:

Textbook: *Accents: A Manual for Actors* by Robert Blumenfeld

Accompanist (\$10) and sheet music (\$5)

A three-ring binder for class materials, which include: syllabus, notes, evaluations, music, handouts and scripts.

Prerequisites: DR 201, 202, 204

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Advanced Acting is the study and practice of the art of acting. This course will focus on applying acting principles while working on accents and preparing song auditions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Jackson State University functions as a community of learners wherein teaching, research, and service are central to its total learning environment. The University embraces the core values of tradition, accountability, learning, nurturing, service, and responsibility. At the completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Perform physical exercises designed to prepare the actor's body, mind and voice.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in a variety of accents utilizing them in performance.
5. Choose, analyze and prepare for the song audition process.
6. Demonstrate a greater understanding of acting terminology.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will develop and practice skills in interpreting and performing texts.
4. Students will be able to analyze and apply Stanislavski's system of realistic acting toward actor preparation and character development.
3. Students will be able to critique, summarize and assess productions from an acting, and design perspective.

METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION & GRADING SCALE

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Quiz I	50	A = 900-1000
Quiz II	50	B = 800-889
Song Audition Workshop	50	C = 700-799
Song Audition Performance w/Character Analysis	100	D = 600-699
Cockney Monologue w/Scored Script & Character Analysis	100	F = 599 & Below
African Monologue w/Scored Script & Character Analysis	100	
Actor Play Report (<i>Spring Production - The Glass Menagerie</i>)	50	
Senior Play Productions /Dept. Workshop (2 @ 25 pts each)	50	
Warm ups (2x25)	50	
Daily Participation	100	
Mid—term – Standard British Accent w/Scored Script & Character Analysis	150	
Final – Special Project (Any accent of your choice, scored script & character analysis)	150	
Total	1000	

Method of Course Evaluation: Jackson State University Student Instructional Rating System (SIRS) and Faculty evaluation.

Caveat: The professor may make additional assignments throughout the course and/or provide an opportunity for the student to earn bonus points.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Quiz I & II	
	Students will be quizzed on acting terminology & sight-reading/breathing process for song auditions.
Song Audition Workshop	
	Students will receive guided instruction from accompanist & professor while working on their song auditions. Students should be off book & prepared to sing and discuss their song and musical.
Song Audition Performance w/Character Analysis	
	Students will perform 16 -25 bars of a song with scored script in preparation for professional song auditions. Usually 1 minute long.
Cockney Accent w/Scored Script & Character Analysis	
	Students will perform a 1 minute monologue using a Standard British accent. Written work should include a character analysis.
African Monologue w/Scored Script & Character Analysis	
	Students will perform a 1 minute monologue using an African accent. Written work should include a typed character analysis.
Actor Play Report (1)	
	Students are required to attend <u>one</u> departmental production in order to foster interest and appreciation for the dramatic art. Play report forms will be provided.
Midterm – Standard British w/ Scored Script & Character Analysis	
	Students will perform a 1 minute monologue using a Standard British accent. Written work should include a typed scored script and character analysis.
Play Production/Any Dept. Workshop	
	Students are required to attend two department activities that serve to mature them as practitioners and art advocates. Observations and questions will be discussed during class.
Warm ups	
	Students are required to lead the class in two 5min. warm ups, in order to prepare the actor's mind, body and voice. Guidelines for this assignment will be provided by Professor.
Daily Participation	
	Students will be expected to participate with a positive attitude. A perfect and punctual attendance in itself will result in a B+ grade for participation; to receive an A requires <i>active</i> participation (i.e. comments and questions that reveal thoughtfulness and preparation). If you are shy about speaking in class, <i>please</i> let me know by seeing me during my office hours.
Final – Special Project w/Scored script & Character Analysis	
	Students can choose any accent from text to perform a two partner short scene. Include typed scored script and character analysis

Note: All work should be typed, double-spaced in 12-font times roman. Should also have student name, class and name of assignment.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance is important to achieving your best work in this class. You need to be present to learn and practice skills introduced in class. A student's final grade will be reduced by one letter grade after three absences; the student will receive a grade of F after seven absences. This means that you have been absent too many times to maintain continuity in improvement.

This course will involve a combination of lecture and guided practice exercises. In order to foster a spirited, supportive, and intellectually rigorous community, I expect each student to come to class ready to constructively support your colleagues, to vigorously participate in all in-class discussions/exercises, and to contribute a positive energy, one conducive to promoting a safe environment wherein all members are free to express ideas and thoughts. The choice not to actively participate in discussions will have a negative impact on your final grade.

Dress for maximum freedom and movement. There will be times when you will be lying on and/or rolling around on the floor during warm ups. Bring a towel or mat if you wish. Also be prepared for the room to be either too cold or too warm. Wear a sweatshirt that you can take off as needed. Wear comfortable shoes. Do not wear clothes that restrict your freedom, like tight jeans, low-cut shirts, or jewelry that restricts your freedom, movement or speech. If scene work requires costumes and props – please come prepared to change quickly.

The course requires you to put in work both inside and outside of class. You will get out of it what you put in to it. If you blow it off, it will show in your work. And it will affect your grade and potentially the grade of your classmates. This is not an easy class or a “leisure time” activity; it is, however, very do-able and can be very rewarding and enlightening.

Arrive to class on time. Tardiness is unprofessional and is not fair to your professor or to your classmates. You will have missed class if you are not there for the entire class period. This is, staying for only half the class, coming in 5-10 minutes before the end of class, or consistently coming in 5-10 minutes late does not mean that you attended. Three tardies equal one absence. If you come in after roll has been called, it is your responsibility to let the instructor know at the end of that particular class. Moreover, do not expect the professor to cover any missed material.

If arriving late to class, please enter quietly/quickly when others are working or doing warmups. No need to explain to me why you are late. It is distracting and unfair to your classmates.

LATE WORK POLICY – All work is due as indicated on the course schedule. If a class presentation, performance, quiz is missed, students are allowed to make it up within a reasonable time (within a week). If late work is turned in after the one-week grace period, there will be an automatic 15 percent reduction of grade. Additionally all arrangements for missing work must be made prior to the time the assignment is scheduled. If such arrangements are not made, then no make-up options will be given and students will receive a zero for that assignment. Having a computer or printer problem at the last minute, having a paper due in another class, being involved in production, or wanting to leave early for breaks for whatever reason are not legitimate reasons for late work. Plan ahead.

CLASSROOM CIVILITY

Students are expected to be attentive and respectful. That includes raising hands to ask a question or share an opinion, and to refrain from shouting at your peers if you feel you are not being heard or understood.

Additionally, such respect involves arriving on time to class, silencing and putting away all cellphones/smartphones, putting away earphones, refraining from side conversations (including text messaging), keeping outside reading material stored away, and staying awake. If you feel tired, excuse yourself and splash water over your face. I will not allow you to sit dozing off. I will deduct participation points (5pts daily) from those who engage in disruptive or disrespectful behavior of any kind. Sleeping/slouching or keeping earphones in even though the device is turned off is a disruptive behavior. If behavior continues student will be asked to leave. Students often use their phones to set date reminders and the like; please write down reminders on paper in class. You are free to add them to your electronic devices at a later time.

Your Professor is expected to give you constructive feedback for the assignments. If you are not in agreement with the feedback or would like to further discuss any comments, you do so at your Professor's assigned office hours or by appointment. Any disagreement expressed outside of office hours that may appear disrespectful and/or threatening to your professor and classmates will be immediately reported campus security and appropriate actions(s) will be taken.

Avoid making racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our classroom community.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS CLASS

Come to class and turn in assignments on time. Just doing the quizzes and attending the plays will not earn you a passing grade.

Take responsibility for your performances in the class throughout the semester. It's your responsibility to make sure that I have received your written assignments. Finals week is too late to fix problems (like a character analysis you thought you handed in two months ago but that didn't actually get to me).

Let me know if you have questions or concerns. I don't know if you're upset or confused about something until you tell me. I am eager to address frustrations or questions, but I rely on you to make me aware of them.

SPECIAL NEEDS LEARNERS

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and the Office of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator and Compliance Officer, P.O. Box 17999, Jackson, MS 39217, telephone (601) 979-3704 as early as possible in the term.

ACADEMIC HONESTY STATEMENT

All acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarizing or presenting another person's work as one's own, having another person write one's paper, fabricating research data, presenting excuses which are untrue for failing to meet academic and professional standards) are a violation of University Policy, which will entail appropriate penalties.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Jackson State University is committed to creating a community that affirms and welcomes persons from diverse backgrounds and experiences and supports the realization of their human potential. We recognize that there are differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic area. All persons are encouraged to respect the individual differences of others.

GRIEVANCES

Any student who has a grievance and/or complaint must first discuss the grievance and/or complaint with the professor. If there is no resolution at the student/professor level, the student can then address his/her complaints through the appropriate channels of administration:

Coordinator of Theatre Studies: Dr. Nadia Bodie-Smith (Rm 105 Rose E McCoy Building)

Department Chair: Dr. Mark G. Henderson (Rm 101A, Rose McCoy 979-2426)

Dean Liberal Arts Dr. Mario Azevedo (Liberal Arts Building, 979-2096)

REFERENCES

- Benedetti, Robert. *The Actor in You: Sixteen Steps to Understanding the Art of Acting*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2000.
- Bogart, Anne and Tina Landau. *A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*. New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2005.
- Cohen, Robert. *Acting One/Acting Two*. 5th edition. New York: McGraw Hill, 2008.

CLASSICS

- Hagen, Uta. *A Challenge for the Actor*. Simon & Schuster, 1991.
- Spolin, Viola. *Improvisation for the Theatre: A Handbook of Teaching and Directing Techniques* 3rd Ed. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1999.
- Stanislavski, Constantin. *An Actor Prepares*. Trans. Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1948.
- Stanislavski, Constantin. *Creating a Role*. Trans. Elizabeth Reynolds Hapgood. New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1961.

MUSIC

- Walter, Richards. Ed. *The Singer's Musical Theatre Anthology*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corp. 2000.
(These anthologies have numerous volumes for mezzo soprano, belter, tenor, baritone/bass)

WEBSITES

- www.musicaltheatreaudition.com
www.stageagent.com
www.backstage.com
www.rhapsody.com
www.youtube.com (Youtube has many student recordings of your chosen song audition)

For additional research options see reading list on department website.
www.jsums.edu/speechandtheatre

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

(Note: Schedule is subject to change throughout the semester at the professor's discretion).

Date	Daily	Due
WEEK 1		
M Jan 14	Course Introductions/ Syllabus	
W Jan 16	Warm-ups/ Choose Audition Songs	Glass Menagerie Auditions / HW: Look up song performances on youtube.com
WEEK 2		
M Jan 21	Martin Luther King Jr. HOLIDAY –no class	HW: Begin learning song
W Jan 23	Warm-ups /Editing the Song Audition	HW: Learn Song/ Seniors attend URITA Auditions Jan. 22-25
WEEK 3		
M Jan 28	Warm ups/ Lecture:Acting Terminology (Before Time, Stan 1- 5)	MADD DRAMA Week 25-31
W Jan 30	Warm-ups / Lecture: Acting Terminology (Stan 6-10)	HW: Review Acting Terminology for Quiz I on Monday
WEEK 4		
M Feb 4	Warm ups/ Quiz I / (Goals,Obstacles,Tactics)	KCACTF begins Feb 3-7^h Albany Georgia
W Feb 6	Warm ups/ Lecture: Breath Process for the Singer/Staging Song	H/W: Learn song/Prep for Quiz II
WEEK 5		
M Feb 11	Warmups/ Quiz II / Accompanist works w/ students (Session 1)	H/W: Continue working on staging song /Pass out Brit. mono.
W Feb 13	Warmups/Accompanist works with students (Session 2)	HW: Continue working on staging song/Watch movie w/accnt
WEEK 6		
M Feb 18	Warmups/Accompanist works with students (Session 3)	Song Auditions: Wed. Feb. 18 in class/ HW: Read chap. 1
W Feb 20	Song Audition Performance	H/W: Read British Accent chapter
WEEK 7		
M Feb 25	Warmups/ Lecture: Standard British Accent	H/W: Score script with IPA and workable units
W Feb 27	Warm ups/ Lecture: Standard British Accent	H/W: Practice British monologue, turn in written work for accent Glass Menagerie begins Fri. Feb. 27 - Mar. 2
WEEK 8		
M Mar 1	Harmonica Warmups/ British Accent Workshop	HW: Complete Glass Menagerie Play Report Due Wed.
W Mar 3	MDTERM - Standard British Performance/ Play Report Due	
WEEK 9		
M Mar 5	SPRING BREAK	H/W: Read Cockney Accent chapter / Watch movies with accent
W Mar 7	SPRING BREAK	H/W: Begin scoring Cockney script
WEEK 10		
M Mar 10	Nkosha Warm ups/ Lecture: Cockney Accent/Pass out African Scene	H/W: Practice Cockney/ Continue Scoring script
W Mar 12	Warm ups/ Lecture: Cockney Accent	H/W: Practice Cockney/ do character analysis/ USITT Mar 18-21
WEEK 11		
M Mar 15	NADS A Conference - No class	NADS A Conference Mar. 25-28
W Mar 17	NADS A Conference - No class	NADS A Conference Mar. 25-28
WEEK 12		
M Mar 20	Warmups/ Cockney Accent Workshop	HW: Watch movie with African accent/Score script
W Apr 1	Warmups/ Cockney Accent Performance	HW:Continue scoring script for African / Easter Break April 3-6

[illegible]

Advanced Acting

Name: _____

WARM-UP PROJECT EVALUATION (total points- 25)

You will devise a warm-up routine for the voice, body and mind. You will be responsible for conducting the vocal warm-up, a physical warm-up and a focusing activity for the class. You may use warm-ups from other texts, or from my leadership of them in prior classes, or you can be creative and make one up. You will lead the entire class through your determined “best” warm-up. You may be asked to justify your decisions, so really think about WHY you have chosen certain things and excluded others. The length of the warm-up presentation should be 5 minutes. Time yourself and plan the time distribution and the leading of your activity well. If your warm-up is too short, points will be deducted from your grade. If it is too long, I will ask you to stop and points will also be deducted from your grade.

Preparation/: _____/5pts
Completion of Requirements

Organization/: _____/5pts
Time

Attention to Details/: _____/25pts
Focus

Leadership/: _____/5pts
Motivation

Communication/: _____/5pts
Articulation

TOTAL POINTS: _____

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Name _____ Character _____ Play _____

Instructions:

Analysis should be 2-3 pages long, 12 font times roman. Arrange your responses in the same format below.

Answer all questions in the first person ("I"). Be positive--do not qualify information.

Use descriptive quotations from the text whenever possible to answer points--they are direct textual clues, so let them work for you.

Whenever you cannot give information that comes from the text, imagine the answers. Put facts first, and then label as "Fabrication" everything else you choose to fill in the gaps with your imagination and information inferred from the playwright.

I. Character's Given Circumstances (1pt each)

- A. Write about the character's family life prior to the beginning of the play and during the life of the play. (You may need to fabricate much of this information)
- B. Further background information (do you get along with your siblings?)
- C. Economic background (Are you from a rich family or have you always struggled financially?)
- D. Religious background (Are you Baptist? Do you like going to church?)
- E. Social background (Do you date or are you married? Who are your friends?)
- F. Super-objective for the entire play. (What your character wants the most)
- G. Do you have other (secondary) objectives as well? If so, what are they?
- H. What obstacles exist that might keep you from accomplishing your goals?
- I. What strategies do you use to accomplish or to try to accomplish your objective(s)?
- J. What is the moment of greatest emotional intensity (the high point, climax) for you in this play and why?
- K. What character traits do you want the audience to perceive about you? (Choose 7 GOOD adjectives)

II. Character's Physical characteristics (2pts each)

- A. Exact age (date and place of birth)
- B. Health (Probably a fabrication: Eg. when did you last see a doctor & why?)

III. Character's Movement (type and quality of) (2pts each)

- A. How does your character habitually walk, sit, stand, and gesture? What do these habits reveal about the character? (Are you conservative or had no etiquette training?)
- B. Describe the physicality of your character through the following:
 - Physical weight: heavy/light (How does your body move? Do you sit down heavily, walk on your toes?)
 - Tempo: fast/slow (Do you saunter slowly and walk erratically (fast) in general?)
 - Rhythm: regular/erratic (What is your general rhythm in the way that you walk and talk?)
 - Movement: direct/indirect (Do you walk directly to your destination or to people or indirectly?)
- C. Name one strong animal image for tempo/rhythm (and perhaps pitch)

IV. Emotional characteristics (2pts each)

- A. Polar attitudes (How does the character change?)
- B. Describe the character's attitudes and outlooks at the beginning of the play and compare them to those at the end of the play--they are probably different

V. The Character's Future (2pts each)

- A. Visualize a day in your character's life one year from the time of the play with all his or her expectancies fulfilled. What does he or she hope other people will become? What is the "ideal possible future?"

Advanced Acting
Play Report Form
Total points (50)

Name: _____

Note: Report must be handed in no later than two class periods after the performance.

I saw the play on (date) _____

The play's title was _____

The playwright's name was _____

CHOOSE TWO OF THE PROMINENT ACTORS IN THE PLAY.

1. The first actor named _____ played the character
named _____.

2. This character's *super objective* was: To

3. The actor established the character's posture, walk and gestures by:

4. What did the actor do that was most striking and effective?

5. What did the actor do that was ineffective and/or least impressive?

6. The second actor named _____ played the character
named _____.

7. This character's *super objective* was: To

8. The actor established the character's posture, walk and gestures by:

9. What did the actor do that was most striking and effective?

10. What did the actor do that was ineffective and/or least impressive?

Bonus: What did you learn from these actors? (5pts)
