

SE '00  
fny

**Spring 2000**  
**Chaminade University - Kaneohe MCBH**  
**DRAMA 205- Acting Workshop**

**Instructor: Justina T. Mattos**

**Phone: 293-1277 hm. / 226-8334 cell.**

**e-mail: jmattos@hawaii.edu**

**Class Location:**

**Class Hours: Thursdays 5:30-9:40 pm**

**Office Hours & Location:**

**Course Objectives:**

This course is open to all Chaminade students; it has no prerequisites and no previous acting experience is necessary. Through this course students will gain a basic understanding of the principles of acting through improvisation, theatrical exercises, monologues and scene work.

**Requirements:**

Although ~~this class~~ does not require a ~~textbook~~ or a great deal of ~~writing~~, it does require personal discipline and collaborative commitment. Theatre is a highly collaborative art form in which each participant is dependent upon many other people to make the whole thing work. In an acting class, at least one other person (and usually more) depend on you to be totally present and prepared for class. This necessitates the following requirements:

**Attendance:**

Perfect attendance is your goal. Missed acting classes are impossible to make up, so absence or tardiness is strongly discouraged. After 2 absences, your final grade will automatically be lowered one full letter grade and will continue to go down for each additional absence. ALWAYS make certain that both your instructor and your scene or project partners know prior to class if you will not be there. Being late for class 3 times constitutes 1 absence. You will also be required to meet outside of class with scene and project partners, so be prepared to give time for this.

**Clothing:**

Dress for maximum freedom of movement. You will be sitting, lying, sometimes rolling on the floor, so dress accordingly. Wear flexible shoes or remove shoes for exercises. If this requires you to bring a change of clothing, do so. If your monologue or scene requires special clothing, come prepared for quick changes.

**Supplies - - Always bring to class the following:**

- Your syllabus
- something to take notes on
- a calendar for scheduling
- a pencil with eraser
- a copy of your scene/monologue (once these have been chosen)
- any necessary props or costumes for your monologue/scene work
- an open mind and enthusiastic attitude

**Reading and Writing Expectations:**

Each student will be required to read a minimum of two plays for this class: the play from which their monologue is selected and the play which contains their final scene. Students will be expected to turn in a type-written paper on each of these two plays. The instructor will provide you with a handout explaining the details of this writing assignment. In the process of searching for the perfect monologue and scene to perform, some students may end up reading many more than two plays. Students can earn extra credit points for this extra reading by turning in a type-written report on each play they have read, utilizing the same format that is used for the required reports.

**Some Suggested Sources to get you started:**

- Beard, Jocelyn. *The Best Men's Stage Monologues of 1990*. Newbury, VT: Smith & Kraus, 1991.
- Beard, Jocelyn. *The Best Women's Stage Monologues of 1992*. (Also available 1990 or 1991). Newbury, VT: Smith & Kraus, 1993.
- Beard, Jocelyn & Kristin Graham. *The Best Stage Scenes for Men From the 1980's*. Newbury, VT: Smith & Kraus, 1991.
- Beard, Jocelyn & Kristin Graham. *The Best Stage Scenes for Women From the 1980's*. Newbury, VT: Smith & Kraus, 1991.
- Handman, Wynn. *Modern American Scenes for Student Actors*. NY: Bantam Books, 1980.
- Heniford, Lewis W. & Samuel Elkind. *1121314 For the Show: A Guide to Small-Cast One-Act Plays*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1995.
- Hooks, Ed. *The Ultimate Scene and Monologue Sourcebook*. NY: Back Stage Books, 1994.
- Schulman, Michael & Eva Mekler. *The Actor's Scenebook*. NY: Bantam Books, 1984.
- Shengold, Nina. *The Actor's Book of Contemporary Stage Monologues*. NY: Penguin Books, 1987.
- Small-Cast One-Act Guide Online*. <http://www2.scescape.com/heniford/welcome.htm>

**Grading:**

Occasionally written assignments are given, but most assignments are performance oriented. The largest of these are the monologue, which is equivalent to your midterm exam/performance, and the two-person scene, which is equivalent to your Final exam/performance. Late assignments will not be accepted unless previous arrangements have been made with the instructor. Grading will not be based on "talent," but rather on commitment, discipline, respect for the art, and an honest effort to grow as an artist. Your work will be evaluated as equally as possible in the following areas: participation in class and with partners} outside of class, growth, written work, and performance. Take the initiative to make the instructor aware of your effort and progress. As explained above, attendance can have a substantial impact upon your overall grade, so make the effort to come to class on time every time. Your work during the term will be graded according to the following points scale: 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, 59&below=F Your final grade for the semester will be one of the following:

- A** Outstanding teamwork and creativity, and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative.
- B** Superior work done in a consistent and intelligent manner.
- C** Average grade indicating a competent grasp of the subject matter and an adequate degree of creative effort.
- D** Inferior work of the lowest passing grade.
- F** Failure to grasp the minimum of the subject material; no credit given. This grade is also given for failure to withdraw officially from the course.
- I** Incomplete. Student has been unable, for a valid reason, to complete the course work according to the assigned schedule. The issuance of an "I" grade is not automatic. Prior to reporting of grades a contract must be made between the student and the instructor for the completion of the course. Sufficient time must be allowed to permit completion of the work, evaluation, and reporting of the final grade within 90 days after the end of the term. This limit may not be extended. If a new grade is not submitted by the instructor prior to the deadline, the alternate grade (indicated in the contract) will be recorded.

### Course Outline/Schedule:

Aril 6	Course Introduction, theatrical improvisations - "getting to know you"
Aril 13	Monologue choices due, theatrical improvisations - building ensemble
Aril 20	Character Bio ra h due; monologue work and improvisations
Aril 27	Play Report due, Off-Book Monologue "dress rehearsal" with class feedback
May 4	Midterm - Monologue Performances
May 11	improvisations, discuss final scenes, choosing a scene partner
May 18	Scene choices due, improvisational exercises
May 25	Character Biography due, scene work an improvisations
June 1	Play Report due, Off-Book scene "dress rehearsal" with class feedback Last day to turn in an Extra Credit work
June 8	Final Scene Performances

### Guidelines for Written Work:

#### General Instructions:

1. Papers should be typed, double-spaced. If using a computer, use font size 12.
2. In the upper left corner of the first page include the following information:  
Your name  
Couse name  
Instructor's name  
Type of assignment
3. Provide an interesting title to grab the reader's attention. The title should be centered at the top of the first page, below the obligatory information in the upper left corner and above the body of your paper
4. Always proof-read for spelling, grammar and punctuation before turning in your work.
5. Turn your work in *on-time*. *You* are welcome to turn your work in *early* for feedback and the opportunity to re-write for a higher grade before the due date.

#### "Play Report" Assignment:

Read the entire play that your monologue/scene is from and type (double spaced) a 2 to 4 page paper covering the following points:

- 1) Give a 1 to 2 paragraph summary of the events of the entire play.
- 2) Choose one character to focus on, and describe everything that this character says about him/her self. Provide at least one quote as an example.
- 3) Discuss everything that other characters or the stage directions say about your character. Provide at least one quote to support what you are saying.
- 4) Write at least one paragraph on your own thoughts about the character - - things you have discovered by reading "between the lines" of the text.
- 5) List three questions that you still have about the character.

The Course Outline/Schedule above shows when the final version of this paper is due. If you choose to turn it in before *YOUR* due date you have the opportunity to receive feed-back and do revisions on it before the final version is due, which can help you to get a better grade.

**Extra Credit:**

The best way to learn to fully appreciate theatre is to experience it outside of the classroom. For this reason there are a variety of Extra Credit options available to you. With 5 extra credit points you can raise your final grade by a full letter. Fewer than 5 extra credit points will not have such a substantial impact on your grade, but can help to give your grade the boost it needs if you are on the borderline. The extra credit options are:

1 point	-	Reading a play and writing a <i>Play Report</i> beyond the two required for this course.
1 point	-	Seeing a play and writing an <i>Acting Critique</i> .
3 points	-	Acting in a play (Instructor must approve this for extra credit).
2 points	-	Off-stage participation in a play (Instructor must approve this for extra credit).

Your work must be at B level (80 points) or above in order to receive an extra credit point. In other words: shoddy, careless work thrown together at the last minute will probably not earn you an extra credit point and are therefore probably not worth bothering to do. Remember that no extra credit work will be accepted after June 1st.

**Play Report (extracredit):**

If you choose to write additional Play Reports for Extra Credit, follow the same format as outlined above for the required Play Reports. Extra Credit Play Reports should be on full-length plays. Two one-act plays can be equivalent to one full-length play as long as you write a separate paper on each one-act play.)

**Acting Critique (extracredit):**

Watch a play and write a 2-4 page paper focusing on the acting of 1 actor in the play. Evaluate their performance based on what you have learned in class and your own life experience. Consider the following points:

1. Was the performer believable in this role? Why or why not? How does the actor use physical appearance/costume to enhance their role?
2. How did the actor use his/her body and voice to reveal the character's Given Circumstances: age, health, personality, social status, emotional/mental state, etc.?
3. What was the actor's level of concentration and/or kind of energy in performance? Was the actor's pace and timing appropriate for the character and situation?
4. What did the actor bring to his/her role that was not provided by the playwright? You should not focus on the playwright's work: HOW something is said or done is more important than WHAT is said or done since the actor generally provides the "how" to the playwright's "what."
5. Did the actor use a particular gesture or bit of business that told you something important about his/her character? Explain.
6. How did the actor handle entrances and exits? Were they appropriate to the scene?
7. How did the actor reveal the hidden dimensions of the character, if any?
8. What did this character want? (What was his/her objective?) Did the actor understand and pursue this?
9. Did you as an audience member care about the character?
10. If the actor played more than one role, how did s/he differentiate between them?