

## **THEA 1103: Acting for Everyone**

Instructor: Professor RJ Magee

Classroom: B118

Office: B107

Class Hours: MWF 10-10:50 AM

Office Hours:

MWF 11 AM-12 PM, TTH 1-2 PM

Email: richard.magee@msutexas.edu

Text & Materials:  
The Great Acting Teachers and Their Methods  
by  
Richard Brestoff  
(full text is available for free on D2L)

Changes in the course syllabus, procedures, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor. You will be notified of any changes as they occur. Continued enrollment in the course constitutes a formal agreement to abide by all policies and procedures that are outlined in the syllabus.

Course Description:

THEA 1103: Fundamentals of acting movement, vocalization, and scene work for anyone interested in Acting. Also allows the student to analyze, understand and explore the methods taught by major acting teachers.

Objectives:

- Appreciate the craft of acting as both an individual and collaborative art form
- Analyze, understand and explore the methods taught by major acting teachers
- Develop research skills necessary to create a character who may be from a different time, place, culture, and lifestyle than the student
- Master specific vocabulary used in acting
- Understand the discipline and commitment required to be a professional actor
- Analyze acting in live theatrical productions in oral and written formats
- Understand these basic acting principles and how to apply them to the student's choice of career or lifestyle.

## **POLICIES**

- Always arrive on time and be prepared to stay the entire time scheduled for the course. This is a performance-based class. Attendance and punctuality are mandatory. The work of this course primarily happens during class time and cannot be made up privately. Tardiness is extremely disruptive and disrespectful to the creative process in an acting class. If you are more than 10 minutes late or leave more than 10 minutes before the end of class, you will be counted absent for that day.
  
- All outside assignments are due on or before the assigned due date at the beginning of class. No late work will be accepted without prior approval or official documentation.
  
- It is the responsibility of the student to keep all graded assignments if a grade is questioned.
  
- Correct English and grammar are necessary for all assignments.
  
- Dishonest work on any assignment or exam will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's thoughts, words, ideas, or lines of argument in your own work without appropriate documentation. Disciplinary action will be taken if the instructor discovers dishonesty or cheating. The instructor reserves the right to drop any student engaging in academic dishonesty from this course. Students dropped from the course by the instructor for failure to attend classes or for academic dishonesty may receive an F for the semester.
  
- Students with disabilities or special needs should see the instructor as early in the semester as possible. Please note that in order to qualify for consideration of special accommodations, the student must be registered with Disability Support Services (Room 168 of the Clark Student Center 397-4140) and the instructor must receive a memo on file from that office, along with a Special Accommodations Request form.
  
- Each student is expected to read and to adhere to the academic standards laid out in the online Student Handbook.
  
- In accordance with Federal Privacy Laws, a student's personal information is protected. As an instructor, it is unlawful for the professor to share your personal information (including grades with anyone without a legal "need to know" unless the professor has your written consent. This means the professor cannot discuss your grades with your parents. If you have questions about your grades or have forgotten the grading policy for the course, please visit the professor during office hours.
  
- When you enter the classroom, turn your cell phone OFF. In case of emergency, the professor will have a cell phone at hand. If outside commitments are so pressing that they cannot wait until the end of the class session, it may be in the student's best interests to reconsider the priority being placed on being in this class.

- In this class, you will be exposed to variety of concepts. Some of these concepts may challenge ideas and beliefs that you have long held. This is the nature of education. Social justice is one of MSU's stated core values, and the professor considers the classroom to be a place where students will be treated with respect as human beings, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age or ability. It is the professor's expectation that ALL students be able to consider the classroom a safe environment.

- Senate Bill 11 passed by the 84th Texas Legislature allows licensed handgun holders to carry concealed handguns on campus, effective August 1, 2016. Areas excluded from concealed carry are appropriately marked, in accordance with state law. Participating in theatre classes often requires students to leave their backpacks/purses and work with other students during class. This required activity may also make concealment of a firearm difficult. While concealed carry is not prohibited in any area other than the scene shop in the Fain Fine Arts Center B wing, students are reminded that intentional display of a firearm is a violation of university policies and may result in disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion from the university. Students should factor the above in their decision as to whether or not to concealed carry in theatre classes.

Excerpts from the Theatre Student Handbook, 11th ed. pp. 4-5:

- No smoking, eating, or drinking will take place in the main theatre auditorium or studio theatre at any time.
- The Theatre Department wing of the Lamar D. Fain Fine Arts Center is without doubt one of the most beautiful, functional, and well-equipped theatre facilities in the world. We maintain the building by picking up after ourselves and by using the facility and equipment carefully.
- The greenroom will be checked continually; any and all items (shoes, coats, purses, books, etc) left lying around will be disposed of.
- The Department of Theatre will in no way be responsible for theft or loss of personal property. There are small lockers available for your use underneath the large worktables in the scene shop. The students using the lockers will supply locks.

## GENERAL NOTES:

1. No food or drinks allowed in class except bottled water.
2. Turn all electronic devices OFF.
3. Please do not bring a laptop to class in order to take notes. I promise you that, when it comes to note taking, you will retain more of this course's content via the mind/body connection of manually writing out your notes via the traditional method of a pen (or pencil) and paper.
4. Wear comfortable clothing suitable for movement and floor work. If you are dressed inappropriately, you will not be able to take part in class and it will affect your participation grade.
5. All written assignments must be typed and formatted with the following guidelines:
  - a. Plain white paper / 8.5 x 11
  - b. 1" margins on all four sides
  - c. Double-spaced
  - d. Times New Roman, 12 pt. font
  - e. Papers less than the required length will lose points.
6. Hate speech, of any form, is not allowed in the course at any time.
7. Full costumes and realistic props are not required for monologues and scenes. However, you are to dress appropriately for a role. For example, a lawyer delivering a final summation in court would not deliver it in sweats and a t-shirt. You will find that dressing appropriately and having a prop to represent important objects in a scene or monologue will help you "get into character." Points will be deducted from the scores of monologues and scenes for inappropriate dress or a lack of necessary props.
8. When attending theatre performances and class: **arrive on time**, be attentive, be quiet, and be respectful.

## ASSIGNMENTS

**Monologue.** You will select, memorize & prepare a 60 second (minimum) monologue from a television show, movie, or play of your choice. You will perform in front of the class, receive direction/critique, revise and return for a final graded performance. You are required to upload a digital copy of your monologue to D2L on or before the date when the selection is finalized.

**Assessment for Social Responsibility.** The students under the guidance of the professor, will develop an example of political theatre. This social construct will be based on the students' awareness of political theatre and their engagement through empathy, openness and communication in the development of the construct.

The students' empathy, openness and communication will be evaluated using the AAUP Intercultural Knowledge rubric. More info to come later in the semester...

**Event Critique.** You will attend two productions of plays performed by the Midwestern State University Theatre Department. The guidelines for these two papers are available on D2L under the Assignments module. These papers must be submitted via hard copy at the beginning of class on the assignment's due date. Virtual submissions will not be accepted.

The MSU Texas Fall 2024 production dates are:

**Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play**

**October 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM**

**11<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM**

**12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM**

**13<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 PM**

**The Thanksgiving Play**

**November 20<sup>th</sup> at 4 PM**

**21<sup>st</sup> at 7:30 PM**

**22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 PM**

**23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 PM**

**24<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 PM**

Information regarding ticket reservations will be forthcoming. Performances are held on the MSU mainstage in the Fain Fine Arts Building.

**Group Scene Presentation.** The professor will assign small teams of students to rehearse and perform a scene performance together. With your group, you will

- Choose or be given a scene that contains two or more characters
- Research the play, characters, and all needed material to create the performance of your scene. To do so, please review the history and summaries of the acting techniques from the textbook, their historical context, justify why you chose to use them, and employ these as needed throughout your preparation of the scene. This presentation should employ the use of visual aids.
- Rehearse and perform the scene for the class on your designated days.

**Exams & Quizzes.** There will be a mid-term exam and a final exam covering lecture and in-class concepts, discussions, guest artists, reading assignments, and vocabulary during the semester.

#### Grading

Participation: 125 points

Upload copy of monologue on D2L: 25 points

Monologue Performance: 150 points

Event Critique #1: 100 points

Political activity/performance: 150 points

Event Critique #2: 100 points

Mid-Term: 100 points

Group Scene/Presentation: 150 points

Final Exam: 100 points

Total available points: 1000

#### Grading Scale

1000-934 A

933-900 A-

899-867 B+

866-834 B

833-800 B-

799-767 C+

766-734 C

733-700 C-

699-667 D+

666-634 D

633-600 D-

599-0 F

**Attendance/ Participation/ In-Class Exercises:** Regular attendance is mandatory and punctuality is of the utmost importance in the Theatre.

You are allowed **3** unexcused absences without penalty. **After three unexcused absences (10% of the course), your final grade will drop by one letter grade.** Your final grade will continue to drop by one letter grade after each subsequent absence.

**Attendance will be taken promptly at the beginning of every class.** If you expect to be more than 10 minutes late do not come to class. It is disruptive to your classmates.

**Three tardies will equal one absence.** Only true, honest, documented medical, and family emergencies are acceptable excused absences at the discretion of the Instructor.

**CLASS SCHEDULE / Acting for Everyone / Fall 2024**

**Instructor: Professor Richard Magee**

*Always come to class dressed appropriately and ready to be on your feet! Acting is doing!*

*Class schedule is SUBJECT TO CHANGE.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Time</b>	<b>Reading Due</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
<b>WEEK ONE</b>			
<u>Aug 26<sup>th</sup></u>	Introductions		
<u>Aug 28<sup>th</sup></u>	Syllabus, Monologue and Short Story Group Assignments Begin Lecturing on Acting Techniques		
<u>Aug 30<sup>th</sup></u>	Begin Short Stories, acting exercises		<b>Short Story Due (Group 1)</b>
<b>WEEK TWO</b>			
<u>Sept 2<sup>nd</sup></u>	NO CLASS		
<u>Sept 4<sup>th</sup></u>	Library Visit		
<u>Sept 6<sup>th</sup></u>	Second Day of Short Stories		<b>Reading due: Chapter 1 Short Story Due (Group 2)</b>
<b>WEEK THREE</b>			
<u>Sept 9<sup>th</sup></u>	Finish short stories Begin table work (Group 1)		<b>Short Story Due (Group 3) Choice of 1st Monologue Due Upload Selection to D2L by 10 AM</b>
<u>Sept 11<sup>th</sup></u>	Continue monologue table work (Group 2)		
<u>Sept 13<sup>th</sup></u>	Conclude monologue table work (Group 3)		<b>Reading due: Chapter 2</b>
<b>WEEK FOUR</b>			
<u>Sept 16<sup>th</sup></u>	Group 1 monologue coaching off-book		<b>Memorization deadline (Group 1)</b>
<u>Sept 18<sup>th</sup></u>	Group 2 monologue coaching off-book		<b>Memorization deadline (Group 2)</b>
<u>Sept 20<sup>th</sup></u>	Group 3 monologue coaching off-book.		<b>Memorization deadline (Group 3) Reading due: Chapter 3</b>
<b>WEEK FIVE</b>			
<u>Sept 23<sup>rd</sup></u>	Group 1 monologue coaching		
<u>Sept 25<sup>th</sup></u>	Group 2 monologue coaching		
<u>Sept 27<sup>th</sup></u>	Group 3 monologue coaching		<b>Reading due: Chapter 4</b>

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**WEEK SIX**

Sept 30<sup>th</sup> Final Monologue Final Performances  
All of Group 1 and half of Group 2

Oct 2<sup>nd</sup> Final Monologue Final Performances  
Half of group 2 and all of Group 3

Oct 4<sup>th</sup> Final monologue performance reflections and discussion  
**Reading due: Chapter 5**

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**WEEK SEVEN**

Oct 7<sup>th</sup> Begin watching *Notes From The Field*

Oct 9<sup>th</sup> Conclude watching *Notes From The Field*

Oct 11<sup>th</sup> Discuss *Notes From The Field*  
Begin creating political performance

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**WEEK EIGHT**

Oct 14<sup>th</sup> Discuss *Mr. Burns*  
**Production Critique of *Mr. Burns* due via hard copy by beginning of class**

Oct 16<sup>th</sup> **Midterm exam**, continue working on political performance(s)

Oct 18<sup>th</sup> Continue working on political performance(s)  
**Reading due: Chapter 6**

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**WEEK NINE**

Oct 21<sup>st</sup> Continue working on political performance(s), assign scene partners

Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> Continue working on political performance(s)

Oct 25<sup>th</sup> Final presentation of political performances  
**Reading due: Chapter 7**

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**WEEK TEN**

Oct 28<sup>th</sup> Scene table work (Group 1)

Oct 30<sup>th</sup> Scene table work (group 2)

Nov 1<sup>st</sup> Scene table work (Group 3) **Reading due: Chapter 8**



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**WEEK ELEVEN**

<u>Nov 4<sup>th</sup></u>	Scene Workshop (Group 1) In class Coaching session	<b>Memorization deadline (Group 1)</b>
<u>Nov 6<sup>th</sup></u>	Scene Workshop (Group 2) In class Coaching session	<b>Memorization deadline (Group 2)</b>
<u>Nov 8<sup>th</sup></u>	Scene Workshop (Group 3) In class Coaching session	<b>Memorization deadline (Group 3)</b> <b>Reading due: Chapter 9</b>

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**WEEK TWELVE**

<u>Nov 11<sup>th</sup></u>	Scene Workshop (Group 1) In class Coaching session	
<u>Nov 13<sup>th</sup></u>	Scene Workshop (Group 2) In class Coaching session	
<u>Nov 15<sup>th</sup></u>	Scene Workshop (Group 3) In class Coaching session	<b>Reading due: Chapter 10</b>

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**WEEK THIRTEEN**

<u>Nov 18<sup>th</sup></u>	Scene performance/presentations (Group 1)	
<u>Nov 20<sup>th</sup></u>	Scene performance/presentations (Group 2)	
<u>Nov 22<sup>nd</sup></u>	Scene performance/presentations (Group 3)	<b>Reading due: Chapter 11</b>

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**WEEK FOURTEEN**

<u>Nov 25<sup>th</sup></u>	Discuss <i>The Thanksgiving Play</i> <b>Production Critique of <i>The Thanksgiving Play</i> due via hard copy by beginning of class</b>	
<u>Nov 27<sup>th</sup></u>	Thanksgiving break, no class	
<u>Nov 29<sup>th</sup></u>	Thanksgiving break, no class	

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**WEEK FIFTEEN**

<u>Dec 2<sup>nd</sup></u>	Final reflections, makeup day, guest visit, TBA	
<u>Dec 4<sup>th</sup></u>	Final reflections, makeup day, guest visit, TBA	
<u>Dec 6<sup>th</sup></u>	Final reflections, makeup day, guest visit, TBA	

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**WEEK SIXTEEN**

Final exam: date/time TBD