

THAR 14A Course Outline as of Fall 2025

CATALOG INFORMATION

Dept and Nbr: THAR 14A Title: SHAKESPEARE WORKSHOP 1
Full Title: Performance Workshop: Shakespeare 1
Last Reviewed: 4/26/2021

Units		Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	2.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	35.00
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	3.00	8	Lab Scheduled	52.50
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	5.00		Contact Total	87.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 70.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category: AA Degree Applicable
Grading: Grade Only
Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP
Also Listed As:
Formerly: THAR 13.2A

Catalog Description:
Introduction to performing Shakespeare through an exploration of historical context, text analysis, acting theory, and performance techniques. Includes both in-depth monologue and scene work, resulting in a showcase performance open to the public.

Prerequisites/Corequisites:
Course Completion of THAR 10B and Concurrent Enrollment in THAR13.2AL

Recommended Preparation:
Course Completion of THAR 1 OR ENGL 27

Limits on Enrollment:

Schedule of Classes Information:
Description: Introduction to performing Shakespeare through an exploration of historical context, text analysis, acting theory, and performance techniques. Includes both in-depth monologue and scene work, resulting in a showcase performance open to the public. (Grade Only)
Prerequisites/Corequisites: Course Completion of THAR 10B and Concurrent Enrollment in THAR13.2AL

Recommended: Course Completion of THAR 1 OR ENGL 27

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;UC.

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:

AS Degree:	Area			Effective:	Inactive:
CSU GE:	Transfer Area			Effective:	Inactive:
IGETC:	Transfer Area			Effective:	Inactive:
CSU Transfer:	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 2005	Inactive:	
UC Transfer:	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 2005	Inactive:	

CID:

Certificate/Major Applicable:

Certificate Applicable Course

COURSE CONTENT

Student Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain the historical, literary, and cultural forces that shaped Elizabethan theatre and Shakespeare's plays.
2. Analyze Shakespeare scripts utilizing various scansion techniques, vocal awareness terms, and acting theories.
3. Prepare, rehearse and perform Shakespeare scenes, monologues, and sonnets at a beginning classical acting level.
4. Audition for a Shakespeare production, including performing a contrasting monologue package and participating in cold readings.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify the influence of Elizabethan history, literature, and culture on Elizabethan theatrical practices.
2. Identify the influence of Elizabethan history, literature, and culture on Shakespeare's writing.
3. Analyze and score Shakespeare scripts (verse and prose) utilizing terms and scansion techniques.
4. Conduct research and text analysis in preparation for roles from different Shakespeare plays.
5. Translate basic Shakespeare acting theories and analytical concepts into practical application through performance interpretations.
6. Create and sustain the distinct physical, vocal, and behavioral components of multiple Shakespeare characters.
7. Revise and enhance acting choices, objectively incorporating the feedback of others, and utilizing the rehearsal process as a period of creative exploration.
8. Critique the work of others performing Shakespeare, utilizing terms and concepts relating to the style.
9. Select and prepare contrasting Shakespeare audition material that highlights personal skills and casting potential, while adhering to audition criteria.

Topics and Scope:

I. Introduction to Shakespeare

- A. Course introduction and acting professionalism standards
- B. Historical overview
- C. Shakespeare's works
- D. Shakespeare's voice in today's world
- E. Elizabethan vs. modern acting
- F. Research techniques and reference materials
- G. Selecting a script version

II. Approaching Shakespeare

- A. Overcoming anxieties about Shakespeare
- B. Basic structural components
- C. Reading a Shakespeare play

III. Basic Acting Skills Applied to Shakespeare

- A. Objectives, obstacles, actions, and motivations
- B. Substitution, personalization, and instincts
- C. Given and imaginary circumstances
- D. Character archetypes
- E. Acting styles
- F. Rehearsing and critiquing performances

IV. Understanding Shakespeare's Language

- A. Heightened/elevated vs. naturalistic language
- B. Word definitions and spellings
- C. Figures of speech - meaning/usage
- D. Figures of speech - sound
- E. Playing with the language
 - 1. Allusions
 - 2. Puns and wordplay
 - 3. Slang and colloquial expressions
 - 4. Double meanings, entendre, bawdry
 - 5. Syntax, Schemes-unusual arrangements of words
 - 6. Tropes-unusual meanings of words
 - 7. Other organizational devices
- F. Analyzing the punctuation
- G. Identifying operative words

V. Speaking Shakespeare's Verse

- A. Analyzing the metre
 - 1. Defining metric feet and iambic pentameter
 - 2. Variations on iambic pentameter
 - 3. Using the Caesura
 - 4. Utilizing punctuation from the First Folio
- B. Notating scansion
- C. Performance techniques for verse
 - 1. Rhythm, cadence, tempo, pace
 - 2. Phrasing
 - 3. Handling rhyming verse

4. Breathing and breath support
5. Handling line endings

VI. Speaking Shakespeare's Prose

- A. Functions of prose
- B. Interpretation techniques
- C. Verse/prose alternation

VII. Preparing for Performance

- A. Rehearsal and performance process
- B. Scoring the text
- C. Comprehension and rehearsal techniques
- D. Balancing emotional truth and technique
- E. Vocal techniques and characterization
- F. Physical techniques and characterization
 1. Developing the character's body
 2. Supporting the text
 3. Supporting the style
 - a. Elizabethan/Jacobean movement/manners
 - b. Applying other styles to Shakespeare

VIII. Other Shakespeare Performance Techniques

- A. Auditioning for a Shakespeare play
 1. Identifying strengths and casting type
 2. Researching and selecting monologues
 3. Preparing the text
 4. Rehearsing and staging
 5. Handling cold readings
- B. Related areas and further study
 1. Stage combat training
 2. Vocal training
 3. Period music and movement

IX. Preparing for the Showcase

[These topics are introduced in THAR 13.2A and applied in the corequisite course, THAR 13.2AL.]

- A. Rehearsing a composite performance
 1. Order and shape of the performance
 2. Transitional material
 3. Cutting and excerpting
 4. Differentiating multiple characters
- B. Performance techniques
 1. Personal and group warm-ups
 2. Maintaining consistency and focus
 3. Handling nerves
 4. Handling audience responses
 5. Handling the unexpected

All topics above are covered in the lecture and lab portions of the course. Topics are introduced during lecture instruction and actively expanded upon during lab instruction.

Assignment:

Students will complete approximately 4 hours of homework per week. Assignments will include:

1. Reading: 10-40 pages/week (text, scripts, prepared materials), including approx. five Shakespeare plays during the semester. (Optional: Instructor may give 1-3 short quizzes to assess reading comprehension).
2. Written Work and Problem-Solving:
 - A. 1-4 short homework exercises, on subjects such as:
 - Shakespeare research for actors
 - Basic acting analysis
 - Sonnet scansion
 - Figures of speech
 - B. Script scoring and analysis for monologues
 - C. Script scoring and analysis for each scene
 - D. Performance critiques (notes and/or 1-2 page papers critiquing performance work of self and others).
3. Performance Assignments:

Stage, memorize, and perform the following -

 - A. 1-2 Shakespeare sonnets
 - B. 2 contrasting monologues (audition package)
 - C. 2-3 partnered Shakespeare scenes
4. Showcase Preparation - Students are registered for the course corequisite, THAR 13.2AL, which encompasses the evening rehearsals and performances for the course's public Showcase. In preparation, students spend the last weeks of THAR 13.2A participating in the Showcase planning process - working with the instructor to select Showcase material from the semester's work, reviewing and polishing that material, making additional cuts, learning/rehearsing new material (when necessary), and completing related planning tasks.
5. Showcase Analysis - Participate in Showcase follow-up discussion (held during scheduled class meeting during Finals week)
6. Production Viewing (outside of class):
 - A. View 1-2 assigned Shakespeare productions (may be live performance or on video)
 - B. Attend 1-3 Theatre Arts productions (free ticket vouchers provided).
7. Professionalism and Attendance

Adhere to the following standards of acting professionalism throughout the course:

 - A. Arrive promptly and prepared for all class meetings, outside rehearsals, and performances.
 - B. Maintain an amiable and supportive attitude when interacting with other members of the performance ensemble.
 - C. Participate actively in class discussions and exercises.
 - D. Work collaboratively with scene partners.
 - E. Perform each role in a conscientious and dedicated manner.
 - F. Respectfully follow director's instructions in Showcase preparation and maintain that direction in performance.

- G. Strive to maintain good health and safety practices.
- H. Follow the terms of the course syllabus.

All assignments above apply to both the lecture and lab portions of the course.

Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

Writing: Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Written homework, Script/Character Analysis; Performance Critiques

Writing
10 - 20%

Problem Solving: Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

Script scansion and scoring

Problem solving
5 - 15%

Skill Demonstrations: All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

Class performances (scenes and/or monologues); showcase preparation

Skill Demonstrations
60 - 70%

Exams: All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

None

Exams
0 - 0%

Other: Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Professionalism (includes attendance and participation) and optional quiz

Other Category
5 - 10%

Representative Textbooks and Materials:

Acting With Style. 3rd ed. Harrop, John and Epstein, Sabine.

Allyn and Bacon. 2000 (classic)

The Actor And His Text. Berry, Cicely.

Hal Leonard Corp. 2000 (classic)

Asimov's Guide to Shakespeare: A Guide to Understanding and Enjoying the Works of Shakespeare. Asimov, Isaac. Avenel. 2003 (classic)

Essential Shakespeare Handbook. Dunton-Downer, Leslie and Riding, Alan.

DK Adult. 2004 (classic)

The First Folio of Shakespeare: The Norton Facsimile. 2 Sub ed.

W. W. Norton & Company. 1996 (classic)

Freeing Shakespeare's Voice: The Actor's Guide to Talking the Text.

Linklater, Kristin. Theatre Communication Group. 1993 (classic)

How To Speak Shakespeare. Pritner, Cal and Colaianni, Louis.

Santa Monica Press. 2001 (classic)

Playing Shakespeare: An Actor's Guide. Barton, John.

Anchor Books. 2001 (classic)

Secrets of Acting Shakespeare: The Original Approach. Tucker, Patrick.

Routledge. 2001 (classic)

Shakespeare Lexicon and Quotation Dictionary, Vol. 1 & 2. Schmidt, Alexander.

Dover Publications, Inc. 1971 (classic)

Shakescenes (Shakespeare For Two). Brown, John Russell (ed).

Applause Books. 2000 (classic)

Shakespeare Without Fear: A User-Friendly Guide to Acting Shakespeare.

Olivieri, Joseph. Harcourt, Inc. 2001 (classic)

Instructor Prepared Materials

Scripts for selected plays