

**THAR 10B Course Outline as of Fall 2012****CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: THAR 10B Title: SCENE STUDY &amp; CHARACTER

Full Title: Scene Study and Characterization

Last Reviewed: 5/14/2018

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	17.5	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:

**Catalog Description:**

An intensive acting study of characterization focusing on psychological, physical, and vocal techniques, as exhibited through modern/contemporary scene work. The course focuses on Stanislavski-influenced theoretical methods and script analysis, as well as an introduction to the business of acting. Attendance at one or more SRJC Theatre Arts productions is required.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:**

Course Completion of THAR 10A

**Recommended Preparation:****Limits on Enrollment:****Schedule of Classes Information:**

Description: An intensive acting study of characterization focusing on psychological, physical, and vocal techniques, as exhibited through modern/contemporary scene work. The course focuses on Stanislavski-influenced theoretical methods and script analysis, as well as an introduction to the business of acting. Attendance at one or more SRJC Theatre Arts productions is required. (Grade Only)

Prerequisites/Corequisites: Course Completion of THAR 10A

Recommended:

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:      Spring 1988      Inactive:

**UC Transfer:** Transferable      Effective:      Spring 1988      Inactive:

### **CID:**

CID Descriptor: THTR 152      Acting II  
SRJC Equivalent Course(s):      THAR10B

### **Certificate/Major Applicable:**

Both Certificate and Major Applicable

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Outcomes and Objectives:**

In order to achieve these learning outcomes, during the course the student will:

1. Effectively analyze and interpret a script; identify and expand upon a script's character details and given circumstances in the development and performance of a role.
2. Implement the major principles of Stanislavski-based acting theory in the analysis, rehearsal and performance of a truthful and dynamic portrayal.
3. Perform a variety of characters from realistic plays; explore characters both within and outside type (age, physical type, etc.) in order to stretch the student's ability to develop authentic characterizations that lie outside his/her personal experience.
4. Research a role and synthesize the research results in the development of a character.
5. Explore a variety of acting methods through the use of representative exercises and rehearsal tools.
6. Employ direct observation of a life model in the development of a role, embodying the person observed through physical and vocal adaptations.
7. Exhibit audition skills, including the selection, preparation and performance of a contrasting monologue package that showcases the actor's skills, range and self-awareness of type.
8. Expand vocal and physical flexibility and control, including the ability to redirect physical hypertension into productive performance energy; utilize warm-ups as mental, physical, and vocal preparation for rehearsal and performance.
9. Develop and exhibit basic skills in psychological, physical and vocal characterization.
10. Observe and objectively critique performances in writing and class discussions; distinguish between acting that is truthful and that which is mechanical, forced and/or self-conscious.
11. Accurately use theatre terminology and acting vocabulary in a variety of circumstances, including class discussions, analysis documentation, scene rehearsals, and critiques.

12. Stage partnered scenes, applying a working knowledge of basic blocking concepts and incorporating motivated movement and business within a floor plan.
13. Cultivate organizational skills as a beginning actor, rehearsing independently outside of class and completing other preparation responsibilities in the preparation of a role for performance.
14. Collaborate with one or more partners in the rehearsal, preparation, and performance of partnered scenes.
15. Demonstrate an introductory understanding of the business of acting, including recognition of key tools, unions, training paths, and resources; compile an acting resume according to a professional format.

## **Topics and Scope:**

- I. Introduction
  - A. Making a first impression
  - B. Learning to multi-task (an essential skill for an actor)
  - C. Techniques for giving and receiving criticism
  - D. Maintaining an actor's notebook
  - E. What a focused study of acting requires
- II. The Business of Acting
  - A. Self-marketing tools
    1. Acting resumes (purpose, content, and format)
    2. Headshots (types, shoots, and selection)
  - B. Actor resources
    1. Publications
    2. Organizations
    3. Unions, agents, casting directors, and managers
  - C. The life of a working actor
  - D. Training and education
  - E. Alternative career paths for actors
- III. Auditioning
  - A. Monologues
    1. How to find audition monologues
    2. Selecting material that works for you
    3. Establishing a monologue morgue
    4. Staging and presenting a monologue in an audition
  - B. Contrasting audition packages
    1. What makes a good contrasting package?
    2. Selecting material that works for you
    3. Staging and presenting a contrasting package
  - C. Cold reading techniques
  - D. Other types of auditions (musicals, etc.)
  - E. Audition etiquette and protocol
- IV. What's My Type?
  - A. Type casting and character types
  - B. Identifying your type and your range
  - C. Embracing your type and making it work for you
- V. Developing the Actor's Instrument: The Mind
  - A. Mental warmups
  - B. Trust and risk
  - C. Self-perceptions
  - D. Enhancing inner resources

1. Focus and concentration
  2. Awareness and self-awareness
  3. Sensory awareness, recall, and imagery
  4. Memory and emotional recall
  5. Personalizing and substitution
  6. Tapping into the imagination
  7. The mind/body connection
- E. Leaving the role 'at the office'
- VI. Developing the Actor's Instrument: The Body
- A. The "physical recipe"
    1. Breathing
    2. Alignment and silhouette
    3. Balance
    4. Center - where we lead from
    5. Movement - tempo, rhythm, energy, directness, etc.
  - B. Physical Awareness
    1. Analyzing one's habits, adaptations and 'cultural binding'
    2. Diagnosing physical tension and self-consciousness
  - C. Physical performance and characterization techniques
    1. Balance and centering
    2. Expanding flexibility and clarity of gesture
    3. Physical neutrality
    4. Psychological gesture
    5. Sustaining performance energy and 'relaxed readiness'
    6. Changing centers
    7. Using abstraction (e.g. animals, objectives, etc.) to develop character
    8. Direct observation
  - D. Physical warmups - function and types of exercises
  - E. Types of physical training methods (e.g. Laban, Alexander, etc.)
- VII. Developing the Actor's Instrument: The Voice
- A. The "vocal recipe"
    1. Articulation
    2. Projection and volume
    3. Quality or tone
    4. Pitch or range
    5. Pronunciation
      - a. Dialects and accents
      - b. Speech impediments
    6. Tempo and rhythm; rate
    7. Word choice and non-verbals
  - B. Vocal Awareness
    1. Analyzing one's habits, adaptations and "cultural binding"
    2. Diagnosing vocal tension and self-consciousness
  - C. Vocal performance and characterization techniques
    1. Expanding diaphragmatic breathing
    2. Relationship of physical and vocal elements
    3. Enhancing vocal variety
    4. Working with text (operative words, upward inflection, etc.)
  - D. Vocal health
  - E. Special vocal demands (e.g. screams, crying, etc.)
  - F. Vocal warmups - function and types of exercise
  - G. Types of vocal training and methods (e.g. Linklater, Berry, etc.)

- VIII. Stanislavski-Based Character Development
  - A. Psychological character development techniques
  - B. Delving deeper into Stanislavski's system
    - 1. Relationships and status
    - 2. Objectives and obstacles
    - 3. Strategies, tactics and units of action (beats)
    - 4. Text, subtext and interior monologue
  - C. Working with the ten system steps
    - 1. Given circumstances
    - 2. The "Magic If" and Super Objective
    - 3. Through-line of actions and scoring the role
    - 4. Endowment, recall, and images
    - 5. External adjustment and the creative mood
  - D. Applying intention and motivation to an open scene script
- IX. Working with a script
  - A. The world of the play
  - B. Research techniques for an actor
  - C. Analyzing a script
  - D. Preparing a rehearsal script
  - E. Scoring a script
- X. Interpretive Techniques and Challenges
  - A. Internal vs external character development
  - B. Playing a character out of type
  - C. Playing a character very similar to you
  - D. When a character's values/beliefs are very different from your own
  - E. Balancing truth and technique
  - F. Believability - "performing a role" vs being a role
- XI. Rehearsal Preparation and Process
  - A. Researching a role
  - B. Motivating blocking and making dynamic staging choices
  - C. Developing business and bits
  - D. Memorizing and rehearsing lines
  - E. Working with a director, teacher or coach
  - F. Working with a scene partner
- XII. Expanding Your Rehearsal Process
  - A. Rehearsal improvisations, exercises, and development tools
  - B. Endowing props and working with costumes
  - C. Expanding characterization choices (physical, vocal)
  - D. Commitment - raising the stakes and getting past "the wall"
  - E. Types of creative character development projects (optional)
- XIII. Brief Overview of Other Acting Theories and Methods
  - A. Offshoots of Stanislavski (e.g. "The Method", Michael Chekhov, Meisner, etc.)
  - B. New theories and methods (e.g. Viewpoints, Suzuki, etc.)
- XIV. Special Performance Skills and Situations (Optional Topics)
  - A. Working in thrust and arena spaces
  - B. Handling scenes requiring intimacy
  - C. Basic unarmed combat techniques
  - D. The differences between stage acting and acting for the camera
  - E. Other special performance skills and situations

**Assignment:**

**Homework and Assignments:** This class requires approximately four-five hours per week of homework and out-of class rehearsal for performance assignments.

### Reading Homework

The student will read approx. 20-40 pages per week from the following:

- A. Textbook, course reader, and/or other instructor prepared materials.
- B. Three to five scripts (including 1 for Class scene, 1 for Risk scene and 1-2 for contrasting monologue package).

### Performance Assignments

Students will complete 4-6 partnered and solo performance assignments. All performance assignments will incorporate physical and vocal characterization techniques.

### Scene Study Assignments

Assignments may vary, but will include the following criteria:

1. Students will complete a minimum of three partnered scenes.
2. One partnered scene will be from an assigned play selected by the instructor for the entire class. Assignment will focus on script analysis, researching the world of the play, given circumstances, and collaboration with others in developing characterization within a larger context. (May also introduce one or more special skills, such as dialect work.)
3. At least one partnered scene will focus on applying Stanislavski-based techniques, psychological character development and motivated action.
4. At least one partnered scene will require the actor to play a character within type.
5. At least one partnered scene will require the actor to play against type.

### Recommended criteria for scripted scene assignments

1. From a published stage play or open scene script (aka Chekovian script)
2. Acting style of scene - realism
3. From a modern or contemporary play, preferably written after 1940
4. Recommended length:
  - a. 2-person scene: 2-5 minutes
  - b. 3-person scene: 4-7 minute

### Scene Study Examples:

- A. Open Scene - With a partner, develop the given circumstances for a scene using a short Open Scene script, applying Stanislavski-based techniques and focusing on psychological character development and motivated action. Prepare, memorize, rehearse and perform the scene. (Recommended length: 2 minutes)  
Documentation: Brief character profile, given circumstances, and scene breakdown (intentions moment-by-moment)
- B. Class Play Scene - Prepare, memorize, rehearse and perform a role in a partnered scene from an assigned modern/contemporary play, selected by the instructor for the entire class.  
Documentation: Character profile, creative project, or character analysis, and/or scored script.

- C. Actor's Risk Scene - Prepare, memorize, rehearse and perform a role in a partnered scene from a stage play that presents the actor with a significant identified risk (e.g. playing out of type).

Documentation: Character analysis, and/or scored script.

### Contrasting Monologue Package

Select, memorize, rehearse and perform a contrasting monologue package, presenting it in an audition format. Intended to be a culminating performance assignment, demonstrating the student's ability to apply vocal and physical characterization and performance skills in the portrayal of two contrasting characters within the student's type and range.

1. Recommended criteria for monologue selection:
  - a. One must be from a published play. The other may be from a play or another source (screenplay, literature, self-written, etc.).
  - b. Preferred acting style of monologues - realism
  - c. From a modern or contemporary play or other source, preferably written after 1940
  - d. Length of Monologue Package: 2-3 minutes max.
2. Monologue selections: Students are expected to find monologues independently, subject to instructor approval.
3. Documentation: Possible character profiles in notebook

### Optional Physical/Vocal Performance Assignments - Examples

#### A. Original Monologue Assignment:

Perform an original 1-2 minute monologue, drawn from interviews and detailed observation of a fellow classmate of the same gender, embodying his/her physical, vocal and behavioral attributes while discarding one's own.

Documentation: Personal profile, physical profile, vocal profile

#### B. Leading a Warmup:

Outline and lead a physical and/or vocal warmup, demonstrating knowledge of warmup techniques and their benefits. (May collaborate with classmate)

Documentation: Warmup outline

### Production Attendance as Homework:

Attend 1-3 Theatre Arts Department productions; participate in class discussion regarding the acting demands within each production and their relationship to course content. Students receive a free ticket for each SRJC production; they select their own performance date and provide their own transportation.

### Written Assignments:

- A. 1-2 written Character Analysis assignments (for scenes and/or monologue package)
- B. 1-2 script scoring assignments (for scenes and/or monologue package)
- C. Actor's Notebook: Compilation of written exercises, class and rehearsal notes, observation notes on peers' work and thoughts on the artform. Purpose is to chart and reflect on the progress made during the semester.
- D. 2-8 brief written exercises, usually part of preparation for performance assignments.

Examples:

1. Acting resume (draft and final)
2. Physical profile (analysis of one's own physical traits and patterns)
3. Vocal profile (analysis of one's own vocal traits and patterns)
4. 1-3 SRJC production critiques (analyzing the acting in the shows; may be entries in notebook instead)

Quizzes and Exam:

- A. Approx. 6-10 quizzes on assigned reading to assess comprehension and application; may be in-class or take-home quizzes, or may take the form of a take-home reading assessment exercise.
- B. In-class exam on acting terminology and concepts; exam may or may not be given as a final.

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

### 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; Character analyses; Script scoring;  
Notebook

Writing  
15 - 25%

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

None

Problem solving  
0 - 0%

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

Performance assignments

Skill Demonstrations  
60 - 75%

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



Terms and concepts exam; Quizzes and/or reading assessments

Exams  
5 - 15%

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

Professionalism (includes attendance, preparation, effort)

Other Category  
5 - 10%

**Representative Textbooks and Materials:**

Acting: An Introduction to the Art and Craft of Playing. Kassel, Paul. Allyn & Bacon: 2006.

Acting: Onstage and Off. Barton, Robert. 6th ed. Wadsworth Publishing: 2011.

Respect for Acting. Hagen, Uta. 2nd ed. Wiley: 2008.

Scripts for selected scenes

Instructor prepared materials