

Bergen Community College
Division of Arts, Humanities & Wellness
Department of the Performing Arts

Course Syllabus

Audition Techniques THR-214

Instructor:
Office Location:
Phone:
Office Hours:

Course Description

THR-214 Audition Techniques is a practical course which helps the student investigate, select, and prepare audition material appropriate to the individual and the audition call. The course includes exercises in handling “cold” readings and in learning to look at auditions from the casting director’s point of view.
2 lectures, 2 credits

Student Learning Objectives: As a result of meeting the requirements of this course, students will be able to

1. Audition for roles in professional, community, and educational theatre
2. Utilize acting techniques to become more adept at auditioning
3. Understand the business aspects of the theatre profession
4. Explore the technological resources available to aid with finding auditions, promoting oneself, and acquiring an agent
5. Develop cold reading skills
6. Perform three prepared audition pieces (monologues)
7. Identify a photographer to take headshots and be able to select the type of pictures needed for a career in the theatre and create a professional looking resume.
8. Understand the requirements of a musical theatre audition

Objectives will be assessed as follows:

1. By practicing cold reading of a wide variety of scripts, working up three audition pieces, exploring acting techniques to aid in auditioning, developing a resume, acquiring 8 by 10 theatrical photos, and understanding the business of the theatre profession, the students will be ready to audition for the professional and non-union theatre.
2. Acting techniques will be explored through class exercises, improvisations, cold readings, script analysis, and performance of monologues.
3. Students will be able to map out their career by learning about agents, managers, unions, self-promotion, pictures and resumes, types of auditions, and resources for identifying auditions.
4. Students will demonstrate their understanding of technological resources, such as Actors Access, by scheduling possible auditions and/or interviews for themselves utilizing the Internet.
5. Cold reading skills will be developed through a series of readings, which become increasingly more challenging, moving from contemporary scripts to classical material.
6. Three memorized monologues will be rehearsed and critiqued in class and then presented in a “mock” audition setting.
7. Students will receive guidance in selecting a photographer to take their theatre headshots. Purchase of photos is optional. However, the composition of an acting resume is a requirement of the course.
8. A brief dance routine will be learned and presented by the class, and actors who are singers will sing 16 measures from a ballad and/or an up-tempo song. They may choose to sing an entire song or songs. All students will cold read material from various musical scripts.

Course Content

Audition Techniques – This course is a practical workshop that should enable students to audition successfully in the professional and non-union theatre. Students will learn about both the artistic and business aspects of auditioning. Cold reading skills will be developed and the students will prepare and present three audition pieces (monologues). How to audition for musical theatre will be explored. Students will create an acting resume and be guided in selecting a photographer to take their headshots. They will learn about the business aspects of theatre and the many technological resources available to them for promoting their work.

Technological Literacy

Technological literacy and/or information literacy is one expectation of this course. Students will be encouraged to utilize the many technological resources available to them, such as Actors Access, Facebook, YouTube, etc. in promoting themselves and identifying auditions.

Course Texts and/or Other Study Materials

Required: “Audition”, by Michael Shurtleff, Bantam Books, 1986

Any Collection of Theatre Monologues: Theatre monologues from plays or even cut from a novel or short story are acceptable. Solo pieces not within a play or piece of literature are not recommended. Monologues, which are found on the Internet that are not from a play and/or which are from a film, are also not recommended.

Suggested Monologue Collections in the BCC Bookstore:

“100 Monologues – An Audition Sourcebook from New Dramatists”, edited by Laura Harrington, New American Library, division of Penguin Putnam, Inc. New York, N.Y. 1989 (or the latest edition)

The Actor’s Book of Contemporary Stage Monologues, edited by Nina Shengold, Penguin Books, 1987

Soliloquy, the Shakespeare Monologues, one for men and one for women, edited by Michael Earley and Philippa Keil, Applause Books, 1988

Grading Policy

Attendance, preparation, and active participation	10%
Three monologues (15% each; includes rehearsals in class)*	45%
Midterm and final presentations (each worth 10%)	20%
Cold readings & class exercises	15%
A typed theatrical resume	<u>10%</u>
	100%

*Extra Credit: A fourth monologue, fully memorized and performance ready, will merit an extra 5% or ½ of a letter grade.

Criteria for Evaluation:

Attendance, preparation and active participation:

- Consistent attendance
- Preparation of three memorized monologues
- Completed assignments
- Overall demonstration of comprehension of the course material
- Active participation in class exercises, improvisations, and in discussions evaluating the work presented

Three Monologues: The presentation of three audition pieces (monologues) is a major requirement of this course. Monologues are graded on a class-by-class basis. Rehearsing them in class is part of the overall grade. Also, no monologue receives a grade in the mid-term or final if it is not memorized. Memorizing a fourth monologue is encouraged and strongly recommended, but not required. This will receive extra credit amounting to a half of a letter grade, but only if the monologue is completely memorized and performance ready.

Midterm and Final Presentations: Two memorized and rehearsed monologues are presented back to back as if at a real audition. The student will state his/her name and the plays from which the monologues have been cut and then perform the pieces. The final presentation combines the third monologue with either the first or second piece. If the student has learned a fourth monologue, this may also be combined with the third.

Cold Readings and Class Exercises: Three levels of cold readings will be practiced in class: the first will consist of readings from contemporary plays in which students will have an opportunity to read with a partner in advance; the second level will consist of readings from classical plays without the benefit of preparing with a partner; finally, the third will consist of readings from musical theatre scripts, also without previous rehearsal with a partner. In addition to cold readings, students will participate in exercises and improvisations relating to auditioning.

A Typed Theatrical Resume: Each student will submit a typed, professionally formatted acting resume. If some of the students have very few or no credits, they will create a resume listing any theatre related training or special skills.

90 -100 = A 86 - 89 = B+ 80 - 85 = B 76 - 79 = C+ 70 - 75 = C
65 - 69 = D E = Unofficial Withdrawal W = Official Withdrawal
INC = Incomplete 0 - 64 = F

Students will be permitted to perform their midterm and final presentations late, if they are either absent or not prepared the day of the presentation. However, one letter grade will be deducted from the grade of the presentation. Monologues, which are not memorized, are not eligible for a grade. Frequent calling for lines during these presentations also lowers the grade.

BCC Attendance Policy

All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Because the course grade depends heavily upon class participation, missing more than 2 classes will drop the grade. 3 classes missed equals a B to a B plus depending upon participation, 4 classes – a C to a C plus; 5 classes – a D, and more than five a failure in the course.

Students will be evaluated on attendance and participation in class using the following criteria: consistent attendance; evidence of studying text and assignments; completed daily assignments; quality classroom responses. If a student is not prepared with the assignment for the day, he/she will not receive credit for it for that particular class.

Course Outline:

Note to Students: This Course Outline and Calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.

Week	Topic/Activity	Learning Objectives	Assignments/Events
1	Introduction to the Course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the various auditions settings and how to approach them • The requirements, time limits and different types of monologues • Students introduce themselves as if they are at the interview which may precede an audition 	1,2	Read pgs. 1-31 and 187-192 in text Select a monologue to read and time for the next class

Week	Topic/Activity	Learning Objectives	Assignments/Events
2	<p>The Elements of Scripts Analysis & First Read-Through of Monologue # 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss pgs. 1-31 and 187-192 • Read-through, assess, and time the first monologue 	1,2,3	<p>Read pgs. 143-186 and 193-194</p> <p>Memorize monologue #1</p>
3	<p>Breaking Down a Script into Beats and Shaping an Audition Piece</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss pgs. 143-186 and 193-194 in the text • Work monologue #1 off book. 	1,2,3	Rehearse monologue for performance
4	<p>The Business of Show Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how to write a theatrical resume • selecting a good photographer <p>The different types of headshots</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audition resources: Backstage, the Ross Report, Actors Access, and the Internet • The role of agents, managers, and how to be signed by one. Knowing how to recognize a legitimate agency and how to avoid being scammed • The use Internet as a way to promote yourself, etc. • Begin presentation of monologue #1 	1,2,3,4,6,7	Read pgs. 77-105
5	<p>Completion of the Presentation of Monologue #1</p> <p>Cold Reading Techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete presentation of monologue #1 • Discuss pgs. 77-105 • Cold Reading Techniques: cold readings of scenes from contemporary plays with a brief rehearsal with a partner prior to the reading 	1,2,3,5,6	<p>Bring in monologue #2, preferably a classical piece</p> <p>Read pgs. 105-142</p>

Week	Topic/Activity	Learning Objectives	Assignments/Events
6	<p>How to Approach a Classical Piece, Especially Shakespeare</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how to approach a classical piece and pgs. 105-142 • Work monologue #2 	1,2,3,6	<p>Memorize monologue #2</p> <p>Rough draft of resume is due.</p>
7	<p>Present monologue #2 and hand in rough draft of resume</p>	1,2,3,5,6,7	Prepare for mid-term presentation
8	<p>MID-TERM PRESENTATION: first two monologues back to back</p>	1,2,3,6	Bring in monologue #3
9	<p>Read-through and begin to work monologue #3</p> <p>Classical cold readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shakespeare warm-up exercises • Begin classical cold readings, this time without a prior rehearsal with a partner • Read-through and work monologue #3 	1,2,3,5,6	<p>Read pgs. 195-199 and 207-213</p> <p>Memorize monologue #3</p>
10	<p>Presentation of Monologue #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss pgs. 195-199 and 207-213 • Present monologue #3 • Complete classical cold readings 	1,2,3,5,6	Read pgs. 217-254
11	<p>Complete presentation of monologue #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss pgs. 217-254 • Complete presentation of monologue #3 	1,2,3,6	<p>Bring in optional monologue #4 or prepare for final presentation</p> <p>Schedule a “fictional” week of auditions using the Internet and Backstage Magazine</p>
12	<p>Strategies for Career Success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the audition assignment • Mapping out your career 	1,2,3,4,6	Prepare a ballad and/or and up-tempo song, either a full song or 16 measures of a song (if the

Week	Topic/Activity	Learning Objectives	Assignments/Events
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work optional monologue #4 or rehearse for final presentation 		<p>student sings). Bring recorded accompaniment, if desired. Also, bring jazz or ballet shoes (if the student has them)</p> <p>Final draft of resume is due</p> <p>Read pgs. 201-206</p>
13	<p>Musical Comedy Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss what happens at a musical comedy audition Learn a brief dance combination and present it If singing, perform the songs, announcing them as you would an audition piece Cold readings of scene from musical theatre Final draft of resumes due 	1,2,3,5,7,8	<p>Bring in photos with resume attached</p> <p>Select which monologues will be done in the final presentation and rehearse them back to back</p>
14	<p>Rehearsal for the Final Presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include “mock” interviews as part of the rehearsal with a completed picture and resume 	1,2,3,6,7	Prepare for the final presentation
15	FINAL PRESENTATION: monologue #3 with either one of the first two monologues or with a fourth one	1,2,3,6	

Advisement for Theatre Majors or anyone interested in theatre:

If you would like for me to be your advisor, you may register for ADV-001-103 POD Advising. This service is free.