

San José State University
College of Humanities and Arts/Department of TV, Radio,
Film, and Theatre.

TA 05: Acting: Section 3, Fall 2014

Instructor:	Mike Cymanski
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Office Hours:	Monday and Wednesday 1:30 to 2:30.
Class Days/Time:	Monday and Wednesday, 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.
Classroom:	HGH 226
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	C1 Humanities and Arts
Course Fees:	Students will need to purchase tickets for two theatre performances, at a cost of at least \$15.00 per performance Text: <i>Simply Acting</i> , approximately \$30.00. Two plays approximately \$9.00 at the bookstore. One additional play will be assigned later in the semester and may be bought or checked-out at the library.

Course Description

Basic acting class for non-theatre-arts majors. Exploration of inner and external resources for performance, analysis of text and character, guidelines for successful rehearsal and performance. Learning to be seen, heard, understood and believed. (3 Units) --No Prerequisites.

Overview:

This course is an introductory acting course, which teaches students knowledge, understanding and participation in the art form of acting. Students will be introduced to significant works of drama through discussion, reading, analysis,

rehearsal, performance and reflection. Students will be developing an understanding of the basic skills of acting, and will be encouraged to explore their physical, emotional and intellectual resources while mastering the skills and discipline needed to begin formal scene study.

Faculty Web Page

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/people/Michael.Cymanski>

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

GE/SJSU Studies Learning Outcomes (LO):

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- LO1 Students will recognize aesthetic qualities and processes that characterize works of the human intellect and imagination.
- LO2 Students will respond to works of art both analytically (in writing) and affectively (in other forms of personal and artistic expression).
- LO3 Students will write clearly and effectively. Writing shall be assessed for correctness, clarity, and conciseness.

Course Content Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- LO4 Speak the language of the theatre.
- LO5 Work confidently in front of an audience.
- LO6 Critically analyze dramatic texts to determine character objectives, obstacles, and tactics within the structure of a scene.
- LO7 Utilize rehearsal skills including physical and vocal warm-ups, characterization exercises, and appropriate performance preparation.
- LO8 Work as an ensemble and collaborate with other actors.
- LO9 Apply critical and creative thinking to an analysis of theatrical performance in the form of a written critique.

TRFT Student Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate a literacy of the language of stage and/or screen; know how to analyze a script, understand the historical and contemporary structure of a script, and the social and political effects of a performance on an audience.
2. Demonstrate an ability to tell meaningful stories through performance; correlate performance to production; demonstrate acting skills and development of a character.

3. Communicate information and entertainment to diverse cultures using stage and/or screen; demonstrate sensitivity to the processes of and the attitudes held by races, religions, political and social groups that are not the student's own.

Required Texts/Readings (Available at the Spartan Bookstore).

Course Text: *Simply Acting: A Handbook* by Amy Glazer and Kathleen Normington.

Doubt: *A Parable* by John Patrick Shanley

Proof by David Auburn

A third play will be assigned customized to each student. We will discuss obtaining the third play later this semester.

Other Readings

Play scripts and additional reading materials will be distributed during the semester and should be considered as supplements to the text. Handouts should be kept in a course-specific folder/binder. Students will be required to research play scripts and either purchase these or check them out from libraries.

Other Equipment / Material Requirements:

Class Attire: Comfortable clothing that allows for freedom of movement. Please avoid wearing clothing that is too restrictive or suggestive. Plan to be physically active in this class.

Bring to Every Class: Course Text and other related reading material including scene and monologue scripts, highlighter pen for marking scripts. A yoga mat or large towel is strongly recommended. Water bottles are allowed in class.

Classroom Protocol

To study acting is to study the human condition. The instructor reserves the right to address controversial issues as they relate to the acting process.

Important. It may be necessary for your instructor to make physical contact with you to determine breathing, muscle tension, alignment, etc. or in the form of interactive role-play. If this ever makes you feel uncomfortable, please let the instructor know immediately.

Creating a Learning Community

The coursework is designed for students to seek genuine understanding and practical application of concepts, and not for rote memorization of facts. Discussions must be approached openly, honestly, critically, and with integrity. Thoughtful, focused, and

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sensitive inquiry is expected of all participants. Discussions are required to be respectful even in the midst of debate. We need to be mindful of creating a learning community that makes the class as safe as possible for exploring ideas and experiences. *Each of us is responsible for the class becoming a learning community that facilitates truthful, respectful, and compassionate relations among participants and critical investigation of the course themes.*

Class Participation

This is a hands-on workshop course. In order for the class to work well, **active participation** by everyone is needed. Participation occurs through consistent, punctual, prepared and interested attendance and involvement in classes. **You must be present in order to participate.** Roll will be taken at every class. If you miss class, **it is your responsibility** to get assignment details and class notes from fellow students. Please exchange phone numbers and email addresses with other students early in the semester.

Unexcused absences on performance dates will result in a failing grade for that project.

Classroom Etiquette

Cell phones are to be turned off. Electronic devices need to be put away **before arriving** for class. Students will be respectful of others who are onstage and not enter or exit the room during a scene. **Students who do not comply with these rules will be asked to leave the class.**

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on add/drops are available at <http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html> . Information about late drop is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/> . Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course.

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not

publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following:

<i>Points</i>	<i>Letter grade</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>Letter grade</i>
97 - 100	A+	76 – 79	C+
93 - 96	A	73 – 76	C
90 - 93	A-	70 – 72	C-
86 – 89	B+	66 – 69	D+
83 - 86	B	63 – 65	D
80 - 83	B-	60 – 62	D-

A – Excellent. Always prepared; extensive outside preparation. Actively pursues improvement and highly self motivated. Student makes significant growth in skill and knowledge during semester. Active, positive contributor to class.

B – Good to excellent. Always prepared; notable outside preparation. Pursues improvement and self motivated. Notable growth in skills and knowledge during semester. Positive contributor to class.

C – Acceptable to good. Generally prepared; acceptable outside preparation. Interested in improvement and often self motivated. Shows some growth in skills and knowledge during semester. Contributes to class.

D – (Failing for majors) Often unacceptable. Often not prepared; shows little outside preparation. Shows little interest in improvement and is rarely self motivated. Very little skill and knowledge growth during semester. Seldom contributes to class and has negative attitude. Sometimes late.

F – Largely unacceptable. Rarely prepared and lacks adequate outside preparation. Virtually no interest in self improvement and not motivated. Virtually no growth in skills and knowledge. Does not contribute to class; negative attitude.

Extra Credit. Opportunities will be offered during the semester and extra credit cannot exceed 5% of total grade points. You must be doing satisfactory work with a grade of “C” or higher to be eligible for extra credit.

Exercises/Quizzes. These include short reading assignments from the text, assigned plays, and a variety of written assignments. I may occasionally administer pop quizzes.

Late assignments will not be accepted. I am sympathetic to those students who know they will be unable to complete an assignment ahead of time. See me at least one week before something is due to discuss an extension. Scheduled quizzes will be administered during the first 15 minutes of class. There are no makeup quizzes.

Performance Critiques. You are required to attend two performances and write a 750-word performance critique of each. **A ticket from the performance must be attached**

to your analysis. Guidelines and a Grading Rubric for writing these papers will be distributed. They must be personally handed in to the instructor or e-mailed (by midnight on the due date). If you e-mail a paper please request an acknowledgement of receipt from the instructor and keep the file in your sent box. **LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** We will be seeing the following productions:

1. *Art* by Yasmina Reza
 Directed by Virginia Drake
 September 18 to October 19, 2014
 City Lights Theatre Company

Student prices are available for some performances. Go to cltc.org

2. *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat As Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum Charenton Under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade*
 By Peter Weiss
 Directed by Kathleen Normington
 November 14, 15, 18 – 22, 2014
 San Jose State University Theater

Student tickets are generally \$10.00 and are sold at the University Box office.

You are responsible for reserving and purchasing your own tickets for all performances.

Scene and Monologue Performances. You will be assigned three major performance tasks. Each will require preparation (ie. rehearsal) outside of class. The more rehearsal time you put in for each performance, the more success you will have. Each performance assignment also requires a written character and scene analysis. The instructor will assign the scripts and partners. **Please note that if you fail to show up to class when your scene is scheduled, you will fail the assignment and points will be taken from your participation grade**

Overview Description of Assignments:

The semester grade is based upon 100 points (100%) to be achieved in the following manner:	Points Possible	Your Points
Participation: (15%) To receive participation points, you must attend class. Unlike other University courses, an acting class requires active participation and interaction with classmates <i>during the scheduled class time</i> . If you are not present, you cannot participate in class and thus absences and lateness will inevitably affect your final grade.	15	
Homework Assignments and quizzes (25%) Reading assignments from the text and other responses to course work. Please type written assignments in 12 point font and double space. Blue books are not required for quizzes.	25	

<p>Performance Critiques: (20%) You are required to attend two live theatrical play performances this semester, and write a performance critique on each one. These written critiques are to be a minimum of 750 words and are to be written using the MLA academic writing style, focusing on particular areas of performance using vocabulary and skills learned in class. It is expected that the opinions expressed in the written critiques will have a clear and concise thesis statement, followed by thoughtful critical analysis and a careful conclusion, which comprehensively expresses your opinion of the performance.</p>	<p>#1=10 #2=10</p>	
<p>Pantomime to Music (5%) Performance with a partner in which a story is created and expressed to the audience without the use of speech. The performance is accompanied by a musical selection of the students' choice.</p>	5	
<p>Contentless Scene: (5%) Initial performance scene with a partner in which the students create a fully memorized scene from scripted lines. The instructor will provide scripts.</p>	5	
<p>Duo Scene: (15%) Students will rehearse and perform a fully memorized, thoroughly prepared duo scene assigned from either <i>Proof</i> or <i>Doubt</i>. Character Analysis Duo Scene Performance</p>	5 10	
<p>Monologue Scene: (15%) You will rehearse and perform a fully memorized, thoroughly prepared realistic monologue. This will serve as your term final. Character Analysis Monologue Scene</p>	5 10	
<p>Total Semester Points Possible</p>	100	

Written Assignments:

Writing assignments are required in this course in order to meet University GE Guidelines. They include written script analysis, written character analysis, performance critiques, and various other shorter assignments.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University's Academic Integrity Policy is available at: http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at: http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The LARC website is located at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/>.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>.

Peer Mentor Center

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. The Peer Mentor Center website is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/> .

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or

group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

Theatre Arts 5: Section 3 Course Calendar Fall 2014

(This maybe altered at any moment in time. We need to progress at the speed of the class, depending on its size and make-up. I will always give you notice when changes occur.)

Date	Class/GE Learning Objective	Assignments
Week 1		
8/25	- Introductions - Syllabus Review - Acting Games/Exercises	Complete questionnaire and buy books. Prepare Introductory Performance for 8/27 Start bringing a yoga mat or large towel next class.
8/27	Acting Games and Exercises (LO 1) Introductory Performances (3 points)	Complete Inspiring Actor paper, due 9/3.
Week 2		
9/1	Labor Day Holiday	No class.
9/3	Physical Warm Up Exercises (LO 1) Pantomime to Music partners assigned. Inspiring Actor paper due (3 points)	Reading #1: Introduction and Chapter one, The Actor's Heritage. Work outside of class with partner on Pantomime to Music exercise.
Week 3		
9/8	Exercises: Objectives, Actions, Obstacles (LO 2) Small Group Projects (LO 1, 2)	Work outside of class with partner on Pantomime to Music exercise.
9/10	Pantomime & Improv Exercises (LO 1, 2) Voice warm-up exercises (LO 1, 2) In-class rehearsal/Quiz review	Reading #2: Chapter 4, Improvisation and the Contentless scene.
Week 4		
9/15	Quiz 1 (3 points) Pantomime to Music performances (LO 1, 2) (5 points)	
9/17	Pantomime to Music performances (LO 1, 2) (continued) Contentless scene partners assigned	Begin to work on Contentless scenes. <i>Art</i> opens tomorrow night. Read <i>Proof</i> by David Auburn.
Week 5		
9/22	Proof quiz (3 points) How to give and receive criticism (LO 1, 2) Work on Contentless scene with instructor	Reading #3: Chapter 2, Scoring Your Script: The Language of Acting.
9/24	In-class rehearsal Writing a performance analysis (LO 1, 2)	Rehearse outside of class with partner on Contentless scene.
Week 6		
9/29	Guest speaker (LO 1) Writing a Character Analysis (LO 1, 2)	Contentless scene due 10/6.
10/1	Contentless scene preview	Begin work on Duo scene. Read <i>Doubt</i> by John Patrick Shanley.

	Duo scene partners assigned	
Week 7		
10/6	Doubt quiz (3 points) Contentless scene performances (LO 2) (5 points)	Reading #4: Chapter 5, Scene Study: The Duo Scene.
10/8	Contentless scene performances (continued) Review for quiz.	Work outside of class with partner on duo scene.
Week 8		
10/13	Quiz 2 (3 points) Script and character analysis, Scene read through, Scoring your script (LO 1, 2)	Rehearse with partner on duo scene. Complete character analysis due on your scheduled performance date (LO 1, 2)
10/15	In-class rehearsal	<i>Art</i> closes 10/19.
Week 9		
10/20	Preview scenes	Continue working on duo scenes.
10/22	Preview scenes	Sign up for coaching session with instructor on 10/27 or 10/29.
Week 10		
10/27	In-class coaching with instructor. Note: half of students will attend – Release time for other half.	Continue to rehearse duo scenes.
10/29	In-class coaching with instructor. Note: half of students will attend – Release time for other half.	Continue to rehearse duo scenes. <i>Art</i> paper is due 11/5.
Week 11		
11/3	Duo Scene Performances (10 points) Character analysis (5 points)	Reading #5: Chapter 6, Exploration of Character: The Monologue.
11/5	Duo Scene Performances (continued) Monologues assigned. Art paper is due (10 points)	Begin scoring/memorizing monologue.
Week 12		
11/10	Quiz 3 (3 points) Theater games all day	
11/12	Individual play report (4 points)	<i>Marat/Sade</i> opens 11/14.
Week 13		
11/17	Work monologues	Sign up for coaching session time with instructor for either 11/24 or 11/26.
11/19	Work monologues	<i>Marat/Sade</i> closes 11/22.
Week 14		
11/24	Individual monologue coaching Note: half of students will attend – Release time for other half.	
11/26	Individual monologue coaching Note: half of students will attend – Release time for other half.	Prepare for final performance of monologue

Week 15		
12/1	Discussion: Creating a solo performance (LO 1, 2) Work monologues in audition setting.	
12/3	Work monologues with a prop	
Week 16		
12/8	Preview performances	
12/10	Preview performances <i>Marat/Sade</i> paper is due today (10 points)	Last regular day of class.
Final		
12/17	FINAL EXAM Monologue Due (10 points) Character analysis due (5 points) (15 points of participation are awarded throughout the semester)	FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, December 17 from 9:45 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Incomplete Grades:

To be eligible to request an incomplete grade in this course, a student must have turned in at least 2/3 of the semester work and received a passing grade of C or better on that work.

Release Time: Students are given class release time from regularly scheduled classes to attend performances. Please see the class schedule for those dates.

If you have an extended absence due to a family or personal emergency, please notify the instructor as soon as possible via email to make arrangements for completing the course.

If you are on an athletic team at SJSU, you are still responsible for completing work on time. Please notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester of class dates you may miss (in writing) over the semester due to competing in athletic events for SJSU.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed.

TRFT participation

TRFT encourages student participation in department activities. However, if you are in a course or production activity that will present conflicts with your other courses and

projects at any point in the semester, plan your time accordingly. This especially applies to your own production work or other student's productions. Be proactive: discover what those conflicts will be, contact your professors well in advance to discuss your options for staying current in ALL courses, especially if you are asked to miss a class meeting. No class and its requirements take precedence over another. Your participation in each course is required and valued by your faculty and classmates.

Instructor Reserves the Right to...

Make changes to any or all of the elements of the course described in this syllabus, including class policies, topics, readings, course requirements, and/or assignments. In the event a change is deemed necessary, the Instructor will provide sufficient notice to the students in order for them to complete the course satisfactorily.