

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO'S PERFORMING ARTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE MAJOR
THTR 390 02 – CAREERS IN THEATER (1 unit)
THTR 390 06 – CAREERS IN THEATER (2 units)
Thurs. 2:40pm – 4:25pm, Room LM 152 (Studio Theater)
Spring 2017

Instructor: Ken Sonkin
Office Phone: 415-422-2721
Email: docsonk@sbcglobal.net
Office: MA 205 (281 Masonic @ Turk, 2nd floor)
Office Hours: T/R 11:30am – 12:30pm

Course Description

Do you dream of acting professionally in regional theater? Do you see yourself starting your own theater company or maybe you want to be a writer, designer, technician, or teacher? Are you interested in drama therapy or arts administration? Do you want to continue your journey as an artist dedicated to social change? "Careers in Theater" is an upper division course designed to provide information about possible career paths for graduating Performing Arts and Social Justice majors and minors. Students will learn about job searching and internships, creating resumes, interviews/auditions, creating a web site, generating their own work, researching unions, contracts, agents, and much more as they consider "life after USF." Each student will be asked to investigate role models in socially relevant performing arts and to map out career goals for themselves. Graduate school application/auditions will also be covered for those students interested in continuing their artistic education. Skills in handling money, time management, and artistic well-being will be offered for students to not only survive, but to flourish in their craft.

Students will learn to apply their college experience as they make the transition into the professional arts arena. Through concentrated and collaborative work with other students, the instructor, and guest artists, students will learn how to bring their dreams into focus, address their fears, find possible solutions, and leave USF better equipped to "change the world from here" or from wherever they make their artistic home.

Course Goals

This course meets Performing Arts Department Learning Goal 1 and 2 (please see the Department's Mission and Learning Goals on last page of this syllabus.)

- to empower students with a variety of approaches to careers in the theater. (*meets PASJ goals 1 and 2.*)
- to understand the role of the artist and discuss the importance of contemporary changes in theory and practice in theatre, (traditional and non-traditional) t.v. and film. (*meets PASJ goal 1.*)
- to address concerns of transitioning from college to the real world of performing arts. (*meets PASJ goal 2.*)
- to develop USF graduates with a sense of individual artistry and responsibility in socially relevant performing arts. (*meets PASJ goal 1.*)

Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- identify the many different jobs that are available in the theater.
- produce a professional cover letter, resume, and CV for the theater and/or for the business world.
- present themselves in a professional audition/interview setting.
- have a working vocabulary of the performing arts unions, and contracts.
- research and apply to graduate schools.
- map out possible career paths to achieving goals in the theater by creating a plan that balances work/life including calendar, budget, priorities, and artistic well-being.

Course Materials and Requirements

Assignments

Each of these assignments is designed to explore your options for a career in the arts.

1. Jobs in Theater
2. Lifestyle, City Research
3. Career Plan
4. Attend the Performing Arts Department Main Stage Theater production: *High Anxiety*
5. Informational Interview
6. Final Project — Create Your Own Website

Students are expected to spend a minimum of 1 - 3 hours per week preparing for class.

Papers

1. You will write a two-page paper on your Career Plan outlining goals, priorities, budget, place of residence, etc. Due Feb. 9.
2. You will write a two-page paper documenting your Informational Interview. Due March 9.
3. You will write a two-page paper for your Final Project “Website.” Due May 4.

All papers must be typewritten, double-spaced, using a 12-point font and one-inch margins top, side, and bottom. All papers must be stapled. Papers that are not properly formatted will be marked down by one grade point (A to A– etc.) Late papers are marked down by a grade point grade for each late calendar day (not class meet.)

Exams

Final Exam: TBA.

Presentation of Final Projects Websites

Grading

Grades are based on class participation, fulfillment of physical and written assignments, responsibility to your partners and to the rehearsal process, commitment to growth, and overall disposition (attitude) in class. This is interdisciplinary, process-driven work; writing and physical work are equally important.

Participation, Attitude, Attendance	30%
Written Work	30%
Final Project:	40%

If you do not know where you stand at any point in the semester, please schedule an appointment with your instructor.

Course Texts and/or Materials (suggested)

“10 Ways Being a Theatre Major Prepared Me for Success”

“A Career In Theater Is A Fast Track To Poverty”

“Becoming a Drama Teacher”

“What Can You Do with a Theatre Major?”

“The Artist’s Way” (Cameron)

“How to Audition” (Michael Shurtleff)

Weekly Assignment Schedule (*Subject to change*)

Week One: Jan. 26 — 1st Day
Introductions, Syllabus, Discuss Course Goals and Outcomes. Identify different Careers in Theater. Assign: Research the place you want to call home.

Week Two: Feb. 2
Present “Places” research. Start a journal. Discuss The Artist’s Way. Hand out “10 Ways Being a Theatre Major Prepared Me for Success.” Assign: Creating a Career Plan.

Week Three: Feb. 9
Introduction to Show “business.” Auditions, agents, unions, contracts. Cold readings. Hand out “Audition Tips.”
(*Fri. —Census Date, last day to add*)

Week Four: Feb. 16
Career Plan is due. Time management exercise. Priorities. Money, budgeting, taxes. Guest Artist #1.

Week Five: Feb. 23
Theater tools. Resumes. CV’s. Cover letters. Auditions. Letters of Rec., Networking. Assign: “Informational Interview Assignment.”

Week Six: March 2
URTAs. Regional theaters. Grad school applications. Continuing education. PASJ Alumni Panel.

Week Seven: March 9
Resumes are due. Performing Arts and Social Media. Self-promotion, Creating a web-site. Hand out “A Career In Theater Is A Fast Track To Poverty.”

Week Eight: March 11 — 19
Spring Break — no classes.

Week Nine: March 23
Generating your own work. Arts administrators. Theater and technology. Guest Artist #2.

Week Ten: March 30
Informational Interview Report is due. Teaching. Hand out “Becoming a Drama Teacher.” Attend USF Main Stage Theater Production: *High Anxiety*. Dates: 3/31-4/2, 4/6-4/8. \$5 w/ USF ID.

Week Eleven: April 6
Artists’ well-being, lifestyle. Balancing personal and professional needs. Mock interviews. Research Final Project — Creating Your Website. Attend USF Main Stage Theater Production: *High Anxiety*. Dates: 3/31-4/2, 4/6-4/8. \$5 w/ USF ID.

Week Twelve: April 13
(*Easter Break — No Class on Thurs. 4/13.*)

Week Thirteen: April 20
Field Trip. Guest Artist #3. Final Project first draft due. Life after USF: Transitioning into the next chapter.

Week Fourteen: April 27
Research internships. Hand out “What Can You Do with a Theatre Major?” TBA Presentation: Dale Albright.

Week Fifteen: May 4
Dress rehearsal of Final Project. Final papers are due.

Week Sixteen: May 11*
Final Exam: TBA
(**Last day of classes Thurs. May 11.*)

Performing Arts Department Guidelines

Academic Integrity: The Department of Performing Arts adheres to USF's Academic Honesty Policy outlined in the *Fogcutter*, and all students are expected to be familiar with it. Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: Plagiarism, intentionally or unintentionally representing the words or ideas of another person as your own; failure to properly cite references; manufacturing references; Working with another person when independent work is required; Submission of the same paper in more than one course without the specific permission of each instructor; Submitting a paper written by another person or obtained from the Internet. Penalties for violation of the policy may include a failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, and/or a referral to the Dean and the Committee on Student Academic Honesty. In addition, a letter will be sent to the Associate Dean for Student Academic Services (the letter will remain in your file for two years after you graduate, after which you may petition for its removal.)

Attendance: Learning in Performing Arts classes occurs through interaction, discussion, and hands-on exercises. Students who are late or absent in class deprive other students of the possibility of valuable learning opportunities and disrupt the creative and intellectual atmosphere of the course. As a result, absence and tardiness will have a profound effect on your grade.

You are allowed 1 absence in this course. 3 tardies (arriving late or leaving early) will be considered the same as 1 absence. **After 1 absence, every additional absence will result in the lowering of your final grade 1/3 grade point (ie. a “B” becomes a “B-“).** Students who miss more than 3 classes may be asked to withdraw from the course; if they do not do so, they may be given a failing grade. **Regardless of the reason for absence, if you miss a class, arrive late or leave early, you are responsible for communicating with your instructor about your absence (in advance), finding out what course material and assignments you missed, and completing them on-time. An absence does not exempt you from meeting assignment deadlines.**

The following absences may be excused:

- Illness documented by a physician's note
- Participation in USF intercollegiate competition (ie. athletics, debate)
- Attendance accommodations associated with a disability registered and documented by Student Disability Services

If you find yourself facing exceptional circumstances (i.e. an unanticipated medical or personal problem that requires immediate attention) during the semester, please see your instructor about possible accommodations. Such situations might include prolonged illness or family crises such as major illness, death or other unusual circumstances. In these cases, we will work together to preserve your participation in the course, or to determine if an “incomplete” is advisable. In some cases, dropping the course may be the best alternative. Your job is to let your instructor know as soon as possible what your situation is so that s/he can develop a good strategy for dealing with it.

Use of Technology: You may not use cell phones or other electronic devices during class. Please be sure to turn off all such devices before the start of class so that they do not disrupt the learning environment.

Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Student Disability Services, (SDS) 422-6876 as early as possible in the semester.

**THERE IS NO FOOD OR DRINK (EXCEPT WATER) PERMITTED
IN PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT CLASSROOMS.**



**UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO'S PERFORMING ARTS DEPARTMENT
PERFORMING ARTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE MAJOR (PASJ)**

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Department offers the unique Performing Arts and Social Justice major, with concentrations in dance, music, and theater. The faculty and staff are committed to providing coursework, activities, and productions that acknowledge and study the performing arts' role as an agent of creative and social change. We strive to achieve academic and artistic excellence in the classroom, on stage, and in the community, offering students professional preparation for a variety of careers in the performing arts, as well as for further study, while working towards a more humane and just society.

LEARNING GOALS

1. Students will gain a historical foundation of the Performing Arts (Music, Theater, and Dance) and associated performance theories, through a lens of cultural diversity, social context, and community engagement.
2. Students will develop technical and conceptual skills related to the practice of their craft while engaging in both individual and collaborative creative processes.
3. Students will gain a foundation in the theory and practical skills involved in community based artistic work and artistic engagements that contribute to a more inclusive and just society.