

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO'S PERFORMING ARTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE MAJOR
THTR 220 01 ACTING II: SCENE STUDY
T/R 2:40pm – 4:25pm Studio Theater LM 152
Fall 2019 | CRN: 42017

Instructor: Ken Sonkin
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Office Hours: T/R 11:30am – 12:30pm

Course Description

This is an intermediate acting course for PASJ majors and minors, designed to introduce you to the ideas and practices of in-depth scene study. Each student will be asked to participate in various acting exercises, games, and scenes from a range of styles and genres. Text analysis, scoring a scene, problem solving, and playing action/objectives are some of the tools offered to help students understand the complicated interactions of the human condition. Improvisation, observation, movement, and character exploration are used in order to free up the actor, allowing him or her to play, and return to a “child-like desire of make believe.” Combining the teachings of Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, Michael Chekhov, and Laban, students will experience different applications of scene work in socially relevant performing arts. **Students are expected to spend a minimum of 1-3 hours per week outside of class rehearsing and preparing their scenes.**

Serving as a Final Exam, a class project will be presented as a public performance during the **week of Dec. 9, 2019**. Students will learn to enrich their scene work through concentrated and collaborative work with other students as well as with instructor. Most importantly, each student will learn to risk something of their own humanity while bringing their acting choices to life.

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 actors with a variety of approaches to scene study. (*meets PASJ goals 1 & 2.*)
- to understand the role of the actor and discuss the importance of contemporary changes in theory and practice in theatre, (traditional and non-traditional). (*meets PASJ goal 1.*)
- to express themes and ideas relevant to various acting theories by writing in depth scene study analyses. (*meets PASJ goal 2.*)
- to develop actors with a sense of individual artistry in socially relevant performing arts. (*meets PASJ goal 1.*)

Course Learning Outcomes*

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

- explore the basic elements of relationships and dramatic action through scoring a scene.
- demonstrate a critical and working vocabulary including the emotional, physical, psychological, and spiritual life of a character to be used in scene work.
- research and write a character biography and scene analysis.
- make strong choices using imagination, truthful communication, observation, personalization, text work, character research, physical actions, and objectives.

*Assessed through classroom participation activities, written work, and midterm/final scenes.

Course Materials and Requirements

Assignments

Each of these assignments is designed to explore your ability to immerse yourself in imaginary circumstances while communicating truthfully. You will learn different acting techniques to help you better understand the human condition through both comedy and drama.

1. Personal Monologue (individual, partner)
2. Midterm Scene (partner)
3. Attend the Performing Arts Department Main Stage Theater production
4. Final Scene/Project (partner)

Students are expected to spend a minimum of 1 - 3 hours per week with their partner outside of class rehearsing and preparing their scenes.

Papers

1. You will write a two-page paper on your Personal Monologue. Memorized. **Due on Tues. 8/27**
2. You will write a two-page Scene Analysis paper for your Midterm Scene including text analysis, research, choices, social context, relationships, archetypes, given circumstances, 3 pictures (relationship, environment, character). **Due on Tues. 10/8.**
3. You will write a two-page Character Biography for your Final Scene including research, text analysis, rehearsal process, acting choices, touching points, author biography, social context, etc. **Due Tues. 12/3.**

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

Midterm:	Tues. 10/8	Presentation of Midterm Scenes
Final Exam:	Week of 12/9*	Presentation of Final Scenes (*Final Exam Week TBD)

Course Texts and/or Materials (suggested)

An Actor Prepares (Stanislavski)
Respect for Acting and Challenges for the Actor (Uta Hagen)
The First Six Lessons in Acting (Boleslavsky)
A Sense of Direction (William Ball)
Theory of Movement (Laban)
How to Audition (Michael Shurtleff)
Anatomy of a Choice (M. Vaughn)
A Practical Handbook for the Actor (Bruder, Cohn, Olnek, Pollack, Previto, and Zigler)

Handouts (provided by instructor)

Acting Class Biography	Final Scene, Play
Code of Ethics	Reading a Play
Truth/Lie Assignment	Research Assignment
Neutral Scenes	Character Outline
Text Analysis	Character Biography Assignment

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.

1st Half of the Semester

Participation, Attitude, Attendance	12
Personal Monologue	6
Research	10
Scene Analysis paper	10
Midterm Scene	10

Possible Points: **48**

2nd Half of the Semester

Participation, Attitude, Attendance	12
Research	10
Character Bio	10
Final Scene	20

Possible Points: **52**

Total: **100**

Grading Scale

97-100	Excellent	A	73-76	Average	C
93-96		A-	70-72		C-
89-92		B+	67-69		D+
85-88	Very Good	B	63-66		D
81-84	Good	B-	60-62		D-
77-80	Above Average	C+	0-59	Failing	F

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

Weekly Assignment Schedule (Subject to change)

Week One: Aug. 20* – 22
Introductions, Syllabus, Ball - Name, Line-up,
Discuss Course Goals and Outcomes. Assign:
Personal Monologue
(*Performing Arts Open House: Thurs. 8/22
8-9:30pm Studio Theater.*)

Week Two: Aug. 27 – 29
Warm-Up, Shoe Pile, Interview, Begin Personal
Monologue, Mirror.
(*Auditions Fall Main Stage: Freedom of the City
Monday 8/26 & Tuesday 8/27, 7:00 - 10:00 PM,
Studio Theater*)

Week Three: Sept. 3 – 5
Sensorial - SFX, Trust Circle, Blind Walk, Hand
out Midterm Scenes. Reading a Play Handout.
(*Labor Day: No classes Mon. 9/2.*)

Week Four: Sept. 10 – 12
Begin Scene #2. Intro to Text Analysis,
Archetypes, Creating an Environment. Press
Conference. Assign: Research topics.

Week Five: Sept. 17 – 19
Personalization, Gift in a Box, Positive, Negative,
Neutral Objects. Research presentations.

Week Six: Sept. 24 – 26
Scene work, Character Biography. Points of
concentration, Scoring a script. Physical Action.

Week Seven: Oct. 1 – 3
Dress rehearsal. Status, Inner Monologue.

Week Eight: Oct. 8 – 10
Character Biography Due.
Presentation of Scenes (Midterm) Tues. 10/8.
Critique. Hand out New Scenes. Partners
assigned. "Time, Place, and Action."

Week Nine: Oct. 15 – 17
"Reading a play." Rehearsing a scene.
(*Fall Break: No classes October 14-15*)
*Freedom of the City: 10/17 – 10/19 @ 8 pm.
Studio Theater. \$5 w/ USF ID.*

Week Ten: Oct. 22 – 24
Rhythm and movement work. Yat/Laban. Leap of
Faith. Character Obituary.
*Freedom of the City: 10/24 – 10/26 @ 8 pm.
Studio Theater. \$5 w/ USF ID.*

Week Eleven: Oct. 29 – 31
Audition technique. Cold readings. Field Trip,
Character conditions and obstacles, Invisible
Envelope, Animal exploration.

Week Twelve: Nov. 5 – 7
Research. Scene work - 1st round Critique,
Morning Routine, Hunter / Hunted. Playing
Objectives, Actions.

Week Thirteen: Nov. 12 – 14
Scene work. Character as a Child, Choices.
Touching Points.

Week Fourteen: Nov. 19 – 21
Rehearsal of Final Scenes, Physical Action.
Psychological Gesture.

Week Fifteen: Nov. 26 – 28*
Scene work. Character Secret.
(**Thanksgiving Break: No class Thurs. 11/28.*)

Week Sixteen: Dec. 3 – 5*
Dress Rehearsal. Character Biographies due:
12/3. (**Tues. 12/3 — Last day of classes.*)
(**Weds. 12/4 End of Semester Theater Showing
@ 8:30pm.*)

Final Exam: Final Scenes week of 12/9

Performing Arts Department Guidelines

Academic Integrity: As a Jesuit institution committed to *cura personalis*—the care and education of the whole person—USF has an obligation to embody and foster the values of honesty and integrity. USF upholds the standards of honesty and integrity from all members of the academic community. All students are expected to know and adhere to the University's Honor Code. You can find the full text of the code online at www.usfca.edu/academic_integrity. The policy covers:

- 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.
- The 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 Academic Integrity Committee.

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 3 absences in this course. 3 tardies (arriving late or leaving early) will be considered the same as 1 absence. After 3 absences, every additional absence will result in the lowering of your final grade 1/3 grade point (i.e. a “B” becomes a “B-”). Students who miss more than 4 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 (i.e. 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.

Students with Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability or disabling condition, or if you think you may have a disability, please contact USF Student Disability Services (SDS) at (415) 422-2613 within the first week of class, or immediately upon onset of disability, to speak with a disability specialist. If you are determined eligible for reasonable accommodations, please meet with your disability specialist so they can arrange to have your accommodation letter sent to me, and we will discuss your needs for this course. For more information, please visit: <http://www.usfca.edu/sds> or call (415) 422-2613.

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

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.

Behavioral Expectations: All students are expected to behave in accordance with the Student Conduct Code and other University policies (see <http://www.usfca.edu/fogcutter/>). Open discussion and disagreement is encouraged when done respectfully and in the spirit of academic discourse. There are also a variety of behaviors that, while not against a specific University policy, may create disruption in this course. Students whose behavior is disruptive or who fail to comply with the instructor may be dismissed from the class for the remainder of the class period and may need to meet with the instructor or Dean prior to returning to the next class period. If necessary, referrals may also be made to the Student Conduct process for violations of the Student Conduct Code.

Learning & Writing Center: The Learning & Writing Center provides assistance to all USF students in pursuit of academic success. Peer tutors provide regular review and practice of course materials in the subjects of Math, Science, Business, Economics, Nursing and Languages. Other content areas can be made available by student request. To schedule an appointment, log on to TutorTrac at <https://tutortrac.usfca.edu>. Students may also take advantage of writing support provided by Rhetoric and Language Department instructors and academic study skills support provided by Learning Center professional staff. For more information about these services contact the Learning & Writing Center at (415) 422-6713, email: lwc@usfca.edu or stop by our office in Cowell 215. Information can also be found on our website at www.usfca.edu/lwc.

Counseling and Psychological Services: Our diverse staff offers brief individual, couple, and group counseling to student members of our community. CAPS services are confidential and free of charge. Call (415) 422-6352 for an initial consultation appointment. Having a crisis at 3 AM? We are still here for you. Telephone consultation through CAPS After Hours is available between the hours of 5:00 PM to 8:30 AM; call the above number and press 2.

Content: If you suspect that specific material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, we'd be happy to discuss any concerns you may have before the subject comes up in class. Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with the class or with either or both of us afterwards, we welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork. If you ever feel the need to step outside during a class discussion you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the room for a significant time, please make arrangements to get notes from another student or see one of us individually to discuss the situation.

Confidentiality, Mandatory Reporting, and Sexual Assault: As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a faculty member. I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on USFs campus with the University. Here are other resources:

- To report any sexual misconduct, students may visit Anna Bartkowski (UC 5th floor) or see many other options by visiting our website: www.usfca.edu/student_life/safer
- Students may speak to someone confidentially, or report a sexual assault confidentially by contacting Counseling and Psychological Services at (415) 422-6352.
- To find out more about reporting a sexual assault at USF, visit USFs Callisto website at: www.usfca.callistocampus.org.
- For an off-campus resource, contact San Francisco Women Against Rape (SFWAR) (415) 647-7273 (www.sfwar.org).

Student Accounts - Last day to withdraw with tuition reversal: Students who wish to have the tuition charges reversed on their student account should withdraw from the course(s) by the end of the business day on the last day to withdraw with tuition credit (census date) for the applicable course(s) in which the student is enrolled. Please note that the last day to withdraw with tuition credit may vary by course. The last day to withdraw with tuition credit (census date) listed in the Academic Calendar is applicable only to courses which meet for the standard 15-week semester. To find what the last day to withdraw with tuition credit is for a specific course, please visit the Online Class Schedule at www.usfca.edu/schedules.



**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. Analyze principles, works, and methodologies in the Performing Arts within their socio-historical contexts.
2. Apply technique and conceptual skills to creative and scholarly practices.
3. Explain how the Performing Arts contribute to a humane and just society.
4. Prepare for professional work or graduate studies in Performing Arts and related fields.