



COURSE OUTLINE

Course Number THR105	Course Title Acting II: Principals of Characterization	Credits 3
Hours: 2 Lecture / 2 Lab	Pre-requisite THR104	Implementation Spring 2008

Catalog description (2006-2009 Catalog): A continuation of the skills developed in THR104. The course will focus on the actor's movement and voice skills to support character work. Students will utilize Michael Chekhov's Acting Technique and improvisation to broaden basic acting skills. Attendance at dance, chorus, and theatre productions is required.

Required texts/other materials:

The Articulate Voice: An Introduction to Voice and Diction, by Lynn K. Wells, Allyn & Bacon, 4th Ed.
Spoon River Anthology by Edgar Lee Masters, Signet Classic
Twenty-seven Wagons Full of Cotton and Other Plays, by Tennessee Williams
Tom, the Unknown Tennessee Williams by Lyle Leverich

Revision date: 2008

Course coordinator: Jody P. Person

Information resources: *The Articulate Voice: An Introduction to Voice and Diction* taps into the most current research to clearly and concisely deliver the basics on voice production and techniques for improving pitch, rate, volume, and quality. *Spoon River Anthology* and *Twenty-seven Wagons Full of Cotton* provide text for students to perform, while *Tom, the Unknown Tennessee Williams* offers background and insight into Tennessee Williams which students can then incorporate into their preparation for performing his one-act plays.

Other learning resources: Our library and the county system contain a collection of relevant books, videos, recordings, and electronic databases to supplement the students' learning, including: *Lessons for the Professional Actor* by Michael Chekhov; *Michael Chekhov's to the Director and Playwright*, compiled and written by Charles Leonard; *Michael Chekhov* by Franc Chamberlain; *To the Actor* by Michael Chekhov; and *On Theatre and the Art of Acting Five Hour CD Master Class*, by Michael Chekhov.

Course Competencies/Goals:

The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate heightened physical and vocal abilities in order to increase creative expression and stage presence, and to enhance characterization.
2. Demonstrate a technical approach to developing the actor's voice for the stage including vocal freedom; breathe control, diction, projection, relaxation, and range in order to enhance characterization.
3. Demonstrate a technical approach to developing the actor's physical instrument for the stage including alignment, releasing tension, grounding, and self-awareness.
4. Demonstrate creative freedom and spontaneity through improvisational exercises and scene work.
5. Demonstrate advanced listening, imagination and interactive skills.
6. Demonstrate ensemble or group interaction through the development and performance of material created using improvisation and the Chekhov technique.
7. Apply enhanced vocal, movement, and acting skills to the analysis and performance of a monologue.
8. Analyze acting, vocal, and movement skills through observation of live theatrical productions, their own work, and the work of their peers.
9. Describe and discuss the life and work of an important dramatist (Tennessee Williams) and use this knowledge to enrich their performance of scenes from his plays. Students will research and compile an online MySpace profile representing his biography.

Course-specific General Education Knowledge Goals and Core Skills.

General Education Knowledge Goals

Goal 1. Communication. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Goal 4. Technology. Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

Goal 6. Humanities. Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

MCCC Core Skills

Goal A. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in speech and writing, and demonstrate proficiency in reading.

Goal B. Critical Thinking and Problem-solving. Students will use critical thinking and problem solving skills in analyzing information.

Goal E. Computer Literacy. Students will use computers to access, analyze or present information, solve problems, and communicate with others.

Goal F. Collaboration and Cooperation. Students will develop the interpersonal skills required for effective performance in group situations.

Units of study in detail.

Unit I: Chekhov Technique and Improvisation

The student will be able to

- Demonstrate heightened physical abilities in order to increase creative expression and stage presence, and to enhance characterization. **(Course Competency 1)**
- Demonstrate creative freedom and spontaneity through technique and improvisational exercises. **(Course Competency 4)**
- Demonstrate advanced listening, imagination and interactive skills. **(Course Competency 5; Core Skills B & F)**
- Demonstrate ensemble or group interaction through the development and performance of material created using improvisation and masks. **(Course Competency 6; Core Skill F)**

Unit II: Movement

The student will be able to

- Demonstrate heightened physical abilities in order to increase creative expression and stage presence, and to enhance characterization. **(Course Competency 1)**
- Demonstrate a technical approach to developing the actor's physical instrument for the stage including alignment, releasing tension, grounding, and self-awareness. **(Course Competency 3; Gen Ed Goal 6)**

Unit III: Voice

The student will be able to

- Demonstrate heightened vocal abilities in order to increase creative expression and stage presence, and to enhance characterization. **(Course Competencies 1)**
- Demonstrate a technical approach to developing the actor's voice for the stage including vocal freedom; breathe control, diction, projection, relaxation, and range in order to enhance characterization. **(Course Competency 2)**
- Apply enhanced vocal skills to the analysis and performance of a poem. **(Course Competency 7; Gen Ed Goal 6)**
- Analyze appropriate vocal qualities through observation of live theatrical productions, their own work, and the work of their peers. **(Course Competency 8)**

Unit IV: Tennessee Williams Project and Scene Work

The student will be able to

- Describe and discuss the life and work of an important dramatist (Tennessee Williams) and use this knowledge to enrich their performance of scenes from his plays. **(Course Competency 9; Gen Ed Goals 1 & 6)**
- Research and compile an online MySpace profile representing his biography. **(Course Competency 9; Gen Ed Goals 1, 4 & 6; Core Skills A & E)**

Evaluation of student learning:

1. Active participation in class exercises developing approaches to the actor's physical instrument for the stage including alignment, releasing tension, grounding, and self-awareness.
2. Active participation in class exercises using Michael Chekhov's Technique to expand movement vocabulary.
3. Active participation in class exercises using Michael Chekhov's Technique to create various characters.
4. Paper analyzing movement choices for a dramatic scene using Michael Chekhov's Technique and other improvisational exercises.
5. Small group performance of one-act plays by Tennessee Williams.
6. Active participation in class vocal exercises.
7. Analysis and performance of a poem from *Spoon River Anthology*.
8. Students will be required to see two professional, live productions and analyze the vocal and movement skills of the actors using information acquired in class. Students must obtain the instructor's approval for each production.

Academic Integrity Statement: Students are expected to comply with the college-wide requirements for academic integrity. Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic Integrity—the honest, fair, and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud or deception. This implies that students are expected to be responsible for their own work. Presenting another individual's work as one's own and receiving excessive help from another individual will qualify as a violation of Academic Integrity. The entire policy on Academic Integrity is located in the Student handbook and is found on the college website (http://www.mccc.edu/admissions_policies_integrity.shtml).