

**DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING ARTS****ACTING 3 -- ADVANCED SCENE STUDY  
(THAR 030)**

Fall Term 2005

Section 1001: Monday - Wednesday – 1:00 - 2:50 – ST295

Instructor: John Schneider

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Office hours by appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION*****Required text:***Benedetti, Robert. *The Actor At Work ( Ninth Edition)****Course focus:***

In this course, you will build on the acting fundamentals developed in THAR 010 AND 011 and integrate those skills into scene work. You will study and practice techniques for playing action and creating character which are standard in the field.

***Course objectives:*****At the conclusion of this course students will be able to:**

- Demonstrate an advanced level of acting skill and artistry.
- Demonstrate an ability to analyze and interpret a dramatic text with an understanding of the structure and function of a scene, the given circumstances, the units of action, and the characters' objectives and traits.
- Produce a comprehensive written performance score.
- Employ the vocabulary and concepts common to contemporary theatre in the United States to analyze and discuss the work of other actors.
- Meet the challenges and goals of rehearsal including learning lines accurately and on schedule.

***Course requirements:***

Talent will not be graded in this course, but accomplishment will be. Grades will be determined by 1) class participation including fully committed scene work which gives evidence of adequate rehearsal, lines learned on time, thoughtful self-criticism, constructive reflection on the work of your classmates, and full commitment to all exercises including the written ones that I will assign (30%); 2) three papers of 2-3 pages in length in which you will reflect on specific aspects of the acting in plays you will view (10% for each paper); 3) a written score for the second of the two scenes you will rehearse and present (20%); and 4) the onstage evidence of your ability to apply the techniques we will study to your work in the scenes you will rehearse and present (10% for each scene). A more complete description of each requirement follows.

**Class participation (30% of your grade)** -- This is a studio class. You will learn through performing for your classmates, through carefully observing the performance work of your classmates, and through discussion with your classmates and instructor about the performance work. You will learn from doing the performance exercises during class, and from thoughtfully and comprehensively completing the related written exercises outside class time which will support the class work and your ability to participate in the discussions. Absence affects not only you, but your scene partners and the class as a whole. Therefore:

- ✓ **Students are allowed two un-excused absences and two excused absences.** The excused absence is for an **emergency** only. Emergencies are defined as severe illness, hospitalization, or a death in the family. Exams, papers, and late night rehearsals are *not* emergencies. In order for an absence to be excused, the student must have a note from a doctor, parent, or supervisor stating the reason for the absence. The telephone number of the authorized person must be on the note so the instructor may verify the reason.
- ✓ **After the absences have been used, additional absences will lower your grade by one level (for example, A to AB) per additional absence.**
- ✓ **Students must take responsibility for leaving a message on the instructor's voice mail if they do not plan to be in class.**
- ✓ **No late arrival.** If you are not in class on time, you may be marked absent.

**Papers (30% of your grade)** – You will view (or perform in) 3 plays:

Marquette University productions at the Helfaer Theatre:

- 1) ***Everyman*** (September 29 – Oct 16)
- 2) ***The Trial of the Catonsville Nine*** (November 10 – 20)
- 3) A professional theatre production of your choosing subject to my advance approval. The Milwaukee Chamber Theatre production of ***Brighton Beach Memoirs*** (October 14 – 30) at the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway, 291-7800, is approved.

You will discuss specific aspects of the acting in each play in a two-three page paper. I will assign the subjects for discussion by the opening night of each production. The paper must address those subjects. The quality and originality of your thinking will be major criteria in grading. You will be expected to discuss the performances you've viewed in the light of the concepts and techniques we will study in class.

I will expect the papers to be largely free of errors in spelling and grammar, to reflect a workable command of style, and to make thoughtful points clearly. Poorly written papers will receive lower grades.

The deadlines for the papers (you can also do them earlier) are:

**Everyman** – Monday, October 17

**Catonsville Nine** – Monday, November 21

**Third Paper** – if you choose the Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, the paper will be due on Wednesday, November 2; otherwise, we'll set the date when we agree on the play.

**Written score (20% of your grade)** – In a format I will give you, you will write a comprehensive score for your performance in the second of your two scenes. You will include all the elements of the technique that we will study in your score. Even if your understanding of these techniques is not fully apparent in your final performance of the scene, the written score will show whether you have understood the concepts. The deadline for the written score is the last day of class -- Wednesday, December 7.

**Performance (20% of your grade)** -- Scene study is the primary focus of the class. I will assign scenes and scene partners. You will work on the scenes in class and outside class to prepare them for a final presentation. The quality of your final presentations will reflect the quality of the rehearsal and other preparation time you have allowed yourselves. *You will have to make a serious commitment to rehearsal outside of class or there can be no growth in class.* You will have to carefully read the plays from which your scene is taken, learn your lines, and be prepared for all presentations *on schedule*. Think of it as a professional situation: if you don't keep up, if you come to work unprepared, the entire company will suffer and you won't last long in the business. *If you feel you can't commit yourself to working with a partner on a consistent basis outside the class time, please drop the course.*

You will give a last performance your first scene for the class, during class time, on Wednesday, Oct. 19.

You will perform your second scene for the entire department on Thursday evening, December 8, at 6:00 PM in ST295.

Here are the broad criteria I will use in assigning a grade to your performance work:

A: Your performance has excellence; the interpretation illuminates the play for this time, and is personal and imaginative; your work inspires your partner

AB - B: Your performance is solid; if there are mistakes, they are not

distracting; the interpretation is valid; you connect with your partner successfully

BC - C: Your performance has distracting mistakes; the interpretation is vague or misleading; your fail to connect well with your partner

CD - D: The performance is poor; little or nothing is communicated; your work detracts from the work of your partner

F – Failure to do the work; sabotage of your partner through failure to rehearse

### ***Classroom policies:***

- ❖ When you arrive, begin to prepare yourself to work. Get focused.
- ❖ No eating or gum-chewing is allowed in class. Beverages are allowed but must be in a spill-proof container.
- ❖ For scene work, dress and shoes should be appropriate for your character. Otherwise, wear loose-fitting clothes – accessory free – that you can move and work on the floor in.
- ❖ Leave the space as you found it. Help clean up at the end of class.

### ***Other requirements:***

You are required to audition for the student directing projects.

You are required to attend all final class viewings at the end of the semester:

ACTING I – Thursday, December 1, 6:00 PM in ST295

DIRECTING – Sunday, December 4, 2:00 PM in Studio 13

ACTING 5 – Monday, December 5, 7:00 PM in the Helfaer

### **Tentative Schedule**

<b><u>Week</u></b>	<b><u>Dates</u></b>	<b><u>General Topic</u></b>	<b><u>Assignments Due</u></b>
Week 1	Aug. 29 Aug. 31	Introduction to class Exercises	
Week 2	Sept. 5 Sept. 7	OFF (Labor Day) Exercises	
Week 3	Sept. 12 Sept. 14	Scene assignments Scene work	
Week 4	Sept. 19 Sept. 21	Scene work Scene work	

Week 5	Sept. 26 Sept. 28	Scene work Scene work	
Week 6	Oct. 3 Oct. 5	Scene work Scene work	
Week 7	Oct. 10 Oct. 12	Scene work Scene work	
Week 8	Oct. 17 Oct. 19	Scene work Perform scenes	<i>Everyman</i> paper due
MIDTERM BREAK			
Week 9	Oct. 24 Oct. 26	Assign scenes Scene work	
Week 10	Oct. 31 Nov. 2	Scene work Scene work	<i>Chamber</i> paper due
Week 11	Nov. 7 Nov. 9	Scene work Scene work	
Week 12	Nov. 14 Nov. 16	Scene work Scene work	
Week 13	Nov. 21 Nov. 23	Scene work OFF (Thanksgiving)	<i>Catonsville</i> paper due
Week 14	Nov. 28 Nov. 30 Dec. 1	Scene work Scene work View acting one scenes, 6 PM	
Week 15	Dec. 4 Dec. 5 Dec. 7 Dec. 8	View directing scenes, 2 PM Scene work; View Acting 5 scenes, 7 PM Scene work PERFORM SCENES FOR THE DEPARTMENT, 6 PM	<i>Written score</i> due