**University at Albany Department of Theatre**

**VOICE for the THEATRE**

**ATHR 343Y**

**Fall 2015**

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**Class Time:** Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4:15-5:35

**Class Location:** PAC 53

**Instructor:** Marnie Andrews

**Email:** [mandrews@albany.edu](mailto:mandrews@albany.edu)

**Office Phone:** 917-701-4424

**Office Hours:** Tuesday, Thursday, 12-1 & 3-4, by appt. only

**Office Location:** PAC 346

**Catalog Number:** THR 343Y-0001 Class #9873

Required Book: “**Speak with Distinction,”** Edith Skinner.( Avail U/Albany bookstore.)

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**Course Description:** The study of voice production for the stage and for recording, employing exercises in relaxation, breathing and resonance designed to liberate the individual’s optimum natural voice. Exercises include projection in a variety of performance spaces with emphasis on text presentation. The course is designed for the professional actor, but will work for any student wishing to improve to quality of the voice through exercises in the class and practice outside of class. Students are expected to attend all classes and develop the quality of his/her voice through exercise work, monologue, song, and understanding the implementation of IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) for greater clarity.

NOTE: This class fulfills the general education requirement.

**Course Goals: Syllabus may change with class skills. Theatre is a collaborative art.**

*By the end of this course, students will:*

* Identify at least one of his or her vocal/speech problem areas.
* Understand and be able to demonstrate exercises used to improve problem areas.
* Develop a comprehensive personal voice and speech warm-up based on the techniques introduced throughout the course.
* Prepare text on the page for rehearsal, utilizing phonetic markings introduced throughout the course.
* Perform two different styles of text.

**Specific Skill Areas to be Developed:**

* Breath: developing breath control, efficient breathing habits, exhalation with minimal effort.
* Vocal Production: pitch, inflection, vocal quality (freedom from nasality, tension or breathiness), and projection.
* Rate and flow of speech.
* Articulation: learning to recognize and reproduce appropriate speech sounds of Standard American English.
* **Texts:** The Actor Speaks by Patsy Rodenburg, Speak With Distinction by Edith Skinner (can be shared between students.)

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**Class Preparation: Always come prepared to work, as in workout, in clothes you can get on the floor and stretch in. No heels or sandals. You will often work without shoes, so have socks available.**

**Once you have learned relaxation and warm-up techniques, you are expected to be warmed up by the time you present in class.**

**Grading:**

* **Attendance is mandatory**. You are allowed ONE unexcused absence.Beyond that, your grade is affected. If you arrive late, after 10 minutes of class, you will not be allowed in without my prior consent. Two late arrivals equal an unexcused absence.Three unexcused absences may result in failure of the course. An absence is excused by an official doctor’s note or a official’s note. I must be called ahead if you will be late.
* **40 % Performance**: You will speak in every class. You will be reading some things cold and from the Skinner text in class**.** You will choose and work on **three** different performance texts throughout the course: 1. Shakespearean sonnet or monologue. 2. A song or modern monologue. Both are two minutes, maximum.3. Five minutes of texts you have chosen to best represent youwill be the final. **These you choose and perform at different points during the semester.**
* Your final grade is based upon the progress you have made throughout the process.
* **20 % Text Preparation**: For the first two performances, you will be required to submit a copy of your text prepared in the following manner:
  + Marked with vowel phonetic symbols.
  + Type written and double spaced.
  + A second clear copy without markings for my records.
* **20 % Mid-Year**: After choosing your piece, you will read the text while being recorded. During the week of mid-year exams, you will read/perform the text that you recorded at the beginning of the semester. Your grade is comprised of your progress in the areas of text preparation, vocal production and diction. You will also be graded on your team presentations of IPA.
* **20% Final-Exam**: For the final, you will choose up to five minutes of text to present to the class. (Do not exceed five minutes, or your grade will be affected.) You will be graded on your progress from the start of class to the final. For the FINAL, submit only the copy of the texts, without IPA markings to your instructor before you perform. There will be an IPA game to test your skills in recognizing that alphabet.

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**A note on all assignments:**

* Late Assignments: your grade goes down one letter every day.
* **Arrive ready to work**: As each class begins with a warm-up, wear the right clothes. Be prepared to exercise: tight jeans, work boots, skirts, heels, low-riding pants, etc. will get in your way when warming up
* ALWAYS have a PENCIL for marking your text. Coming to class unprepared will cause your grade to go down.
* All students taking theatre classes are required to **attend all Theatre Department Productions**. Not attending is considered an absence. Ticket stub must be submitted.
* The only way to progress in this class is through regular and frequent practice.

**Date of Class: Topic:**

August 27th Introductions. Learning to warm-up. Diaphragm.

Audition prep, Fall plays

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September 1st Introduction to IPA and exercises. “Speak with Distinction.”Assign teams for flash cards

Intro Laban. Choose a sonnet, bring to next class.

September 3rd Do IPA on your sonnet choice.

By hand (no internet.) Playing with sonnets

September 8th Text work-round 1 IPA Team 1.-Laban

September 10th Cold readings. IPA Team. Text from book

September 15th Begin research on project. Text work-round 2. IPA Team 2. Laban.

September 17 Intro to “scoring a text.”

work-round 3. IPA Team 3. Laban Sonnet IPA due

September 22nd NO CLASS. Holiday

September 24th 1st Text work-. Team 4 IPA Bring 1st reading choice to class. (No self-written poems, no children’s poems; eg: Dr. Seuss—not a good choice, Walt Whitman, Grace Paley— good choices.) Sign up for a recording. NOTE: You must first SELECT and have my approval on the text being used for the recording--this first serves as my initial analysis of your voice, and then becomes the text for your mid-year. Choose what you will enjoy working on during the semester

September 29th Feedback and excerpts from reading.

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October 6th Cold readings-round 1.

October 8th Movement with text

October 9th-11th “REUNIONS: Re-Unions” ATTENDANCE REQUIRED

October 13th Articulators. Cold readings-round 2

October 15th 1st IPA flash session

October 20th Circles of concentration

October 22nd Possible choices from final 1. 2nd IPA Flash session

October 27th Possible choices from final 2. 3rd IPA Flash session

October 29th Intro to recording. Assigned book excerpts.

November 3rd  Group 1. Record

November 5th Group 2. Record

**November 5th-14th** “Good Kids” ATTENDANCE REQUIRED.

November 10th Singing preparation. (concert Hall?) Choose a song.

November 12th Perform Songs Group 1

November 17th Perform Songs, Group 2

November 1 4th IPA Flash session. Auditioning using vocal skills

November 24th Auditioning Shakespeare or text plays

November 26th NO CLASS HAPPY THANKSGIVING

December 1st Advanced Voice Recording. Recorded Books.

December 3rd Perform Finals

December 8th Perform Finals

Exam IPA cards/Speaking in Main Hall

**General Education Requirements:** **Learning Objectives are as follows:**

* communicate ideas (creative, expressive, intuitive, intellectual) according to a specific set of criteria
* establish and maintain an appropriate performer/audience relationship in a given oral exercise, and actively engage with listeners/audience
* respond to and, where appropriate, incorporate listener's comments and questions
* critique, orally or in writing, an oral performance.

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| **Grade Scale** | **Grade Conversion** |  | **Grade Scale** | **Grade Conversion** |
| 93-100 | A |  | 73-76 | C |
| 90-92 | A- |  | 70-72 | C- |
| 87-89 | B+ |  | 67-69 | D+ |
| 83-86 | B |  | 63-66 | D |
| 80-82 | B- |  | 60-62 | D- |
| 77-79 | C+ |  | Grade < 60 | E |