

# Acting I

Theatre 251, 3 Credits  
Course Syllabus, Fall 2015  
Iowa State University

*“True power is in the individual’s ability to move from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.” – Winston Churchill*

## **Instructor Information:**

**Instructor:** Adrien Logsdon  
**Office Hours:** Scheduled by appointment.  
**Phone:** 641-980-8038  
**E-mail:** adrien@iastate.edu

## **Course Description:**

Theory and practice in fundamentals of acting including the actor’s process, improvisation, ensemble work, and stage vocabulary.

## **Meeting Information:**

**Time:** 12:10-1:00 PM, M W F  
**Room:** Pearson 2140

## **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify and effectively apply fundamental acting vocabulary, techniques, and processes in practical acting situations.
- Use and integrate acting skills, including control of the actor’s instrument (voice and body), collaboration, play instinct, imagination, flexibility, courage, focus, discipline, and communication.
- Build effective collaborations through creativity, self-awareness, confidence, and sensitivity to self and others.

## **Methods of Instruction:**

This class involves intellectual and experiential exploration of the acting process. The plan of study for this course includes:

In-class demonstrations and explorations

Laboratory activities designed to help students put theory into practice

Homework assignments

Observation of live performance within and outside of class

Self and peer critiques

## **Course Evaluation (1000 points possible):**

Attendance, Preparation, and Engaged Participation	300pts
<i>Note: Acting 251 students must attend all university theatre productions.</i>	
Monologue Project (Performance & Analysis)	150pts
Scene Project (Performance & Analysis)	150pts
Audition Project	50pts
Warm-Ups	100pts
Terminology	100pts
Acting Journal	150pts

**Attendance:**

Attendance is vital to success in this class. As with any rehearsal or performance, absences affect both the individual student's progress and the progress of the class as a whole. Be on time, dressed in comfortable clothes and shoes that allow you to move, bend, sit on the floor, etc. You will be expected to participate fully in class exercises and to rehearse and memorize performance projects outside of class time.

**Each student is permitted two unexcused absences in this course.** Each subsequent unexcused absence will automatically lower the "Preparation and Participation" grade by 15 points. It is possible to achieve negative points in this category.

An excused absence is defined as: 1) a medical emergency or illness, 2) death in the immediate family (grandparents included), 3) university sanctioned activities. Official documentation and advance notification is required for an absence to count as "excused."

**Note: Arriving late to class more than once will impact your attendance grade.**

**Deadlines:**

Assignments are due in class on the day assigned. Assignments will drop one letter grade for each day that they are late. **An assignment turned in after class time will be considered one day late, so plan ahead.** Save your work, have ink in your printer, keep your dog from eating your thumb drive, etc.

**Assignments due on the date of campus-sanctioned activity absences must be turned in prior to the absence date.** The student is responsible for making up all work missed because of absences.

**Play Attendance:**

**Students must attend the following ISU Theatre productions:** *Treasure Island* (Oct. 2-11), *The Magic Flute* (Nov. 5-8), and *Love and Information* (Dec. 4-13).

Tickets can be purchased at the Stephens box office. You can also see the shows for free by signing up to usher in the Main Theatre Office (Pearson 2130). Failure to attend a production will result in two unexcused absences per production missed.

**Grading Scale:**

**A- to A = 900-1000 pts.** Exceptional work: Always prepared; extensive outside-of-class preparation; self-motivated. Active, positive contributor to class. Punctual; always present. Makes significant improvements in skill and knowledge during semester.

**B- to B+ = 800-899 pts.** Good work: Always prepared; significant outside-of-class preparation; self-motivated. Punctual; always present. Positive contributor to class. Notable improvement in skills and knowledge during semester.

**C-to C+ = 700-799 pts.** Average work: Generally prepared; adequate outside-of-class preparation; often self-motivated. Often contributes to class. Punctual; almost always present. Demonstrates improvement in skills and knowledge during semester.

**D-to D+ = 600-699 pts.** Below average work: Often not prepared; shows lack of outside preparation; rarely self-motivated. Seldom contributes to class and/or may have negative attitude. Sometimes late; some absences. Little skill and knowledge improvement demonstrated during semester.

**F = 599 pts and below.** Unacceptable work: Rarely prepared and lacks adequate outside-of-class preparation; not

motivated. Does not contribute to class and/or may have negative attitude. Not punctual; several absences. Virtually no growth demonstrated in skills and knowledge.

**Please note:**

**The theatre explores the full range of human experience and perspectives. Some of the assigned plays, performances, and class discussions will cover sensitive material that may be offensive to some people. It is not the objective of this course or the instructor to change anyone's worldview, and students will be encouraged to share their opinions and perspectives on material covered throughout the course.**

**University Policy Statements:**

The instructor of this course abides by University policies and regulations concerning attendance, academic honesty (including plagiarism), and all others as stated in the current Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

All work should be your own. Cheating, plagiarism (copying or paraphrasing the ideas of others and passing them off as your own), and other forms of academic dishonesty are very serious issues. Penalties for academic dishonesty may range from failure of the assignment to dismissal from the university. Anyone suspected of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students Office.  
<http://www.dso.iastate.edu/ja/academic/misconduct.html>

**To avoid plagiarism, document the source when using words or ideas from another person's work, (including printed, spoken, and electronic sources).**

**To document direct quotations in APA or MLA style, writers must:**

- ☐ include quotation marks around the material or indent it within the text to indicate their use of the source;
- ☐ provide appropriate parenthetical notation;
- ☐ include the name of the author (if available) or the title (if no author is given) either in the introduction to the quotation or within the parenthetical citation.

**To document a direct quotation in an oral presentation, speakers must:**

- ☐ say the word "quote" to verbally replace written quotation marks; and
- ☐ include the name of the author (if available) or the title (if no author is given) either immediately before or after the quotation.
- ☐ outline oral presentations consistent with the above rules for written material.

**If you paraphrase facts and/or ideas of others, by fully considering the ideas, then stating them in your own words and sentence structure; you must still credit the sources.**

**Disability Accommodations:**

Iowa State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Sect 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you have a disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please contact your instructor to set up a meeting within the first two weeks of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your need. Before meeting with your instructor, you will need to obtain a SAAR form with recommendations for accommodations from the Disability Resources Office, located in Room 1076 on the main floor of the Student Services Building. Their telephone number is 515-294-7220 or email [disabilityresources@iastate.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@iastate.edu). Retroactive requests for accommodations will not be honored.

**Dead Week:** This class follows the Iowa State University Dead Week guidelines as outlined in

<http://catalog.iastate.edu/academiclife/#deadweek>

### **Harassment and Discrimination:**

Iowa State University strives to maintain our campus as a place of work and study for faculty, staff, and students that is free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and harassment based upon race, ethnicity, sex (including sexual assault), pregnancy, color, religion, national origin, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, or status as a U.S. veteran. Any student who has concerns about such behavior should contact his/her instructor, Student Assistance at 515-294-1020 or email [dso-sas@iastate.edu](mailto:dso-sas@iastate.edu), or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance at 515-294-7612.

### **Religious Accommodation:**

If an academic or work requirement conflicts with your religious practices and/or observances, you may request reasonable accommodations. Your request must be in writing, and your instructor or supervisor will review the request. You or your instructor may also seek assistance from the Dean of Students Office or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Compliance.

**Contact Information:** If you are experiencing, or have experienced, a problem with any of the above issues, email [academicissues@iastate.edu](mailto:academicissues@iastate.edu)

### **TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE**

WEEK 1	
M 8/24	Introduction/ The Basics
W 8/26	Discovering the Instrument
F 8/28	Discovering the Instrument
WEEK 2	
M 8/31	Storytelling
W 9/2	Storytelling
F 9/4	Storytelling
WEEK 3	
M 9/7	No Class – Labor Day
W 9/9	Engaging the Instrument
F 9/11	Engaging the Instrument
WEEK 4	
M 9/14	Individual Research

W 9/16	Engaging the Instrument
F 9/18	Engaging the Instrument
WEEK 5	
M 9/21	Creative Play and Improvisation
W 9/23	Creative Play and Improvisation
F 9/25	Creative Play and Improvisation
WEEK 6	
M 9/28	Group Dynamics
W 9/30	Group Dynamics
F 10/2	Group Dynamics
WEEK 7	
M 10/5	Objectives In Practice, <b>Monologue Analysis Due</b>
W 10/7	Objectives In Practice
F 10/9	Monologue Workshop
WEEK 8	
M 10/12	Monologue Workshop, <b>Journals Due</b>
W 10/14	Monologue Workshop
F 10/16	Monologue Workshop
WEEK 9	
M 10/19	Monologue Performances
W 10/21	Monologue Performances
F 10/23	Making Engaging Choices
WEEK 10	
M 10/26	Making Engaging Choices
W 10/28	Making Engaging Choices
F 10/30	Making Engaging Choices
WEEK 11	
M 11/2	Scene Study, <b>Scene Analysis Due</b>
W 11/4	Scene Workshop
F 11/6	Scene Workshop
WEEK 12	
M 11/9	Scene Workshop
W 11/11	Scene Workshop
F 11/13	Scene Workshop
WEEK 13	
M 11/16	Scene Workshop
W 11/18	Scene Workshop
F 11/20	Scene Workshop
<b>WEEK 14: THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>	
WEEK 15	
M 11/30	Audition Basics
W 12/2	Audition Workshop
F 12/4	Audition Workshop
WEEK 16	

M 12/7      **Terminology Exam & Final Journals Due**  
W 12/9      Audition Performances  
F 12/11      Overview

**WEEK 17: Final Exam Week: 12/14 – 12/18**

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**The Ethics of Acting**  
Guidelines for Professionalism in the Classroom and Beyond

Accept responsibility, and abandon excuse making.

Demand excellence in your own work, and expect the same from others.

Embrace the nature of our discipline – we learn by doing, and sometimes by failing.

Respect your collaborators, including your audience.

Never, ever see another's failure as your success.

Practice . . .  
generosity  
humility  
and tact  
. . . in all things