

Voice & Articulation I

THEA 232 – Section 001

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point

Course Syllabus, Fall 2016

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:00 – 10:50 am, NFAC 283

Final Exam Period: Wednesday, December 21, 2:45pm – 4:45pm

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Office Hours: Mon/Wed, 3-4pm

(and by appointment)

PURPOSE

Voice & Articulation I is an introduction to the process of developing a clear, resonant voice for the stage that is responsive to honest impulses, can be heard clearly in a variety of spaces, and free from blocks or other limiting habits. This semester will build the groundwork for vocal practices you will utilize throughout your career. We will be utilizing the teachings of Patsy Rodenburg and Catherine Fitzmaurice to build a foundation of physical awareness, connection to breath, and releasing tension to find the “free and placed” voice. We will be using exercises and wisdom from Kristin Linklater to strengthen resonance and extend pitch range. We will also begin to develop a greater awareness of speech actions and articulation through the teachings of Dudley Knight and Phil Thompson. I will be evaluating the development of your instrument through a variety of activities and performances of different styles of text: primarily poetry this semester.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Enduring Understandings – Through this course, students will understand that...

- The voice is a primary and versatile tool used by actors to project themselves believably into imaginary circumstances.
- The voice and the body are intricately connected. Tension is the enemy of the natural voice.
- Vocal production is directly linked to character need and impulse, and fueled by breath. Specificity of thought shapes articulation.

Essential Questions

- How does the proper use of the body serve the voice?
- What are my personal vocal habits?

Specific Goals

- *Knowledge* – Voice & Articulation I students will be able to...
 - Describe the physical processes that produce voice and speech.
 - Identify and discuss their personal vocal habits (strengths and limitations to be addressed).
 - Identify strategies for maintaining good vocal health under the demands of performance.
- *Skills* – Voice & Articulation I students will be able to...
 - Speak with organic breath support to be heard in a variety of theatre spaces.
 - Broaden their voice’s expressive potential by developing resonance and a wider pitch range.
 - Explore and create every possible sound in human speech.
 - “Mine” text for meaning and “own” spoken language.
- *Dispositions* – Voice & Articulation I students will...
 - Value that voice and speech training takes time, patience, discipline, and above all, curiosity.
 - Value all possible speech actions as useful (and by extension, all accents, dialects and idiolects). Intelligibility is the standard – adaptability is our goal.
 - Celebrate that every voice is as unique as the actor it belongs to.

CLASS POLICIES

Required Text

- Rodenburg, Patsy. **The Actor Speaks: Voice and the Performer.** St. Martin's Press, 2000.

Suggested Texts

- Linklater, Kristin. **Freeing the Natural Voice.** Revised & Expanded. Drama Publishers, 2006.
- Knight, Dudley. **Speaking With Skill: An Introduction to Knight-Thompson Speechwork.** Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2015.

Required Materials

- **Attire** – All students are required to wear clothing that does not restrict movement or obscure the shape of the body. Clothing should be neither too tight nor too baggy. Most athletic apparel will be just fine. No jeans, period. Please remove all jewelry/watches and pull back long hair for class. Depending on the activity, we will either be barefoot or in socks, be prepared for either (i.e. always have socks). If you are not dressed appropriately, you will not be able to participate, which negatively impacts your grade.
- **Water** – Bring a personal water bottle to stay hydrated during class.
- **A Book** – Any book, about two inches thick, to lay your head on during floor work. (*The Actor Speaks* works well...)
- **Notebook** – For class notes & personal journaling.
- **Yoga Mat/Cushion** – Bring your own personal mat and cushion for floor work.

Required Production Attendance

- *Unnecessary Farce* – Studio Theatre – Oct. 14-16, 19-22
- *La Cage Aux Folles* – Jenkins Theatre – Nov. 4-6, 9-12

Class Assignments & Expectations

- **Daily Participation & Attitude** – Includes, but not limited to: a consistent willingness to engage, explore, and play with focus and abandonment; being off-book when due; your growth in the practice of course techniques. This is the bulk of your work in this class.
- **Journal** – You are required to keep a journal of your discoveries, difficulties, and experiences with the exercises in class as well as responses to required readings, and thoughts about your vocal work outside of class (private vocal exercise, production work, etc.). Journal entries will be submitted electronically. Details forthcoming.
- **Monologues** – You will be applying what you learn in this class to a series of 1-to-2 minute monologues of your choice, with my approval. You will be working on these pieces in class, on-book at first, but the work will culminate in off-book performances.
- **Mid-semester Evaluation** – Following the final performance of your mid-semester monologue, you will schedule a private meeting with me to discuss your progress in the voice work. You will complete a self-evaluation and receive feedback from me. Details forthcoming.
- **Vocal Critique Paper** – You will write one brief (1-2 page) paper on the vocal work in a department production. You may choose which production you'd like to write about (although, you may not write about a production in which you are cast). Details forthcoming.
- **Final Exam** – Your final exam will be the final presentation of your second monologue. Details forthcoming.

Final Grade Breakdown

Daily Participation & Growth	25%
Voice/Speech Assignments	10%
Mid-semester Monologue	15%
Final Monologue.....	15%
Vocal Critique Paper	10%
Journal	25%

Grading Scale

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
A	94 – 100	C+	78 – 80
A-	91 – 93	C	74 – 77
B+	88 – 90	C-	71 – 73
B	84 – 87	D+	68 – 70
B-	81 – 83	D	60 – 67

Grading Criteria

A (91 – 100%) – Excellent Work – Student consistently demonstrates strong understanding and application of course materials and techniques. Student is consistently well-prepared for and engaged in all class activities. All assignments are completed on time with the highest degree of quality, demonstrating excellent growth.

B (81 – 90%) – Good Work – Student demonstrates good understanding and application of course materials and techniques, with minor issues in performance. Student is consistently well-prepared and engaged in all class activities. All assignments are completed on time with good quality, demonstrating a good level of growth.

C (71 – 80%) – Mediocre Work – Student demonstrates limited or inconsistent understanding and application of course materials and techniques. Student is mostly present and participates in class. All assignments are completed with enough effort to meet minimum requirements, demonstrating limited growth.

D (60 – 70%) – Poor Work – Student attempts to complete all assignments, but is unable to achieve many requirements. Student demonstrates the minimum level of effort, participation, understanding and growth for a passing grade.

F (Less than 60%) – Failure – Student does not adequately participate in class, complete assignments or adhere to assignment guidelines. No improvement evident.

Attendance & Participation

- Prompt, consistent attendance is essential to your growth in this class. Show up dressed to move and ready to engage!
- You may miss two classes without grading penalty. Every absence thereafter will reduce your final course grade by one full letter (i.e. the best possible grade with 3 absences is a “B”, with 4 absences is a “C”, and so on).
- Six absences results in a failing grade for the course.
- There is no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences in this course; save your absences for when you absolutely need them.
- Arriving more than five minutes late to class counts as half an absence.
- If you fail to deliver a performance on your assigned day, your grade on that assignment will be “0.” Make-up performances will not be arranged.
- If there are exceptional circumstances (i.e. serious health/family emergencies), please speak with me privately, asap. If you develop a physical ailment (injury or illness) that prevents you from participating, please still come to class and observe (unless you’re given specific orders otherwise and obtain my express permission).
- You are allowed **one** observation day – after that, observing will count as an absence. If you are observing, you must take notes in your journal.
- If you are late or miss a class, you are responsible for finding out what work and assignments, if any, might have been missed, by e-mailing me and/or seeing me during office hours.
- If a class should need to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, I will e-mail the class and a note will be placed on the classroom door.

Safety & Comfort

Take care of your instrument. We will be discussing good vocal health practices during the semester, but as any issue presents itself (vocal and/or physical), please let me know immediately so we can address it.

In Voice & Articulation I, students are likely to be in close physical contact with every member of the class at one point or another. I will also be working physically with students to help adjust movements. If you are uncomfortable with this at any point in the semester, please come speak with me privately, asap.

Emergency Response

- In the event of a medical emergency, call 911 or use the red emergency phone located outside NFAC 278 (Jenkins HR Coat Room). Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide emergency responders to victim.
- In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room without window exposure – the restrooms next door.
- See www.uwsp.edu/rmgt/Pages/em/procedures/other/floor-plans for floor plans showing severe weather shelters on campus. Avoid wide-span rooms and buildings.
- In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Meet across Portage Street in Parking Lot R. Notify instructor or emergency command personnel of any missing individuals.
- Active Shooter – Run/Escapes, Hide, Fight. If trapped: hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Follow instructions of emergency responders.
- See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at www.uwsp.edu/rmgt for details on all emergency response at UW-Stevens Point.

UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

UWSP values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, we have developed a set of expectations for all students and instructors. This set of expectations is known as the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, and it is intended to help establish a positive living and learning environment at UWSP. Look here for more information: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Pages/rightsandresponsibilities.aspx>

Academic integrity is central to the mission of higher education in general and UWSP in particular. Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) is taken very seriously. The minimum penalty for a violation of academic integrity is a failure (zero) for the assignment. For more information, see the USP “Student Academic Standards and Disciplinary Procedures” section of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document, Chapter 14, which can be accessed here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

Americans with Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP’s policies, check here:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyinfo.pdf>

If you have a disability and require classroom and/or exam accommodations (even temporarily), please register with the Disability and Assistive Technology Center and then contact me as soon as possible. I am happy to help in any way I can. For more information, please visit the Disability and Assistive Technology Center, located on the 6th floor of the Learning Resource Center (the Library). You can also find more information here:

<http://www4.uwsp.edu/special/disability/>

Religious Beliefs

Religious beliefs will be accommodated according to UWS 22.03 as long as the student notifies the instructor within the first three weeks of the beginning of the semester with the days or dates on which he/she wishes to request relief from an examination or academic requirement.