

SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY THEA 1322-001 STAGE MOVEMENT

Fall 2022
Tues/Thurs
9:30 am – 10:45 am
Marshall Auditorium (MAB 207)

Office Hours: M/T/TH 3 – 4 pm
All other times by appointment

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Course Description

This is an introductory course in movement for the stage. The goal of this course is to help you free your body, so you may move spontaneously in rehearsal and performance. This class is also designed to help you gain better control of your body so you may learn to move thoughtfully and deliberately. Stage movement is a balancing act between freedom and control.

In this class, students will explore movement to express character, relationship, and action.

In this class, we'll explore a variety of techniques, including Viewpoints, Laban, and techniques developed by Eric Franklin and Stephen Wangh (inspired by Jerzy Grotowski).

Required Texts *(available at Amazon)*

- 1) *Dynamic Alignment Through Imagery* (Second Edition), Franklin, Eric. Human Kinetics, Inc., 2012. ISBN 978-0736067898
- 2) Additional readings provided by instructor.

Materials Required

- 1) A working e-mail account. **You are required to check your Sul Ross email account regularly.**
- 2) A working Blackboard account.
- 3) Two journals – one for body scans/body image work and one for the Zoo Exercise
- 4) Comfortable, breathable clothing in which you can move freely and easily.
- 5) Bring plenty of water to each class.
- 6) A clean, good-quality yoga mat. You may purchase one at Amazon or Blue Water (local health food store)

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES *The graduating student will demonstrate:*

- 1) Knowledge of eras and contributions made throughout Theatre History and Musical Theatre History.

Additionally, the graduating student with a concentration in Acting/Directing will demonstrate:

- 2) The ability to express themselves creatively through appropriate theatrical performance the ability to analyze a script.
- 3) The ability to work creatively with actors and technicians in mounting a laboratory theatrical production.
- 4) The ability to apply standard requirements to all aspects of technical production.

Additionally, the graduating student with a concentration in technical/design will demonstrate:

- 5) The ability to apply all approaches to the theatrical design and rendering of the design.
- 6) The ability to address all technical aspects of a theatrical production.

MARKETABLE SKILLS

Strong oral and written communication skills.

Strong analytical skills.

Strong teamwork and collaboration skills

Marketable Skills Dissemination Strategy:

Through a combination of coursework and laboratory work, i.e., theatrical productions, our students will gain the opportunity to explore and develop all three program marketable skills. Specifically, students will learn how to analyze scripts, and communicate their findings via written assignments. They will also be encouraged to support their analysis orally through classroom discussion and their Comprehensive Oral Exam at the end of the senior year. Theatrical productions will provide the opportunity for actors and technicians to problem solve and work collaboratively developing strong teamwork skills.

Students with Disabilities

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartze Grisham, M.Ed., LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email mschwartze@sulross.edu Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall

(Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

Course Objectives

- Articulate a working vocabulary of some of the Laban, Grotowski (from , and Viewpoints techniques
- Demonstrate beginner-level mastery of the Laban Efforts, Viewpoints and Jerzy Grotowski's techniques
- Demonstrate the ability to take on the physicality of a character different from one's own physical nature and habits.
- Demonstrate progress in utilizing a playing space more completely and effectively in the context of scene work.
- Articulate a process of character analysis and development from a physical perspective.

Course Requirements

Attendance & Participation: You are expected to come to class regularly and ready to work. Participation in classroom exercises is worth 40% of your overall grade. **After two (2) unexcused absences, your overall course grade will go down by one full letter grade for each unexcused absence.**

The following is the Absence Policy, from the Sul Ross State University 2022-2023 Course Catalogue:

“Regular class attendance is important to the attainment of the educational objectives of the University. Each instructor will keep class attendance records, and the instructor's policy on class attendance will be explained at the beginning of the semester or term.

The instructor will drop a student from a course when the student has a total of nine (9) absences.

An absence is defined as non-attendance in fifty minutes of class; for example, non-attendance in a one and one-half hour class will constitute one and one-half absences and non-attendance in a three-hour class will constitute three absences. An absence because of participation in an official University activity is considered to be an authorized absence.”

Excused Absences: Excused absences from class include: a university event for which you are required to attend, religious holidays, an illness (a doctor's note must be submitted to the instructor), a death in the family (an obituary or funeral program must be submitted), or court dates (an official notice from the court must be submitted). If you miss a project deadline or presentation due to illness you must provide written documentation from the Health Center (or an outside health care provider), verifying

dates of treatment and the time period during which you were unable to meet academic responsibilities. **All other absences will be marked as unexcused.**

Cell phones, texting, and engaging in activities unrelated to class are all strictly prohibited. If you choose to engage in such activities you may be asked to leave the class and you will be marked as absent.

Exercises: Throughout the semester, you will practice exercises aimed at helping you free your body and move your body in ways that may feel strange to you at first. I invite you to approach these exercises with an open heart. Allow yourself to feel whatever you feel and invite whatever you feel into your work. There are no mistakes.

Body Scan/Body Image Journal: You are required to maintain a written journal of your observations and experiences with body scans and body image exercises. You will submit the journal for evaluation by faculty at the end of the term. See attached calendar for due date.

The Viewpoints: Developed by Anne Bogart (Artistic Director of SITI Company and Professor of Directing at Columbia Univ.) and Tina Landau (Director, Steppenwolf Theatre Company), Viewpoints are techniques for 1) training performers; 2) building ensemble; and 3) creating movement for the stage. The Viewpoints themselves are **nine points of awareness** that a performer utilizes while working. We will explore the Viewpoints through a series of exercises and improvisations and apply the nine points of awareness to scene work.

Laban/Bartenieff: Rudolph Laban (1879-1958) was a choreographer, teacher, philosopher, and writer. He is considered one of the most important movement theorists from the early 1900s to present day. You will learn about the **Laban Still Shapes, the importance of Body, Effort, Shape, and Space (BESS) and the Eight Efforts**. Irmgard Bartenieff was a German dancer, researcher, physical therapist, and pioneer in the field of dance therapy. Her work with Laban led her to develop her physical re-education method known as Bartenieff Fundamentals. We will learn and practice some of the fundamentals of the Bartenieff technique as a way to prepare and free the body for stage work.

The Zoo Exercise: One of the techniques that can be helpful both in freeing the body and developing characters is animal work. You will begin by observing various animals in person and/or on video. Observe how each animal moves, the shape and size of its body, and how the animals interact with their respective environments. By **Tuesday, September 4th, you will need to select your animal** (no birds or water animals please). This animal is the one you will observe and study for the Zoo Exercise.

For the Zoo Exercise, you will research your animal's physical body (skeleton, skin/fur, defenses, dietary needs) and its natural habitat. You will practice perceiving, interacting, and moving as your animal both in and outside of class. **On Tuesday, October 18**, you will arrive to class by 9:00 am to set up your environment. These environments will be pre-determined and placed throughout Marshall Auditorium. By 9:30 am you will

“become” your animal for the duration of class. Your challenge is to maintain character as your animal for 60 consecutive minutes. You may invite visitors to view the “Zoo” starting at 9:45 am. At 10:30 am, the presentations will end to allow time for cleanup.

Zoo Journal: You are required to keep a journal of your Zoo Exercise experience. It may be handwritten or typed, and I encourage you to include photos, research, links to videos and any and all material that helped you develop your animal character. **You must write a minimum of three journal entries per week in your journal, including dates.**

Entries must include: the sources you studied, the techniques you used to physically transform into your animal, challenges or frustrations you experienced, breakthroughs you had, and your experience “being” your animal for the midterm. **Zoo Exercise journals are due in class on Thursday, October 20.**

Composition: Working in pairs, you will create and present to the class an original composition incorporating **all nine Viewpoints** and a list of assigned “ingredients.” Detailed assignment to follow. **You and your partner will present your composition in class starting Thursday, November 10th.**

Final Scene: Working in pairs, you will rehearse and present a short scene in class, incorporating **all nine Viewpoints**. Scripts and scene partner assignments will be provided for you. Your work in this scene will count as the final “exam” for the course.

Late Work: Assignments must be presented or submitted on time. I do not accept late work, except for unusual and extenuating circumstances.

Academic Integrity: The University has a Code of Academic Integrity, which prohibits, among other things, cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers or portions of papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, forging signatures, and using unauthorized study aids (including old quizzes and exams). This class abides by that code.

Grading

Assignments are valued as follows:

1) Exercises/Participation	35%
2) Zoo Exercise (midterm)	20%
3) Composition with dialogue	10%
4) Body Scan/Body Image Journal	15%
5) Final Scene	20%

Grading Criteria:

A = Exceptional. Demonstrates mastery of material beyond expectation. Professional quality of work. Highest level of scholarship.

B = Above average. Demonstrates mastery of material. High level of scholarship.

C = Average. Demonstrates proficiency with material. Work is of amateur quality. Ordinary level of scholarship.

D = Below Average. Work shows errors, careless mistakes, or is just plain wrong. Poor scholarship

F – Failure. Material incomplete. Work grossly negligent or incomplete. No evidence of scholarship present.

Class Dates: Assignments and Deadlines

Note that these dates and the details of each class are subject to change at the instructor's discretion

DAY	DATE	IN-CLASS TOPICS/EXERCISES	READING/ASSIGNMENT DUE
WEEK 1			
Tuesday	Aug 23	Review syllabus and expectations. Movement warm-up	
Thursday	Aug 25	Warm-up. Introduce Exercises Corporels Work on Viewpoints group work	
Tuesday	Aug 30	Body Scan "How To" -Journal Discuss "Purpose & Will" Planes & Gravity exercises	<i>Dynamic Alignment Through Imagery (DATI) Intro & Chapter 7</i> Select animal for Zoo Exercise
Thursday	Sep 01	Exercises Corporels and Viewpoints	<i>An Acrobat of the Heart</i> pages 1-74
Tuesday	Sep 06	Body Scan – Journal Body Image Exercise 1 Improv Exercises	<i>DATI</i> Chapters 4&5
Thursday	Sep 08	Viewpoints Animal Work	
Tuesday	Sep 13	Body Scan -Journal Breath Work & Improv Animal Work	Body Image Drawing <i>DATI</i> Chapter 16
Thursday	Sep 15	Plastiques/Plastiques River	
Tuesday	Sep 20	Body Scan -Journal Breath Work & Improv – Anatomical Imagery Animal Work	Body Image Drawing <i>DATI</i> Pages 147 - 171
Thursday	Sep 22	Introduce Laban Efforts	Laban Handout
Tuesday	Sep 27	Body Scan -Journal Anatomical Imagery Animal Work	Body Image Drawing <i>DATI</i> Pages 253-264
Thursday	Sep 29	Laban Effort Rehearse Zoo Exercise (30 minutes)	Bring all food items for Zoo Exercise. Select enclosures for Zoo.

Tuesday	Oct 4	Plastiques River/Viewpoints Exercises Rehearse Zoo	.
Thursday	Oct 06	Plastiques/Viewpoints Exercises Rehearse Zoo	Assignment due: Bring photo and brief description of animal.
Tuesday	Oct 11	Body Scan -Journal Warm-up Animal Work Introduce Imagery for Technique & Performance	Animal description and photo due.
Thursday	Oct 13	The Viewpoints	<i>The Viewpoints</i> , Chapter 4
Tuesday	Oct 18	ZOO EXERCISE	Bring all food items for Zoo Exercise. Dress appropriately for animal.
Thursday	Oct 20	Zoo Exercise Post-mortem	Zoo Exercise journals due in class.
Tuesday	Oct 25	Mirroring Exercise – Journal & Develop Handouts 1 & 2 exercises	<i>Dance Imagery for Technique & Performance (DITP)</i> -Handouts 1 & 2
Thursday	Oct 27	The Viewpoints and Speaking Final Scene Partners Assigned	
Tuesday	Nov 01	Handout 3 exercises Mirroring Demos	<i>Dance Imagery for Technique & Performance (DITP)</i> -Handout 3 Mirroring Exercise - Writeups
Thursday	Nov 03	TBD	
Tuesday	Nov 08	Warm up Exercises Handouts 4 & 5 Mirroring Demos	<i>Dance Imagery for Technique & Performance (DITP)</i> -Handout 4 & 5 Mirroring Exercise - Writeups
Thursday	Nov 10	The Viewpoints – Compositions in class	
Tuesday	Nov 15	Warm up Exercises Hand out 6 Exercises	<i>Dance Imagery for Technique & Performance (DITP)</i> -Handout 6
Thursday	Nov 17	Work on final scenes	

Tuesday	Nov 22	Warm-up Exercises Hand out 7 Exercises	<i>Dance Imagery for Technique & Performance (DITP) -Handout 7</i>
Thursday	Nov 24	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS	
Tuesday	Nov 29	Rehearse final scenes	Body Scan & Body Image Journals Due
Thursday	Dec 1	DEAD DAY – NO CLASS	
FINAL	Monday, December 5th 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Presentation of final scenes		