



**THE 236: VOICE AND DICTION
COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2019
T/TR 12:30-1:45 p.m.
PERFORMING ARTS #126**

Instructor: Rebecca Worley, MFA, Assistant Professor of Theatre
Office Location: Performing Arts Center #105
Office Hours: M/W 2-4 p.m., T/R 9:30-10:30 a.m.; W noon-2 p.m. or by appointment
Office Phone: 903-886-5339
University Email Address: Rebecca.worley@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Suggested Texts:

Actor Training The Laban Way: An Integrated Approach to Voice, Speech, and Movement; by Barbara Adrian
Freeing the Natural Voice; by Kristen Linklater

Required Special Supplies:

In addition to standard classroom supplies (pens, pencils, paper for daily notes/assignments, a folder for those notes/assignments, computer paper, etc.), you will need a yoga or personal workout mat for this class.

Required Viewing:

She Kills Monsters

Directed by Rebecca Worley

Produced in the Main Stage Theatre by the University Playhouse at A&M Commerce
February 19-23 at 8 p.m. and February 24 at 3 p.m.

The Bald Soprano

Directed by Jake Foster

Produced in the Studio Theatre by the University Playhouse at A&M Commerce
April 23-27 at 8 p.m. and April 28 at 3 p.m.

Tickets are available for a nominal fee from the University Playhouse Box Office (PAC 101) from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. Or, you may make advance reservations by phone at any time by calling 903-886-5900 or by email at playhouseboxoffice@tamuc.edu.

Course Description:

Fundamentals of vocal production and movement for the stage. Including breathing, kinesthetic awareness, vocal placement and resonance, physical storytelling, and the interconnectedness of voice and body.

Course Introduction:

The course will consist of lecture demonstrations, vocal and physical warm-ups, explorations and exercises, written assignments, and performances. The objective for the semester is for the students to develop an increased awareness of individual physical and vocal strengths, weaknesses, controls and potential. Please consider yourself part of a workshop rather than a classroom as it is usually understood.

Although there is a lecture/discussion component to this course, by nature actor training requires substantial studio work – both inside and outside of the classroom. Please consider yourself to be part of a learning community where members support one another with suggestions and constructive criticism. Learning, observing, and sharing are central to this course. *Attitudes of awareness and openness are essential to your development and your contribution to the development of the other members of this class.* Please leave your worries, frustrations, competitiveness, and negativity outside the classroom door as much as possible.

Active participation in discussion and presentation of projects within the class is not only welcome; it is an essential requirement. Positive, helpful and constructive attitudes are also required! Presentations must be well prepared and shared with the understanding that questions and discussion will follow. The ongoing critique of performance is crucial to everyone's learning process. You should be aware that the vast majority of class time is composed of activities in which you are REQUIRED to actively participate. *If you have no plans or interest in sincerely exploring vocal and physical techniques and accomplishing significant growth as a performer, this is not the class for you.*

In this course, I will serve as your teacher, vocal/movement coach, director, guide, and outside eyes/ears as we work very specifically on your individual performance efforts. I ask that you trust me and approach the work with an open mind, an open heart, discipline and commitment, and a willingness to try new things. Then, we can work through our artistic challenges together!

Course Ethics and Attendance: Promptness, attendance, and “attentiveness” are valued in this class. Please behave accordingly and do not disrupt the class with excessive talk or the use of cell phones or other devices. It is assumed that students will work cooperatively with one another and all work that is not “original” will be properly credited. See the TAMUC *Student's Guide Handbook* for more information on plagiarism. This is a serious offense that can result in separation from the university. **EVEN if not specifically noted on instructions or prompts for each assignment, plagiarism policies will be strictly enforced.**

Physical Contact in Performance Classes

In all performance classes, it is sometimes necessary for the instructor or students to interact physically with one another. This is part of the learning process. Any required contact is to be considered professional and clinical in nature. If a student is at any time uncomfortable with the ideas or practices of physical contact, he/she should voice the concern(s) to the instructor or head of the Theatre Department. All needs for privacy will be respected.

Student Learning Outcomes: Students completing this course must be able to:

1. **Demonstrate**, through written and performed warm-ups, the ability to create and perform an effective physical and vocal warm-up for actors.
2. **Demonstrate**, through application and performance and written work, basic principles of Laban Movement Analysis (body, space, and effort).
3. **Demonstrate**, through performances, critiques, and oral analytical defense and prepared texts, a basic understanding of vocal production, voice placement and articulation.
4. **Demonstrate**, through performance and an oral analytical defense of choices made, the ability to create a detailed final performance incorporating and integrating the concepts of voice and movement presented in this course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

Participation and Growth (20 pts.): *Note that attendance alone does not constitute participation.* Participation and Growth is a large portion of your grade in this course – for good reason! As mentioned above, participation is vital in this class. This is an interactive environment and students must not only attend, but must also actively contribute to each class. Furthermore, the completion of miscellaneous homework assignments will also be considered part of your participation grade. There will be quite a few of these short assignments and they are all important in the development of your skills as an actor.

Positive, respectful and helpful attitudes are mandatory. *I would like to make this very clear: I will make every effort to treat you with the respect that I believe you deserve. You are also expected to treat your peers and myself with that same respectful attitude.* If I believe that a student is disrespectful, I will ask that person to leave the classroom. In this event, the student will receive a zero for any activities conducted that day in class and receive a zero for his/her participation grade for the day (no matter how long you have been in class). Disrespect, rudeness, disruptive behavior, or negative attitudes will **NOT BE TOLERATED**. It should go without saying that refusal to participate in any activity or part of an activity during class will result in a substantial and appropriate loss of participation points for the student.

Previous vocal/movement training will not guarantee you a good grade in this course. Significant growth and a genuine attempt within the class will. This is a class that regards self-

competition as a goal. You and your peers will arrive at various levels, and you will leave at different levels. However, growth from the beginning to the end of the semester can be evaluated. I challenge you to push yourself to grow and succeed. This class is concerned with developing *your* skills to the best of *your* ability. The community in the class is here to help all of us grow and expand our abilities.

Participation and Growth grades will be calculated daily and reflected upon/tabulated at the end of the semester. *Each student will begin with a mid-passing Participation and Growth grade of a 15.* Strong effort or lack of effort during each class and over the course of the semester as a whole will either raise or lower that grade.

Observation Summaries (2 @ 5 pts. = 10 pts. total): Students are required to attend performances of both Playhouse productions (clear your schedules NOW!). Students will submit a summary of observations made during the performance of an actor's use of voice and movement, citing the principles learned in the class. Alternatively, if cast in a production, students may write a summary/reflection of their *own* vocal and physical growth during a production. Summaries should be approx. 1-2 pages, typed, 12 pt. font (or whatever your default font/size is). Though you may write in bullet points, students should approach these summaries through a scholarly lens; it is expected that students will write at a level appropriate for collegiate work and will exercise critical thinking skills. Summaries are to be submitted **via email. I will not accept hard copies of your summaries.**

Performance Projects (6 = 50 pts. total):

- **Actor Warm-up (10 points):** Students will develop and "perform" a personal vocal and physical warm-up using any or all of the steps we use in class. Students will also submit a written portion for this assignment that is specific, thorough, and includes
- **Body Attitude Project (5 points):** An observation and application of concepts explored in class. Students will present a short performance of their observations of another person's body attitude. More in-depth expectations will be discussed in class at a later date.
- **PGM Performance (5 points):** An observation and application of concepts explored in class. Students will present a short performance of their observation of another person in an extreme Postural Gestural Movement. In addition to the performance, students will also submit a **typed** Inner Monologue (6-10 sentences) of the person during their PGM using terms we have learned in class. More in-depth expectations will be discussed in class at a later date.
- **Poetry/Sonnet Performance – 1st Quatrain (10 points):** Memorized performance of the first four lines of the final exam sonnet. This "in-progress" performance should demonstrate that you are working towards a fully developed performance.

- **Final Performance and Oral Defense (20 points):** A fully memorized and prepared sonnet performance. This performance should show me that you, as an actor, have comprehended and interpreted the meaning of this sonnet, allowing for a compelling and passionate performance. In other words, big choices need to be made. In addition to the performance, students will also submit a series of written assignments for the final exam. More in-depth expectations will be discussed in class at a later date.

Tests (2 @ 10 points = 20 pts. total)

Grading Breakdown:

The following grading scale will be used to determine all individual grades as well as the student's overall grade in the course:

Participation & Growth	20 pts.	90-100 =	A
Observation Summaries	10 pts.	80-89=	B
Performances	50 pts.	70-79=	C
Tests	20 pts.	60-69=	D
		59 and below=	F
Total	100 pts.		

All assignments must be prepared and presented on scheduled dates. Please note: A grade of "A" will not be assigned to an individual who has not completed ALL outside of class assignments, regardless of average.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

WORKING EMAIL REQUIREMENT: It is a course expectation that you have a working email address that you check daily. If you have not already acquired an email address through the university or otherwise, please make arrangements to do so before the next class meeting. There WILL be times that I need to contact you with important information and email is often the speediest and easiest way of doing so. Additionally, I will provide electronic copies of the plays and any supplemental reading through myLeo Online and/or email.

WRITTEN WORK: Unfortunately, papers/projects do occasionally get lost. Please, for your sanity, save your work on a thumb drive, etc. Do not depend on your paper staying on the hard drive of any university computer, as it will be deleted, altered, or worse – turned in by someone else as their work! Be aware that it is a course expectation that you keep copies of your assignments until you receive your final grade for the semester.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Contacting Me:

Please feel free to visit me during my office hours at any time during the semester. I am here to help! If you can't make my office hours due to a scheduling conflict, please set up an appointment with me. Communicate, communicate, communicate! The easiest and most reliable way to contact me is **via email**. Please do not leave a message for me in the main department office.

Email Policy:

Before sending me an email with a general course-specific question, **review your syllabus/look at the handouts/check myLeo Online/ask a classmate first**. If your question has already been addressed in one of those places, then you will have the answer you need. If your question does not exist, please feel free to email me.

When emailing me: Please make your emails clear and concise, written with proper grammar in order to assure my earliest attention. In addition, please follow some common "email etiquette" procedures in order to keep our electronic communication effective and efficient. Specifically:

- Write a relevant subject line (e.g., "Voice and Diction question," or "THE 236 meeting request")
- Address me by name (ie: "Dear Professor Worley" or "Hi Becca" or just "Becca")
- Bonus: "meaningless niceties" are never a bad idea!
- Concisely state what it is you need. If it can't be communicated in a concise manner, perhaps request an appointment. **If requesting an appointment**, give me times that you are available **in the initial email!!!** My office hours are posted above.
- Use a "sign-off" ("Thank you" is always good) and **sign your name**.

Not following these guidelines potentially puts you at the bottom of my list for response time.

Student Resources:

Department of Theatre

Performing Arts Center (PAC) #101

Phone: 903-886-5346 (Main Office)

<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/mmct/default.asp>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Course Specific Procedures:**Attendance Policy:**

You may accumulate two (2) absences before any penalty occurs. **There are no additional absences allowed without penalty. Plan accordingly. There is no such thing as an “excused” absence.** Of course, if you have a prolonged illness or injury, or if a family emergency arises, speak with your instructor ASAP. **Grades will be dropped in ½ letter grade increments for every class absences beyond two.**

Late Arrivals:

To further foster a high level of commitment—and because the work we will be doing this semester will involve intensive focus—the class will adopt the following late entry policy. Students must be on time for every class. Entering a class late or leaving early is disruptive to the flow of the class and indicative of a less than disciplined/committed artist. Please be on time out of consideration to your learning process and the processes of others. **If you are late for class, your participation grade will reflect this.** The class will begin promptly at 12:30 p.m.! If you arrive after 12:40 p.m., please do not enter the classroom (you will be marked absent regardless). If you arrive within the ten-minute grace period, please do so discretely in order to avoid disrupting the class activities/discussions. *It is your responsibility to make sure that you find me after class and document your late attendance for the day—otherwise, your initial marked absence documented during roll will remain.* Also, you are expected to stay until you are dismissed from class. An early departure will significantly reduce your participation grade as well. **Two late arrivals (within the ten-minute grace period) or early departures (or any combination of the two) may be counted as one absence in the class.**

Cell Phones and Laptops:

Please turn off all cell phones upon entering the classroom. Please do not check messages or engage in text messaging during class. This is disruptive to the flow of the course. Further, you are welcome to take class notes on a laptop or other electronic device. However, these devices should only be used for taking notes over the current discussions/activities – and you must type very quietly and turn off all sound so as not to disturb other class members. If I suspect that laptops are being used for other purposes, I will ban them from the classroom.

Late Work:

I do not accept late work.

Extra Credit:

The instructor reserves the right to offer extra-credit to all students, and to gauge its application appropriately and uniformly for all.

Adaptation of Assignments:

Due to the fluid nature of this performance-based class, some assignments/scheduling may need to be adapted. All changes will be announced prior to implementation.

Food, Drink, Gum, and Smoking:

Please do not bring food or drinks into the classroom at any time (exception: you may bring bottled water with you to class). As this is a course focusing on practical performance, chewing gum is not allowed at any time during class. Smoking during class time (even when in individual rehearsals outside of the building) is never allowed.

Clothing:

Dress for maximum freedom and movement. Loose fitting clothing, sweats or dancewear are required. Jazz shoes, sneakers, bare feet or stocking feet are required. You will be rolling around the floor and need a full range of motion—clothing that inhibits this will result in a lowered participation grade.

Heels, boots, flip-flops, untied shoes, short skirts, tight jeans, and low-cut shirts will all restrict movement (and consequently restrict your ability to participate in class). Do not wear jewelry that will affect your freedom of movement or speech. No hats are allowed during warm-ups, activities, performances, etc. Also, please keep your hair securely away from your face during all exercises and performances in class. *No one will be excused from a class activity because of clothing concerns; you are required to wear clothing that will not inhibit participation in class activities.*

Fair warning: the floor may or may not be spotless.

Incompletes:

Under normal circumstances, an Incomplete (I or X) will NOT be given for a final grade in this course. Per University policy, students who **because of circumstances beyond their control** are unable to attend classes will, upon approval of their instructor, receive a mark of X (incomplete) in all courses in which they were ***maintaining passing grades at the time of the request*** for an incomplete.

University Specific Policies and Procedures:**Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement**Students with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gege Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status.

Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in

the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

WEEK ONE

1/15: Introductions and Syllabus
Relaxation

1/17: Relaxation
Breath Work

WEEK TWO

1/22: Relaxation
Breath
Touch of Sound
Trapezius exercise

1/24: Floor Work
Move to Standing
Alignment

WEEK THREE

1/29: Alignment
Buzzing
Walk Into Sound

1/31: Add Stretching/Mobility
Huh Circle

WEEK FOUR

2/5: Intensify Movement/Strength

2/7: Rhythm/Movement/Sound
Zoom & other focus/rhythm/movement/sound games

WEEK FIVE

2/12: Cont. Voice Work w/ Movement

2/14: Calling
Middle Voice

WEEK SIX
DoT Production *She Kills Monsters* Feb 19-24

- 2/19: Middle Voice Cont.
 Calling in Middle Voice
- 2/21: Assign Warm-Up Assignment
 Peals

WEEK SEVEN

- 2/26: **Warm-Up Assignment Due**
 Spinal Orientation
 Body Attitude
- 2/28: Assign Body Attitude Assignment
 Initiation
 Sequencing
 Breath Support
 Articulation

WEEK EIGHT

- 3/5: *She Kills Monsters* summaries due **via email**
Body Attitude Assignment Due
- 3/7: ****Becca Gone - MATC****
 Review
Test 1

WEEK NINE

- 3/12: Kinesphere
 Dynamisphere
 PGM
- 3/14: Assign PGM Assignment
 PGM, cont.
 Reach Space

*****SPRING BREAK*** (March 18-22)**

WEEK TEN

- 3/26: Spatial Tension
 Trace Forms
- 3/28: **PGM Assignment Due**

WEEK ELEVEN

4/2: Hand out sonnets and Assign Translation Assignment
Start Efforts

4/4: Continue Efforts

WEEK TWELVE

4/9: **Translation Assignment Due**
Continue Efforts

4/11: **Test 2**
Assign Outline Assignment
Laban in group/Circle

*****UIL OAP REGION CONTEST*** (April 12)**

WEEK THIRTEEN

4/16: **Perform 1st Quatrain**

4/18: Continue Efforts

WEEK FOURTEEN

DoT Production *The Bald Soprano* April 23-28

4/23: **Outline Assignment Due**
Workshop Sonnets

4/25: Cont. Workshopping Sonnets

WEEK FIFTEEN

4/30: Cont. Workshopping Sonnets/Mock Performances

5/2: Mock Performances

**Final: Thursday, 5/9, 10:30-12:30 a.m.: Final Performance of Sonnets
The Bald Soprano summaries DUE BY FINAL via email**

Student Contract for THE 236, Spring 2019

I have read the Course Syllabus for THE 236 and understand its content including the attendance policy, productions required, academic honesty section, and classroom behavior requirements (including use of cell phones).

NAME (Signature)

Date