

**University of South Dakota**  
**Theatre 283, Sec U015, Voice Dynamics I**  
**3 credits**

Time/Place: MWF 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.; Fine Arts 183 (Arena); Spring 2009  
Instructor: Priscilla Hagen, Fine Arts 184F; 677-5734; phagen@usd.edu  
Office Hours: 11-12:00 MTWTRF and by appointment  
Crs. Prereq: Thea 181. Instructor permission required.

**Department of Theatre Vision Statement**

The Department of Theatre prepares the student for a career in the theatre and encourages personal and creative growth. It does this by providing a comprehensive humanistic education, supplemented by intensive craft training in which classroom study and practical experience are of equal and complementary value. The Department promotes excellence in education, research, and service; explores new questions, techniques, and practices in the theatre; and inspires students to become life-long learners who contribute to their respective discipline and profession while enhancing the cultural life of their community.

**A. Catalog Course Description:**

Process-oriented work on all aspects of vocal production: Articulation, projection, resonance, expressivity, breathing, and relaxation techniques.

**B. Additional Course Description and Objectives:**

1. To enhance the following aspects of vocal production: relaxation/breathing, articulation, projection, expressivity, and vocal quality /resonance through intensive exercise work and readings in the text;
2. To provide opportunities for the student to practice vocal technique in class;
3. To increase the student's awareness of the use and care of the human voice and to encourage healthy vocal practices.

**C. Instructional Methods:**

Craft based exercises, solo and group performance, discussion, written analysis papers.

**D. Required Text:**

Lessac, Arthur. **The Use and Training of the Human Voice**. California: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1997.

Stanislavski, Constantin, "Diction and Singing" in Building a Character, trans. Elizabeth Hapgood. New York: Theatre Arts books, 1949, pp. 78-104.

**E. Disability Services:**

Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access to accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register w/Disabilities Services during the first week of class. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered w/Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester. (For information contact: Ernetta L. Fox, Director Disability Services, rm 119, Service Ctr, 605.677.6389, [www.usd.edu/ds/dservices@usd.edu](http://www.usd.edu/ds/dservices@usd.edu).)

**F. Assignments:**

1. This class will be run in “studio” fashion and will include intensive exercise work in each aspect of vocal production, as well as assigned individual and group readings;
2. There will be a midterm exam with both a written and vocal performance component;
3. The final exam will be the performance of a reading (poem or verse monologue);
4. There will be one paper on a vocal health topic to be assigned;
5. There will be two self evaluation papers written in response to audio tapes made of the student at the beginning and end of the semester;
6. It is expected that the student will reinforce the exercises and techniques practiced in class by working (twenty to forty minutes a day, five days a week) regularly outside of class.

**G. Evaluation based upon:**

1. **Class work:** this includes commitment, concentration, attitude, vocal growth, mastery of vocal exercises as evidenced, in part, by two audiotapes made at the beginning and end of the semester.....35%
2. **Two self evaluations/analyses:** of taped vocal selection (10% each)... 20%
3. **One research paper:** on vocal health topic to be assigned..... 10%
4. **Midterm Exam:** Essay test on assigned chapter in Stanislavski text, Building a Character (10%), reading of a piece of poetry or dramatic verse selection(10%).....20%
5. **Final Exam:** reading.....15%

A= 90-100, excellent work; complete, detailed, consistently dynamic  
 B= 80-89, very good work, fairly complete w/numerous details, but not consistently dynamic  
 C= 70-79, average to good work; meets the minimum requirements but lacks details  
 D= 69-70, below average work; sloppy incomplete, shows lack of care/respect for assignment  
 F= 0-64, failed to meet any of the assignments goals

**H. Attendance Policy:**

Your attendance is vital to your own growth as an actor. Absenteeism and lateness are discouraged. More than two (2) absences will result in the lowering of the student’s grade by one letter for each absence thereafter. The only exceptions to this policy are family emergency, or *serious illness*.

**I. Make-up Policy:**

In the event of a family emergency or serious illness the student should, if able, contact the instructor prior to the performance so that the student’s scene partner can be informed. The student will be expected to make up the performance during the next scheduled class period.

**J. Cheating and Plagiarism Policy:**

Plagiarism is defined as the act of appropriating the literary composition of another, or parts of passages of writings, or the ideas or language of the same, passing them off as the product of one’s own mind (Black’s Law Dictionary). By extension this has traditionally been applied to the appropriation of artistic product including music compositions, designs, paintings, sculpture, etc.

Credibility and integrity are essential traits in a professional who is guaranteed the exclusive ownership of his or her own creations and must respect the same right of others. No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. At the discretion of the instructor, a student caught engaging in any form of academic dishonesty may be:

- a. Given a zero for that assignment.
- b. Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- c. Assigned a reduced grade for the course.

- d. Dropped from the course.
- e. Failed in the course.

**K. Freedom in Learning:**

Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study in which they are enrolled. Under Board of Regents and University policy, student academic performance shall be evaluated solely on an academic basis and students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study. Students who believe that an academic evaluation is unrelated to academic standards but is related instead to judgment of their personal opinion or conduct should contact the dean of the college which offers the class to initiate review of the evaluation.

**L. Course Outline: (subject to change)**

- Week # 1: Introduction to the class, read Part I (chapters 1-4) in text;
- Week # 2: **ACTF in Lawrence, KS**; work on relaxation/breathing techniques;
- Week # 3: Students are taped, relaxation/breathing;
- Week # 4: Introduction to integrated warm-up, self evaluation of audio tape is due, papers due on vocal health topic, discuss vocal care, read chapter 5 in text, begin work on articulation via the consonant orchestra;
- Week # 5: Discuss and work on articulation exercises in chapter 5;
- Week # 6: **President's Day Holiday**, continue work on articulation;
- Week # 7: Read chapter 6, work on ybuzz and +ybuzz resonance exercises in text;
- Week # 8: Continue resonance work;
- Week # 9: Spring Break;
- Week #10: **Midterm Exam**;
- Week #11: Continue work on range, resonance, and projection with Lessac Call exercise in chapter 6, work on exercises to develop vocal expressivity;
- Week #12: Work on vocal expressivity, group readings of "The Clean Platter" by Ogden Nash, work on volume and projection;
- Week #13: Work on application exercises: voice overs in commercials; corporate video, cd roms, **Easter Break**;
- Week #14: **Easter Break**, application exercises: voice overs in commercials; corporate video, cd roms, individual coaching sessions with instructor;
- Week #15: Individual coaching sessions with instructor;
- Week #16: Retape students, Self evaluation #2 due, prepare for Final Exam.