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Fall 9-1-2022

### THTR 120A.01: Introduction to Acting I

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Sweeney, Bernadette, "THTR 120A.01: Introduction to Acting I" (2022). *University of Montana Course Syllabi, 2021-2025*. 351.

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# INTRODUCTION TO ACTING I- LATE START

THTR 120A Section 01 3 Credits

2022 Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays 10:00am-10:50am

**Final Day/Time:** tba

Instructor: Dr Bernadette Sweeney Office: McGill 216

Email: bernadette1.sweeney@umontana.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays 10-12, Friday 11-12 [just after class]

Phone: 406-243-5216

## Aim

The Introduction to Acting course aims to broaden your communication, presentation and inter-personal skills. The course offers foundational skills to develop a more articulate and responsive means of expression. These goals are achieved by studying the craft of acting.

You will study a range of genres and forms as offered within the School of Theatre and Dance season, and by the materials covered in class, including references to classical theatre, musical theatre, and contemporary scripts which may be closer to your own experience. You will be exposed to a wide diversity of work in terms of identity, genre, ability and cultural experience. It is important for the class to understand that acting is not therapy, but in making keen observations of your world you can harness your experience to broaden our understanding of society, to the benefit of all.

You will be introduced to the language of performance analysis and critique, and apply this language to your own analysis in discussion and in writing, when considering the work of your peers in class, and the productions you view over the course of the semester.

## Outcomes

At the end of the class the semester you should be able to demonstrate:

- A confidence in the presentation of yourself in performance
- An ability to further articulate your character and the character of those you take on in performance
- A basic understanding of the nature of theatre and the craft of acting
- An understanding of, and respect for, performance, including audience etiquette
- An understanding of the importance and contribution theatre makes to our world.

## Schedule

This course is divided into four units:

### Unit 1: Ensemble

Building trust and skill through group exercises, including warm-ups and theatre games.

### Unit 2: What is Acting?

An introduction to the fundamentals of acting and live performance.

### Unit 3: Scene Work with a Partner

Rehearsing and performing short scenes with a partner, creating new and original characters, writing scenes, and script analysis.

### Unit 4: Applying Acting in Your Life

An introduction to Forum Theatre, theatre in education, social-commentary theatre, community performance.

## Attendance and Promptness

Acting is participatory: there is no way to learn without doing, no adequate substitute for a missing partner, and no way to “make up” missed experience. You may present documentation for two excused absences without affecting your final grade. *Further excused absences and any unexcused (undocumented) absences will drop your final grade one-third of a letter.* If an illness should cause you to miss class to the point of failing, pursue a withdrawal or incomplete. Visit the university catalog for more information on these policies at [www.umt.edu/catalog](http://www.umt.edu/catalog).

Our classes are only 50 mins long. Arriving late for class disrupts the learning process of your fellow students. Tardiness in excess of 10 minutes will be considered a complete absence. Please note that leaving class during exercises or performances for a non-emergency is disruptive.

## Electronic Resources

In this class, we will embrace technology. Email is the required method of communication for the course. Please check your university email and Moodle frequently.

If you have course materials stored on your phone, tablet, laptop or equivalent device, set it to “Airplane Mode” so that the functionality is limited to stored data retrieval. Silence and stow other unneeded electronic devices. I will have my phone on vibrate in case an emergency message is sent by the university. If accessing the web becomes necessary, inform me that you are doing so for the benefit of the entire class.

If your device beeps or rings accidentally during class, please silence it as *quickly as humanly possible*. Don’t be embarrassed, just turn it off and all will be forgiven. Having said that anyone caught messaging or frivolously surfing the web will be dismissed from class, resulting in a complete absence for the day.

## Evaluation:

### Attendance and Participation - 50%

*Effort and respect* are two important components of participation. The effort necessary for engaging in live performance demands a solid work ethic and an openness to risk and collaboration. It requires that you commit to your actions, such commitment is only possible in an environment that is comfortable and inviting. The following rubric will apply to class participation:

- 4** The student was actively participating in class, well prepared, and positively engaged with the material and fellow classmates.
- 3** The student was late.
- 2** The student was absent but had the courtesy to notify the instructor prior to missing class. Please note, notification does not necessarily constitute documentation and your final grade may still drop
- 1** The student was unprepared, disruptive, or disrespectful
- 0** The student was absent and provided no notification or documentation.

### In-class performances - 25%

Your performance grades will evaluate your understanding of basic concepts and how you apply them in practice.

*A Superb Acting.* The student has transcended the level of craft they brought to the course, mastered the intellectual preparation, and has begun to play imaginatively “in the moment.”

*B Good Skills.* The student has mastered the intellectual preparation necessary to move on to more advanced skills, made some basic advances in craft, but is not yet playing fully “in the moment.”

*C Fair Work.* The student is prepared intellectually for the work, and is making progress with some skills, but stronger choices and more practice are necessary.

*D Poor work.* The student has not or is not prepared for the work and it is painfully obvious to the both the student and audience.

*F Failure.* The student has not or is not prepared at all, has made no specific choices, and is wasting theirs and the audience’s time.

All students will be evaluated based on your personal growth over the course of the semester and not in comparison or competition with other students.

## Writing Assignments - 25%

There are several writing assignments this semester. They are designed to stimulate your critical eye and creative instinct while also being representative of university-level writing. These assignments and course materials can be found on Moodle. You are expected to check moodle often. All written work must be properly formatted, typed, and submitted as a PDF document by the beginning of class on the date due. If Moodle is down, please use email as your alternate submission option.

## Production Attendance

Production attendance is a part of this class—there will be graded assignments or quizzes on the productions.

We are busy preparing Fall Term productions in the Montana and Masquer theatres even as we're only a few weeks into the semester. Students registered for THTR 120 carry the fee that grants you a single complimentary ticket to EACH T&D Mainstage show. Tickets are managed by GrizTix.

If you don't intend to also get tickets to any UM Athletics events, you do **not** need to use the "student account" process that requires a PIN. Simply sign up for a GrizTix account and enter the T&D promo code (**UMTD2223CLASSPASS**) to get your ticket(s) online for free. School Director John DeBoer created an instructional video last year that walks you through the process. However, please DO NOT share this video with anyone else. Thank you.

<https://umt.box.com/s/pnw46q5mcsc78j0if78b85nn58mwkwye>

Another tip on finding the place to type in your T&D promo code on a mobile device is attached.

We recommend that you pick up your online ticket via GrizTix ASAP to avoid long lines at the PARTV Box-Office window just before the performance you intend to see. To access your free ticket to *Cabaret* and *The Call of the Wild*, you will enter the promo code **UMTD2223CLASSPASS** when checking out. **THIS IS A DIFFERENT CODE FROM THE ONE YOU MAY HAVE USED LAST ACADEMIC YEAR!** This entitles you to one free ticket to the event that you can secure online and store in your mobile device (like the Apple wallet) to bring to the theatre when you attend the show. **PLEASE DO NOT SHARE THIS CODE WITH ANYONE.**

*Dance on Location* is also part of your ticket package for this semester, but that production is not being managed by GrizTix. When you attend that production, simply know that no tickets are required and you're not expected to donate (but of course you may if you wish! Proceeds go to funding future *Dance on Location* events).

If you're a T&D major and you wish to see a production beyond your single free promo-code ticket, you can still visit the PARTV Box Office and wait until about 10 mins prior to

curtain to see the show for free **one additional time**. Please know that this policy is based on availability and should that particular performance sell out, you might not be seated.

We need your help in reminding your family and friends about the new(ish) system/structure when inviting them to our performances. Any Griz Card holder (students/faculty/staff) can purchase two tickets for \$5.50 each (plus fees) in person at any GrizTix location (this offer is not available online at this time). Tell all your friends!

All *purchased* tickets (not comps) will include a \$2.50 facilities fee and additional convenience fees to pay for online and phone orders. There are four ways to purchase tickets:

1. Online at the [T&D GrizTix page](#) (10% convenience fee added to the ticket price)
2. Over the phone at 406-243-4051 (15% convenience fee added to the ticket price)
3. At the Adams Center Box Office or Worden's Market during regular business hours (facilities fee only)
4. At the PARTV Box Office one hour before the show starts (facilities fee only)

Get your GrizTix account up and running well before October 8 (the date of *Dance on Location*—the official start of our season!) and go ahead and reserve your ticket for Opening Night of *Cabaret* (October 13) using the promo code **UMTD2223CLASSPASS**. We can't wait to see you in the audience!

PS: When checking out on GrizTix, you can close out of the "Donate Now" pop-up window. DON'T try to type in a zero dollar amount and hit "Submit": GrizTix doesn't like that. Just click the "X" in the upper right of the pop-up and it will disappear.

## 2022-2023 FALL SEASON

### DANCE ON LOCATION

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#### **October 8 | 2pm | Mansfield Library Mall**

The UM Dance Program launches its 2022-2023 season with its most alternative annual concert: *Dance on Location*. The free outdoor concert begins at UM's Mansfield Library Mall and unfolds as the audience travels (on foot, bike, stroller, skateboard, etc.) to different venues around and near campus to behold diverse dance and performance-art installations. *Dance on Location* invites the audience to celebrate the gems of UM's beautiful campus through the eyes of a choreographer and the magnificent movement of dancers.

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## **CABARET**

*Book by Joe Masteroff; Based on the play by John Van Druten and stories by Christopher Isherwood; Music by John Kander; Lyrics by Fred Ebb*

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**October 13-16, 20-23 | Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sundays 2 p.m. | Montana Theatre | Tickets available through [GRIZTIX](#)**

*Co-Production with the School of Music.*

This timely production captures all of the decadence and denial of pre-war Berlin. Cliff Bradshaw is an American author with writer's block who arrives looking for inspiration. There he finds the Kit Kat Club, featuring English singer and performer Sally Bowles. With its compelling Master of Ceremonies, fabulous live music, and complex romantic intrigue, *Cabaret* draws the audience into a glittering, dangerous world—and ultimately gives us a searing look at what happens when an apathetic society refuses to see the consequences of its own political extremism.

[Part of UM Family weekend, October 13-16!](#)

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## **THE CALL OF THE WILD**

*By Ian Frank, adapted from the novel by Jack London*

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**November 10, 12, 13, 17-20 Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m., Sundays 2 p.m. | Masquer Theatre | Tickets available through [GRIZTIX](#)**

Set during the Klondike Gold Rush of the 1890s, *The Call of the Wild* follows Buck, a Saint Bernard, who is stolen from his home in California and sold as a sled dog. An ensemble of ten actors will immerse the audience in Buck's violent yet majestic story of self-discovery and survival in this new adaptation of the 1903 masterpiece.

No performance on Veterans Day, Thursday, November 11.

## DANCE UNDERGROUND

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**December 2-3 | Friday-Saturday 7:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday | Open Space | \$10 minimum contribution requested at the door.**

*Dance Underground* is a uniquely intimate production that provides a platform for choreographers to experiment with choreography and performances.

Choreographic work from students and faculty will be presented in this distinctive production.

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### Procedure/Policy

You are expected to abide by the following School of Theatre & Dance regulations. Eating, drinking, or gum chewing are not permitted during class. Water in a capped container is acceptable. Please let me know in writing if you have a medical exception to this policy. Absolutely no weapons, real or fake, are allowed in the classroom. Late work is not accepted; this includes late or unprepared performances. Students are encouraged to wear appropriate movement attire to class. There is inherent risk involved in many Theatre & Dance classes, as they are very physical in nature. Please proceed through class, shop time, or rehearsal with caution. Always be mindful of your personal safety and the safety of others. Students participating in class/shop/rehearsal/performance do so at their own risk.

Due to safety considerations, at no point during a student's time spent in class or serving on a production (in any capacity) should non-enrolled persons be guests of that student without my consent. Presence of such unauthorized persons in a class, shop, or any backstage/off-stage area will negatively affect a student's grade.

Please stay in communication with your faculty advisor and know that we are here to help. You can call in anytime to our office hours (posted on office doors) or email us to set up an appointment.

All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the [School of Theatre & Dance Student Handbook](#).

### Wellness Statement

The School of Theatre & Dance recognizes that theatre and performance content and processes can provoke; therefore, during the course of a class or rehearsal, students can choose to remove themselves from activities should they feel a threat to their well-being. Please



communicate with your instructor and/or stage manager as soon as you can, prior to or after leaving.

Personal considerations such as health, wellness and/or other issues can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive in the university setting. For helpful resources, please contact the Curry Health Center Counseling department at 406-243-4711 or schedule an online appointment through the health portal: [www.umt.edu/hportal](http://www.umt.edu/hportal). For a crisis or for after-hours care, you can contact: the emergency rooms at St. Patrick Hospital or Community Medical Center; the National Suicide Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255; or the Crisis Text line: text MT to 741-741. For University of Montana financial aid: phone: (406) 243-5373 or email [faid@mso.umt.edu](mailto:faid@mso.umt.edu)

### Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

### Accessibility

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and “Reasonable” means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. Students registered with [Office For Disability Equity](#) (ODE) may request reasonable accessibility modifications by contacting me directly.