

MUS 311

Musical Theatre Auditioning

Credits: 1, Fall 2020

Course Description

The course will utilize all of the foundational training in the first years of the musical theatre major to assist the student in preparation for professional auditions. This course will cover song types, song cuts, working with an accompanist, and practical audition workshops with feedback. With a particular focus on self-tapes and virtual auditions in the professional world, students will gain necessary tools to create successful musical theatre auditions in a wide variety of mediums.

Instructional Methods

Class will consist of:

- lectures, readings, group discussions, viewings
- practice and exercises for musical theatre auditioning
- song preparation, analysis, and performance
- class presentations of audition songs and performance work
- recording, editing, and presenting video auditions
- additional work and practice as assigned by instructor

Required Materials

- Music (pdf and hard copy) to create your audition book
- Recording and editing equipment
- Audition appropriate attire
- Online readings and viewings as assigned
- Various scripts, scores, articles, and texts as assigned, including:
 - backstage.com, Musical Theatre Audition Column, by Philip Hernandez
 - actortherapy.com, by Lindsay Mendez and Ryan Scott Oliver
 - The Professional Actor's Handbook, by Julio Agustin
 - How to Audition for The Musical Theatre, by Donald Oliver (selections)

Recommended Materials

- Ring light, usb microphone, backdrop, tripod
- Letters to a Young Artist, by Anna Deavere Smith
- Get the Callback: The Art of Auditioning for Musical Theatre, by Jonathan Flom
- The Creative Habit, Twyla Tharp
- Web Materials: Various websites and video clips TBA

Learning Outcomes

- to understand an intentional working process for preparing a musical theatre audition
- to gain a knowledge of basic musical theatre audition principles, practice, and industry standards
- to discover the challenges of acting by experiencing them and observing others experiencing them and to develop a method for meeting these challenges

Instructor

Shanara Gabrielle
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Class Meetings

Wednesdays
3:40-6:10 pm
Virtual Classroom via Zoom

Office Hours

As scheduled or by appointment

Prerequisites

Department consent

Course Communication

Email preferred
Cell phone or text *if necessary*

Final Exam

TBA

(Currently scheduled for:
Wednesday 12/9, 3:15-5:15 pm)

- to learn, practice, and embrace discomfort for artistic exploration
- to demonstrate an understanding of personal resources and challenges as tools for continued growth as a professional actor
- to develop an appreciation of the creative impulse and an appreciation for the skill, artistry, and discipline required for effective performance and a professional career in the theatre
- to understand that empathy, curiosity, and engagement are crucial to actor and humankind's development and the help the student move towards greater commitment to enhancing these skills

Class Policies

Course Requirements:

- Active participation in class performances, exercises, workshops, and discussions
- Satisfactory and punctual completion of all work *as assigned by instructor* - including, but not limited to: readings, viewings, recordings, projects, and performances
- Demonstrated preparation time on all assigned performance and audition pieces
- Examinations: final performance project TBA

Expectations and Policies:

- Professional participation in each class session. This includes: appropriate and full virtual participation, no cell phones during class, no texting or using the zoom chat for personal conversations, appropriate attire for a professional class setting.

- Professionalism, Decorum, Content: The studio classroom is a laboratory where you should feel able to fully commit to a wide range of physical, emotional, and psychological acting choices. You will be encouraged to take risks and asked to explore outside of your comfort zone. This work is vital to your development as an actor and discomfort is a natural bi-product of this kind of work. Content in the arts can sometimes include works, situations, actions, and language that can be offensive to some students on the grounds of emotional extremity, sexual explicitness, violence, blasphemy, or other content. This course is devoted to the principle of freedom of expression, artistic and otherwise, and it will not be the practice to censor these works on any of these grounds. The studio will be treated as a working and exploratory space where students are expected to create a professional and safe environment for taking risks and pushing themselves. Unprofessional or unsafe conduct will not be tolerated. Decorum in the classroom and during out-of-class rehearsals is expected as it strongly impacts the quality of instruction for you and your partners. You are expected to show respect for yourself, your colleagues, and the art and craft of music and theatre. Part of learning the acting process is also learning how to act professionally.

- Justice, Balance, and Anti-bias: These are core principals for any young artists or working theatre professional to uphold. Please take responsibility for any power or privilege may have, be proactive instead of responsive, communicate with civility at all levels, celebrate diversity, honor history, embrace change, and be an advocate for yourself and your values!

Assessment:

- Overall evaluation will be based on the student's effectiveness in meeting the course goals and requirements.
- Attendance is required.
- Late projects and/or assignments are not indicative of a serious theatre student. Nor do they show the discipline required for student's artistic development. Late assignments, projects, or performances may not be accepted and, if accepted, will receive no grade higher than 75%.
- No extra credit work is scheduled. If such work does become available, the opportunity will be presented to all students.

Grading Criteria:

- Preparedness and participation = 50% (including but not limited to: completion of assignments and readings or viewings, rehearsal and practice commitment, contributions to class discussions, observation feedback, audience/classroom behavior, and attitude.)

- Performance work = 50% (including but not limited to: mock auditions, class exercises, demonstrations, recordings, song work, monologues, memorization, rehearsal, and all performance projects.)

(The University grading system is available at policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii Reports of grades in courses are available at the end of each term on cardinalstudents.cua.edu/.)

Course Schedule

Please see proposed course schedule, which is subject to change.

*****Syllabus and schedule are subject to change.**

University Policies

All members of the Catholic University community have a shared responsibility to know and to abide by the University's policies, especially relating to:

- Academic Integrity
- Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
- Attendance
- Conduct
- Final Exams
- Grades and appeals

All of Catholic University's policies are detailed at <http://policies.cua.edu/>. Please follow up with the instructor if you have any policy-related questions.

Of particular note are the policies regarding Academic Integrity, Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, and Final Exams, which are described below.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty at The Catholic University of America is not tolerated (<http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityfull.cfm> and <http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityprocedures.cfm>)

As such, academic integrity is not merely avoiding plagiarism or cheating, but it certainly includes those things. Academic integrity means, above all else, taking responsibility for your work, your ideas, and your effort, and giving credit to others for their work, ideas, and effort. If you submit work that is not your own – whether test answers, whole papers, or something in-between – that is considered to be academic dishonesty. University procedures related to academic dishonesty are conducted with respect and dignity, while also preserving accountability, and they presuppose that all participants will treat each other with respect and dignity.

The following sanctions are presented in the University procedures related to Student Academic Dishonesty:

The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. There may be circumstances, however, where, perhaps because of an undergraduate student's past record, a more serious sanction, such as suspension or expulsion, would be appropriate. ...In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction.

At times, you may do group work for an in-class presentation or group project. For that *specific* assignment, you are allowed to share material, ideas and information; however, for any related work that is to be submitted on an individual basis, I expect your submission to be your own in its entirety.

For more information about what academic integrity means at CUA, including your responsibilities and rights, visit integrity.cua.edu.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Any student who feels s/he may need a reasonable accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (<http://www.dss.cua.edu>) by email at CUA-DSS@cua.edu or call 202-319-5211 to make an appointment to discuss possible accommodations. DSS recommends that a student with a disability meet with DSS staff during the first week of every semester since accommodations are not retroactive. Please note that instructors will only provide those accommodations included in the DSS accommodation letter. DSS is located in PRYZ 127.

Final Exam: The final exam must be given on the day and time assigned by Enrollment Services. Please plan accordingly for travel, work, special events, or appointments.

A student having an exam scheduling conflict as defined in the policy must report to her/his school's Academic Dean's Office no later than fourteen calendar days before the end of classes. The dean will assist the student in rescheduling the exam(s) for the course having the lowest enrollment(s). All make-up exams must be completed at the earliest possible time during the final examination period.

University Resources

Libraries <https://libraries.catholic.edu/>

Center for Academic and Career Success <https://success.catholic.edu/>

Tutoring Services <https://success.catholic.edu/academic-support/tutoring-services/index.html>

Writing Center <https://english.catholic.edu/writing-center/index.html>

Office of Disability Support Services <http://dss.cua.edu/>

Counseling Center <http://counseling.cua.edu/>

Student Health Services <http://health.cua.edu/>

Dean of Students Office <http://deanofstudents.cua.edu/>