

# Fundamentals of Musical Theatre Acting

**class:** DAA 2580L

**location:** McGuire Pavillion, Studio G11

**time:** Monday & Wednesday, 8:30am - 10:25am

**instructor:** Andrew Cao (he/him/his)

**email:** andrewcao@ufl.edu

**phone:** 352.273.0597

**office:** McCarty C 305

**office hours:** Mon & Wed, 10:25am - 11:25am (*or by appt*)

## Course Overview:

In addition to singing, a professional musical theatre artist must have highly developed acting skills. In this class, we will establish a strong foundation and understanding of various approaches to acting through song.

## Course Objectives:

- create a process for working on musical theatre roles/songs/shows by exploring, integrating, and uniting various fundamental acting techniques.
- help the singing actor find fusion between playing a character and bringing one's authentic self to the role/song/show
- explore the different possibilities of using one's voice/voices that are specific to character
- find strong audition material that highlights the actor's instrument and their individuality
- further prepare students for success in the audition world through demystifying the audition process and learning strategies to best represent themselves in the audition room
- embrace reliability, work ethic, collaboration, and contribution as core elements to a performing artist's success
- expand knowledge of and familiarity with the musical theatre repertoire
- study the history of musical theatre, its position and influence in the year 2020, and learn about some of the prominent performers, creatives, and producers within the musical theatre industry



# Content Warning

It is possible that some of the material we cover in class may be unsettling or difficult for students. You are always welcome to step away for a moment, without penalty, should we cover material or explore something that affects you in this way. Please feel free to communicate concerns or considerations of which you wish us to be aware at any time throughout the semester.

## Schedule (subject to change)

|        | Monday                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Wednesday                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Friday                |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Aug 22 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome. Syllabus.</li> <li>Introduce Questions.</li> <li><b>Assignment #1:</b> Become familiar with... "Don't Want To Be Here" from <i>Ordinary Days</i>.</li> <li>Vocalizing and First Song Conversations</li> </ul> | Independent Work Time |
| Aug 29 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Assignment #1 Discussion:</b> Analysis, character research, method, etc., for "Don't Want To Be Here" from <i>Ordinary Days</i></li> <li>Continued song choice discussions</li> </ul> | Song #1 Round 1, 4 students, 25 minutes each                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Independent Work Time |
| Sep 5  | LABOR DAY                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Song #1 Round 1, 4 students, 25 minutes each                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Independent Work Time |
| Sep 12 | Song #1 Round 1, 4 students, 25 minutes each                                                                                                                                                                                    | Song #1 Round 2, 6 students, 15 minutes each<br>Continue Song #2 discussions                                                                                                                                                                                  | Independent Work Time |
| Sep 19 | Song #1 Round 2, 6 students, 15 minutes each<br>Begin Song #2 discussions                                                                                                                                                       | De-processing after Song #1<br>Guest Speaker #1                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Independent Work Time |
| Sep 26 | Song #2 Round 1, 4 students, 25 minutes each                                                                                                                                                                                    | Song #2 Round 1, 4 students, 25 minutes each                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Independent Work Time |
| Oct 3  | Song #2 Round 1, 4 students, 25 minutes each                                                                                                                                                                                    | Song #2 Round 2, 6 students, 15 minutes each<br>Begin Song #3 DUETS discussions                                                                                                                                                                               | HOMECOMING            |
| Oct 10 | Song #2 Round 2, 6 students, 15 minutes each<br>Begin Song #3 DUETS discussions                                                                                                                                                 | De-processing after Song #2<br>Guest Speaker #2                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Independent Work Time |
| Oct 17 | Song #3 Duets Round 1<br>3 duets = 6 students, 30 minutes per duet                                                                                                                                                              | Song #3 Duets Round 1<br>3 duets = 6 students, 30 minutes per duet                                                                                                                                                                                            | Independent Work Time |
| Oct 24 | Song #3 Duets Round 2<br>3 duets = 6 students, 15 minutes per duet<br>Begin Song #4 discussion – 16 Bars                                                                                                                        | Song #3 Duets Round 2<br>3 duets = 6 students, 15 minutes per duet<br>Begin Song #4 discussion – 16 Bars                                                                                                                                                      | Independent Work Time |
| Oct 31 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buffer Day</li> <li>De-processing after Song #3</li> <li>Watch Day? Students bring in video examples of...?</li> <li>Audition Thoughts</li> </ul>                                        | Song #4 16 Bars, Round 1, 4 students, 25 min each                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Independent Work Time |
| Nov 7  | Song #4 16 Bars, Round 1, 4 students, 25 min each                                                                                                                                                                               | Song #4 16 Bars, Round 1, 4 students, 25 min each                                                                                                                                                                                                             | VETERAN'S DAY         |
| Nov 14 | Song #4 16 Bars, Round 2, 6 students, 15 min each                                                                                                                                                                               | Song #4 16 Bars, Round 2, 6 students, 15 min each                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Independent Work Time |
| Nov 21 | De-processing after Song #3<br>Guest Speaker #3                                                                                                                                                                                 | THANKSGIVING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Independent Work Time |
| Nov 28 | Final Presentation Prep                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Final Presentation Prep                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Independent Work Time |
| Dec 5  | Final Presentation Prep                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Final Presentation Prep                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                       |

**Mid-Term Check-In:** Half-way through the semester, students will be given a summary of their attendance and be notified if their "Daily Classroom Participation" grades are on track to negatively affect their final grade. Please see the next page for a complete "Daily Classroom Participation" breakdown.

## Grading

| Letter Grade      |        | GPA Equivalency |
|-------------------|--------|-----------------|
| A                 | 100-94 | 4.0             |
| A-                | 93-90  | 3.67            |
| B+                | 89-87  | 3.33            |
| B                 | 86-84  | 3.00            |
| B-                | 83-80  | 2.67            |
| C+                | 79-77  | 2.33            |
| C                 | 76-74  | 2.00            |
| C-                | 73-70  | 1.67            |
| D+                | 69-67  | 1.33            |
| D                 | 66-64  | 1.00            |
| D-                | 63-60  | .67             |
| E, I, NG, S-U, WF | 59-0   | 0.00            |

Current UF grading policies can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>



# Semester grade will be based on a 100 point scale

## Attendance: 40 Points

| Absences | Total Deduction from Semester Grade |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| 1        | Ok!                                 |
| 2        | Ok!                                 |
| 3        | -3                                  |
| 4        | -10                                 |
| 5        | -20                                 |
| 6        | -30                                 |
| 7        | Failure                             |

| Late | Total Deduction from Semester Grade |
|------|-------------------------------------|
| 1    | Ok!                                 |
| 2    | Ok!                                 |
| 3    | Ok!                                 |
| 4    | -5                                  |
| 5    | -10                                 |
| 6    | -15                                 |
| 7    | -20                                 |

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: [catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/](http://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/)

Acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to engage in class include illness; Title IX-related situations; serious accidents or emergencies affecting the student, their roommates, or their family; special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences); military obligation; severe weather conditions that prevent class participation; religious holidays; participation in official university activities (e.g., music performances, athletic competition, debate); and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena). Other reasons (e.g., a job interview or club activity) may be deemed acceptable if approved by the instructor.

The university recognizes the right of the instructor to make attendance mandatory and require documentation for absences (except for religious holidays), missed work, or inability to fully engage in class. After due warning, an instructor can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

## Daily Classroom Performance and Assignments: 40 points

Each of the categories below are worth 8 points

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Attitude:</u></b>                     | Student is positive, optimistic, and supportive of other students ...                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b><u>Motivation:</u></b>                   | Student demonstrates focus, a desire to learn, and a willingness to implement the methods we are studying in class...                                                                                                       |
| <b><u>Preparation:</u></b>                  | Student is memorized, has invested time in research, analysis, made strong character choices, and/or has spent ample outside-of-class time rehearsing individually or with scene partner to present material as assigned... |
| <b><u>Discussion and Collaboration:</u></b> | Student participates in classroom discussions and collaborates with faculty and classmates...                                                                                                                               |
| <b><u>Direction &amp; Correction:</u></b>   | Student absorbs, applies, and retains direction to the best of their ability ...                                                                                                                                            |
|                                             | 8 points = Always                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                             | 6 points = Most of the time                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                             | 4 points = Sometimes                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                             | 2 points = rarely                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                             | 0 points = never                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



## Final Presentation: 20 points

Each of the categories below are worth 5 points

|                                             |                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Preparation:</u></b>                  | Student displays confident familiarity with the material and is ready to perform at a professionally reliable level...      |
| <b><u>Teamwork and Collaboration:</u></b>   | Student demonstrates evidence of having spent time and worked cooperatively with their scene partner(s)...                  |
| <b><u>Attitude, Effort, and Energy:</u></b> | Student is positive, enthusiastic, supportive of other students, and commits 100% of their energy...                        |
| <b><u>Growth &amp; Improvement:</u></b>     | Student displays a level of growth and improvement through implementation of the lessons learned throughout the semester... |
|                                             | 5 points = throughout the entire performance                                                                                |
|                                             | 4 points = throughout most of the performance                                                                               |
|                                             | 3 points = throughout some of the performance                                                                               |
|                                             | 2 points = throughout very little of the performance                                                                        |
|                                             | 1 points = throughout none of the performance                                                                               |
|                                             | 0 points = (student did not show up to participate)                                                                         |

## University Policies

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center: <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/> It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Click here to read the Honor Code: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

(continued...)



Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Policy on Course Syllabi Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: Contact Uf Helpdesk ([helpdesk.ufl.edu](http://helpdesk.ufl.edu)) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

Career Connections Center ([career.ufl.edu](http://career.ufl.edu)): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support ([cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask](http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask)): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center ([teachingcenter.ufl.edu](http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu)): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352-392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio ([writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/](http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/)): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/>)

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process (<https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/>)



# Campus Resources

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [umatter.ufl.edu](http://umatter.ufl.edu), We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit [counseling.ufl.edu](http://counseling.ufl.edu) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the [shcc.ufl.edu/](http://shcc.ufl.edu/)

University Police Department: Visit [police.ufl.edu/](http://police.ufl.edu/) or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit [ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center](http://ufhealth.org/emergency-room-trauma-center)

GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the <https://gatorwell.ufsa.ufl.edu/> or call 352-273-4450.

## House Bill 7

### University Statement:

People learn best when they are encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse opinions on course content which may include images, texts, data, or theories from many fields. This is especially true in courses that deal with provocative or contemporary issues. UF offers many such courses, in which students encounter concepts of race, color, sex, and/or national origin. We teach these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we do not limit access to, or classroom discussion of, ideas and opinions-including those that some may find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or even offensive. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. But hostility, disruptive and disrespectful behavior, and provocation for provocation's sake have no place in a classroom; reasonable people disagree reasonably. These guidelines can help instructors and students as they work together to fulfill the mission of the University of Florida, which includes the exploration of intellectual boundaries, the creation of new knowledge and the pursuit of new ideas.