

Stage Dialects

TPP 4930

Wednesday/Friday: 3-4:55pm

Instructor: Kaitlin Henderson

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For the way characters speak reveals much: where they are from, where they have been, and who they want to be

—Paul Meier

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This class will explore the details of Dialect work for stage and screen through the use of IPA, ear training, and the KTS “4 P” method, and practical application in performance, while maintaining an awareness of the connection our voices have to our emotional and psychophysical selves.

This course is not designed to help you master certain dialects. The dialects we work on in class are simply vehicles to help us understand the **process** of dialect acquisition.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Accents and Dialects for Stage and Screen by Paul Meier (I recommend the deluxe version with streaming audio)

GRADING BREAKDOWN

Preparedness and Participation: 15%

IPA ear training quizzes: 10%

Monologues (written scoring): 15%

Monologues (application and performance): 15%

Practice Session Journals: 20%

Final Project: 25%

IPA Quizzes:

We will be learning an abbreviated version of the International Phonetic Alphabet in order to best facilitate our dialect work. Since we have such a wide range of experience levels (with IPA) in this group, some will be reviewing this material, and some will be learning it for the first time. We do not have time to get in-depth with this work, but just enough to ensure a working understanding of phonetics. We will be having a few quizzes to test our knowledge and progress with IPA before we move on to dialect application.

Preparedness and Participation:

This grade includes your attendance and tardy record, your participation in class discussions and work sessions, and your energetic presence in the class (more on this soon).

Monologues:

For each dialect, you will choose a short monologue (think 30-45 second mini monologues). The hard copy should be scored (more explanation to come) and copied so that I can follow along. You will workshop these pieces in class with instructor feedback on both your score and oral interpretation.

The score and the oral interpretation will have separate grades.

Practice Sessions:

Each week you will be required to do a 45 min practice sessions. These are group activities and should be done with 2-4 people. A group of more than 4 is too big. This is an opportunity for other ears to hear your sounds and pieces, as well as for you to develop your own ear when listening to others (ear training is important!). It's also an opportunity to help each other with your written scoring. Sometimes extra eyes are helpful! You will submit a journal entry (in a paragraph format) that might include the following:

1. Who did you work with? When? Where?
2. What did you do?
3. What successes did you have?
4. Where did you hit a roadblock or a struggle?
5. What did you notice about other people's work? Ie: how has your listening developed?

Session Examples:

Reviewing scored monologues

Listening to monologues and giving feedback on signature sound changes

IPA listening practice quizzes

Listening to Native Speakers on the website: <https://www.dialectsarchive.com>

Final Project Description:

You will be required to interview a native speaker with a dialect (or accent, if approved) of your choosing. Please begin this search early, as it is not always easy to find someone. You will then lead the class through a presentation of the signature sound changes, regional rhythms and timbres, and a monologue spoken in the dialect. A written document and scored monologue will be required. Examples to come.

In Class Dialect Work will include:

British RP

Standard Irish (Southern)
American Deep South
Final Dialect Presentations

Calendar:

WEEK 1: Syllabus and Intro to Phonetics

WEEK 2: IPA continued

WEEK 3 IPA continued

WEEK 4: IPA continued and Intro to British RP

WEEK 5: British RP

WEEK 6: British RP

WEEK 7: British RP and Intro to Standard Irish

WEEK 8: Standard Irish

WEEK 9: Standard Irish

WEEK 10: SPRING BREAK

WEEK 11: Standard Irish and Intro to American Deep South

WEEK 12: American Deep South

WEEK 13: American Deep South

WEEK 14: American Deep South and Final Presentations

Policies

Attendance:

Barring the below circumstances, students are expected to be in attendance daily and to be on time. **Students are allowed one “unexcused” absence** that does not require documentation and does not conform to the UF “acceptable reasons for absence.”.

Any other “unexcused” absence will result in a penalty of a half letter grade (5%) from the final grade. To be considered “excused” an absence must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation. Religious observances do not require documentation.

Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty:

- Illness—doctors note must be on official letterhead with address and phone number, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted, doctor name and signature
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition, or debate.
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

*To help organize accommodations, students should inform the instructor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

Any student that acquires 3 unexcused absences will be required to meet with this course’s instructor and/or area faculty to discuss the student’s continued participation in the course.

Tardiness:

Tardiness is disruptive to a class of this nature and will not be tolerated. It is also one of my biggest personal pet peeves. Any tardiness will be recorded along with attendance. Attendance will be taken promptly at the start of class. If you enter the room after the check-in has started, you will be considered tardy.

That being said, I am a reasonable human being who has my own set of access needs. As such, please communicate with me if something comes up.

2 tardies = 1 absence

Cell phones:

NO cell phone use is permitted in this classroom unless during our class time (before class and during break use is ok).

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

Follow this link for all university policies

FINAL NOTES FROM INSTRUCTOR:

This kind of specialized education (really any education) is a serious privilege. Please honor that. Honor those people who don't have this opportunity. Honor those who are not allowed any education. Honor the people who have supported and cared for you to make this possible by always bringing your best, your most curious, your most eager, your most dedicated selves to our work.

You are the owner of your experience.

On a more personal note...

I am a very kind, reasonable person and instructor. I expect rigor AND I understand that life happens (and our access needs are all different). Communicating with me will go a long way. Please keep the lines open if you need extra help, support/accommodations or simply want to chat about the work.

This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class.