



THTR 105: Introduction to Acting and Dramatic Arts

Term: Fall 2026

Credits: 3.0

Lecture Times & Location: Tuesday & Thursday 4:00–5:15 p.m., Lovell Hall 320

Modality: In-Person

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Instructor Information

- **Instructor:** Dr. Julian Whitlock (Assistant Teaching Professor of Music and Theatre)
- **Email:** jwhitlock@university.alkimi.ai
- **Office:** Lovell Hall 172
- **Office Hours:**
 - Tuesday & Friday: 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. (In person, Lovell Hall 172)
 - Wednesday: 11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. (Virtual via Zoom; link posted in Canvas)
 - Also available by appointment.

Course Description

Introduction to the fundamentals of acting, dramatic analysis, and stagecraft, featuring studio performance exercises in vocal projection, physical expression, scene study, and improvisation. THTR 105 introduces students to the fundamentals of acting, dramatic analysis, and stagecraft through immersive studio performance. Rooted in Stanislavskian principles and contemporary physical theatre practices, this course guides actors through vocal projection, expressive movement, psychological objectives, and active listening. Students learn how to analyze dramatic scripts from an actor's perspective, score scenes for dynamic beats and subtext, and collaborate effectively with ensemble partners. Through monologue presentations, intensive scene study, and critical evaluation of live theatre, participants cultivate creative confidence, empathetic interpretation, and disciplined artistic expression.

Prerequisites

None.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of THTR 105, students will be able to:

1. **Analyze Dramatic Texts:** Identify character objectives, beats, tactics, subtext, and dramatic structure in theatrical scripts.
2. **Develop Vocal and Physical Presence:** Demonstrate vocal projection, breath control, articulation, and physical awareness suitable for stage performance.
3. **Apply Foundational Acting Techniques:** Employ psychological realism and Stanislavskian principles—including given circumstances, action, and obstacles—in scene work.
4. **Execute Collaborative Scene Performance:** Rehearse and perform memorized contemporary dramatic scenes with focused partner connection and active listening.

5. **Evaluate Live Theatrical Performance:** Critique theatrical productions analytically in written reviews addressing acting choices, directing, and stagecraft.

Required Course Materials & Approximate Costs

1. **Uta Hagen with Haskel Frankel. *Respect for Acting*. 2nd ed., John Wiley & Sons, 2008.** Approx. \$18 print or digital purchase.
2. **Alkimi University Theatre Production Tickets (admission to two campus productions during the semester).** Approx. \$15 for two student-rate tickets.
3. **Acting editions of selected contemporary plays for monologue and scene study (Dramatists Play Service / Concord Theatricals).** Approx. \$15 for printed acting scripts.
4. **Total estimated cost:** \$35 to \$50.

Generative AI Policy (AI Level 2: AI Permitted with Disclosure for Specified Tasks)

In accordance with Alkimi University Academic Policies (Student Handbook §5.8), THTR 105 operates under **AI Level 2**.

- **What is permitted:** You may use generative AI tools to research theatrical production histories, brainstorm hypothetical character backstories, or explore historical dramaturgical context for your assigned scenes.
- **What is prohibited:** You may not use generative AI to write your rehearsal journals, compose your play attendance response paper, analyze scene objectives, or replace memorization and live performance work.
- **Disclosure:** If you use generative AI for background dramaturgical research or historical context, you must include a brief disclosure note at the end of your written submission citing the tool and prompts used.

Grading Components and Weights

- **Contemporary Monologue Performance:** 15% (In class, Thursday, October 1)
- **Play Attendance Dramatic Response Paper:** 15% (Due Thursday, October 29 at 11:59 p.m.)
- **Scene Study Performance:** 25% (In class, Thursday, November 19)
- **Rehearsal Journal & Script Scoring:** 15% (Actor's process journal documenting rehearsal discoveries, character objectives, and beat scoring submitted periodically in Canvas)
- **Studio Warm-Ups & Ensemble Engagement:** 15% (Active, punctual participation in vocal warm-ups, physical theatre exercises, improvisation drills, and peer critiques)
- **Culminating Dramatic Performance & Analysis:** 15% (Thursday, December 17, 2026, 3:30–5:30 p.m.)

Grading Scale (Alkimi University Standard)

- **A:** 93–100% | **A-:** 90–92%
- **B+:** 87–89% | **B:** 83–86% | **B-:** 80–82%
- **C+:** 77–79% | **C:** 73–76% | **C-:** 70–72%
- **D+:** 67–69% | **D:** 60–66% | **F:** Below 60%
- **Extra credit:** None is offered.

Course Schedule (Fall 2026)

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Assignments & Deadlines
Week 1	Aug 27	Foundations of Dramatic Action and Ensemble Building: Introduction to the actor's craft, studio etiquette, release of tension, ensemble building, and active presence. <i>Reading: Hagen, Part I: 'The Actor'</i>	<i>First day of classes: Wed Aug 26.</i>

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Assignments & Deadlines
Week 2	Sep 1, 3	Physical Expression and Stage Movement: Physical alignment, body awareness, spatial relationships, gesture, and tempo-rhythm on stage. <i>Reading: Hagen, Ch. 1–3</i>	<i>Wed Sep 2: Add/section change deadline.</i>
Week 3	Sep 8, 10	Vocal Projection, Breath Support, and Articulation: Diaphragmatic breath support, vocal resonance, projection without strain, phonetic articulation, and diction. <i>Reading: Hagen, Ch. 4–5</i>	<i>Mon Sep 7: Labor Day (no classes). Wed Sep 9: Census date (last day to drop without a W).</i>
Week 4	Sep 15, 17	Stanislavskian Technique: Objectives and Actions: Stanislavski's system; defining objective, super-objective, action verbs, and overcoming stage obstacles. <i>Reading: Hagen, Ch. 6–7</i>	—
Week 5	Sep 22, 24	Given Circumstances and Sensory Endowment: The 'Magic If', sensory memory, exploring given circumstances, and personalizing dramatic stakes. <i>Reading: Hagen, Ch. 8–10</i>	—
Week 6	Sep 29, Oct 1	Monologue Performance and Textual Scoring: Textual scoring, finding the inner monologue, and live performance of assigned monologues in class. <i>Reading: Assigned monologue texts</i>	Contemporary Monologue Performance (in class).
Week 7	Oct 6, 8	Dramatic Analysis: Beats, Conflict, and Subtext: Script breakdown for actors: identifying beats, operative words, transitions, conflict arcs, and subtext. <i>Reading: Hagen, Part II: 'The Target'</i>	—
Week 8	Oct 15	Characterization and Physical Transformation (Fall Break Week): Character biography, vocal-physical transformation, status, and habit; Fall break week. <i>Reading: Hagen, Ch. 11–13</i>	<i>Oct 12–Oct 13: Fall break (no classes). Fri Oct 16: Midterm grades due.</i>
Week 9	Oct 20, 22	Scene Study: Partner Connection and Active Listening: Introduction to scene study; establishing partner connection, eye contact, listening, and responsive action. <i>Reading: Hagen, Part III: 'The Play and the Role'</i>	—
Week 10	Oct 27, 29	Contemporary Realism and Scene Rehearsal: Rehearsing contemporary realism; staging blocking, pacing, and relationship dynamics; Play Attendance Response Paper due Thursday. <i>Reading: Assigned contemporary scene texts</i>	Play Attendance Dramatic Response Paper due Thu Oct 29 at 11:59 p.m.
Week 11	Nov 3, 5	Non-Realist Drama and Heightened Language: Heightened theatrical language, verse, non-realistic conventions, and expressive physical comedy. <i>Reading: Selected classical and heightened dramatic excerpts</i>	<i>Fri Nov 6: Last day to withdraw (W) or elect Pass/No Pass.</i>
Week 12	Nov 10, 12	Improvisation, Status, and Spontaneity: Spontaneous reaction, status transactions, agreeing and advancing ('Yes, and...'), and overcoming performance anxiety. <i>Reading: Studio improvisation handouts</i>	—
Week 13	Nov 17, 19	Scene Study Performances: Polishing scene dynamics, integrating props and costumes, and presenting memorized Scene Study Performances in class. <i>Reading: Scene scripts and peer critique guidelines</i>	Scene Study Performance (in class).
Week 14	Nov 24	Stagecraft, Production Design, and Backstage Collaboration (Thanksgiving Week): Collaborative stagecraft: stage lighting, sound cues, scenic design, prop handling, and stage management protocols (Thanksgiving week). <i>Reading: Stagecraft technical overview handout</i>	<i>Nov 25–Nov 27: Thanksgiving break (no classes).</i>
Week 15	Dec 1, 3	Audition Technique, Cold Readings, and Professional Practice: Audition preparation: contrasting monologues, cold reading techniques, professional headshot and résumé standards. <i>Reading: Professional acting resources and industry guidelines</i>	—
Week 16	Dec 8	Ensemble Synthesis and Final Performance Preparation: Synthesis of vocal, physical, and textual methodologies; final rehearsal polish and preparation for the culminating	<i>Wed Dec 9: Last day of classes. Thu Dec 10: Reading Day.</i>

Week	Dates	Topics & Readings	Assignments & Deadlines
		performance. <i>Reading: Course review and performance reflection guidelines</i>	
Finals	Dec 17	Culminating Dramatic Performance & Analysis: Thursday, December 17, 2026, 3:30–5:30 p.m., Lovell Hall 320.	Culminating ensemble performance presentation and comprehensive written dramatic analysis during the final exam slot.

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Acting is fundamentally an ensemble art and studio discipline requiring live, collaborative engagement. Active attendance at every class session is mandatory. You are permitted two unexcused absences without penalty; each additional unexcused absence lowers your final grade by one-third of a letter grade. Missing more than five class sessions will result in a failing grade for the course. Students who miss the first two class meetings without notifying the instructor may be dropped. Students may miss class for religious observance without penalty if they notify the instructor in writing within the first two weeks of the semester (by Wednesday, September 9, 2026). Absences for university-sponsored activities (athletics, performances, conferences) are excused with a letter from the sponsoring office at least one week in advance.

Late Work Policy

Written assignments, including character analyses and the play attendance response, lose 10% per calendar day late and are not accepted after three days past the deadline. Rehearsal journals cannot be submitted late without prior instructor permission. Performance dates (monologues and scene studies) are scheduled in advance; missed performance slots without an excused medical absence cannot be rescheduled.

Final Exam Policy

The final examination (Thursday, December 17, 2026, 3:30–5:30 p.m.) is scheduled by the University Registrar and can't be moved without the Dean's written approval (Faculty Handbook §5.5). A student with three or more final exams on the same calendar day may reschedule one of them. Requests go to the instructor of the middle exam by the last day of classes. For this term, send the request by Wednesday, December 9, 2026 (Student Handbook §6.4).

Academic Integrity

Alkimi University is an academic community devoted to rigorous scholarship, open intellectual inquiry, and uncompromising ethical conduct. All students are subject to the regulations of the Alkimi University Academic Integrity Policy. Academic dishonesty—including plagiarism, cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, fabrication of empirical data, and unauthorized submission of academic work generated by artificial intelligence—undermines the integrity of the university and carries severe disciplinary sanctions. Sanctions range from a failing grade on an assignment or exam to an administrative course failure recorded as an 'XF' on the official transcript, academic suspension, or expulsion. Suspected violations are formally investigated and resolved through the Office of Academic Integrity in accordance with Faculty Handbook §6. For detailed information, consult the Office of Academic Integrity, Lovell Hall 315, (555) 555-0163, integrity@university.alkimi.ai.

Accessibility Services

Alkimi University is committed to providing equitable educational access and reasonable accommodations for all students with documented disabilities, including physical, sensory, psychological, learning, and chronic health conditions. Students requesting academic accommodations must formally register with the

Office of Accessibility Services, Harlan Hall 204, (555) 555-0155, access@university.alkimi.ai. Once approved, students will receive an official Faculty Accommodation Letter detailing approved accommodations. Students should present this letter to the instructor as early in the semester as possible, and at least one week prior to any exam or assignment requiring accommodation. Accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.

Student Wellness and Mental Health

Your physical health, psychological well-being, and mental health are essential to your academic success. If you experience heightened stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms, personal trauma, or academic burnout, free, confidential counseling and medical care are available through the Hollis Health & Counseling Center, located in the Hollis Center. Routine appointments are available Monday–Friday 8:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. and Saturday 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. during the semester by calling (555) 555-0190 or emailing health@university.alkimi.ai. Urgent, 24/7 crisis psychological counseling is accessible immediately at (555) 555-0199.

Campus Student Support Services

- **Academic Advising Center:** Lovell Hall 101 | (555) 555-0158 | advising@university.alkimi.ai
- **Writing Center:** Whitcombe Library 3rd Floor | Free consultations on papers, reports, and research projects at any stage.
- **Whitcombe Library:** Whitcombe Library, Main Floor | (555) 555-0170 | askalibrarian@university.alkimi.ai
- **Hollis Health & Counseling Center:** Hollis Center | (555) 555-0190 | 24/7 Counseling Line: (555) 555-0199 | health@university.alkimi.ai
- **The Writing Center:** Whitcombe Library | Consultations on play attendance response papers, character analyses, and dramatic essays.