

CHIARTS THEATRE CONSERVATORY
ACTING MAJOR COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
AUGUST 2016
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The Theatre Acting Program is designed to train actors in a wide range of skills, techniques and experiences to provide a broad overview of theatrical performance, practice, history and literature. The overall arc of the program is to begin by establishing a foundation in the first year, moving into progressively more challenging work in years two and three, and finally exploring each student's unique artistic voice in the final year. The end goal is to provide a high level of instruction and experiences that prepare students for further study at the college level or entrance into the profession.

1st Year - Foundations

Acting I (2 semesters)

Students explore making strong choices and taking risks as individual performers and as an ensemble, using improvisation as a foundation in the first semester and story theatre in the second. The basics of character development, scenic construction, and dramatic agreement are explored using body, voice, and imagination to create fully realized and committed characters. Using techniques drawn from multiple theatrical backgrounds and pioneers, students heighten their connection to sensory life, environment and relationship in order to strengthen their creativity, imagination and understanding of human behavior. They develop skills related to scenic objectives, listening, impulse, problem solving, physical and verbal communication and given circumstances. They take the skills developed through improvisation in the first half of the year and apply them to text work in the second semester. Performance Requirements: Freshman Preview (Fall) and Acting Curtain Call (Spring).

Movement IA and IB (2 semesters)

Movement in year one focuses on the fundamentals of body awareness and control, sense, and awareness through movement. Students use yoga in the fall semester as a means to discover body mechanics, physical alignment, connection to breath, and self-awareness. The spring semester focuses on strengthening the body and awareness of oneself with yoga and Pilates so students move from a place of strength. Students also are introduced to partner yoga to discover a greater understanding of themselves as individuals and as part and participant in the world and the ways this applies to them as actors. Performance Requirements: Freshman Preview (Fall).

Theatre History and Literature I (2 semesters)*

A survey of Western theatrical history, drama and practices from Classical Athens through the Restoration. Students will study the social, political, cultural and historical influences of each period to understand the context in which theatre was created. Likewise, they will explore the means by which theatre was produced and practiced including theatre companies, acting styles, design and architecture. They also will study the dramatic literature of each period including a critical analysis of each text.

Voice and Speech IA (1 semester)

An introduction to voice production, including how sound is produced, how it is connected to image and intention, and how it is affective for an audience. Students learn to identify their habits, as well as larger cultural vocal holds that affect the voice, and begin the process of release through physical exploration and warm ups. Using a variety of texts students explore the muscularity and size of speech and sound, and begin to learn to use their vocal mechanism to radiate energy up and out, in order to fill any space they are performing in through the concepts of placement, pitch, tone, pace, and range.

Theatrical Stagecraft (1 semester)

Theatrical Stagecraft will provide students with an overview of the theatrical production process with an emphasis on exploring the various components and responsibilities associated with production, theatrical organizations and the fundamental skills required for serving on a stage crew (sets, lights, costumes, sound, props and make-up).

2nd Year - Realism

Acting II (2 semesters)

Scene study and acting techniques with an emphasis on 20th century realism in the fall semester and short plays in the spring semester. This course introduces students to the work of Constantin Stanislavski and elements of dramatic text analysis including beats, objectives, tactics, obstacles, given circumstances and previous action to aid the student actor creating recognizable human behavior, action and theatrical worlds. They also work on dramaturgical research in order to fully understand the world of the play and the circumstances in which it was written and has been performed. In the fall semester, students focus on scenes from a contemporary play. In the spring semester, students work on ten minute plays. Performance Requirements: Winter Acting Showcase (Fall) and Acting Curtain Call (Spring).

Theatre History and Literature II (2 semesters)*

A continuation of the first year's study with an emphasis on 19th, 20th and contemporary Europe and the United States.

Movement IIA and IIB (2 semesters)

An exploration of movement through ensemble, space and in groups. Students uncover the expressive potential of their body through specific techniques in Viewpoints, Suzuki and Contact Improvisation and/or other techniques in the spring semester. Focus is given on listening with the entire body, movement to external stimuli and on impulse, making dynamic choices in developing the physical/emotional life of a character, and in generating original performance.

Voice and Speech IB (1 semester)

Building on the foundations of Voice and Speech 1A, students continue to specify and deepen their own awareness of habits, and continue to work through physical warm ups to assist in the release of breath and connection to sound and intention. They begin to focus on character expression, based on text analysis, and begin to explore the journey toward vocal transformation. They explore their interior emotional landscape and the connection to image, breath, and release. Using a variety of texts, including poetry, Shakespeare and contemporary playwrights, they focus on rhythm, meter, rhetorical and poetic devices. Students strengthen

their articulation and diction and continue to speak with energy that is forward moving through space.

Theatrical Design (1 semester)

A continuation of the work begun in Theatrical Stagecraft, the emphasis of this course is on the various design elements of production (scenery, costumes, lighting, sound and props) and the process of creating a design based on a theatrical text.

3rd Year - Periods and Styles

Acting III (2 semesters)

Scene study and monologue work of various theatrical periods with an emphasis on texts with heightened language and physicality including the works of William Shakespeare and other classical playwrights. Students are expected to apply the analytical work introduced in the second year with contemporary playwrights to that of classical works. Performance Requirements: Winter Acting Showcase (Fall) and Acting Curtain Call (Spring).

Voice and Speech II (2 semesters)

The focus is on refining the actor's use of their voice through deepening their experience of resonance along with clarifying vowel and consonant articulation. Basic elements of speech will be explored to help the actor bring vocal clarity, energy and point of view to any text. In conjunction with the acting and movement classes, the text used in this class will be from classical periods and playwrights.

Professional Development (2 semesters)*

Students explore the process of college research, selection, and preparation for college auditions as well as an introduction to entrance into the profession including an overview of the business of acting and audition preparation.

Stage Combat (1 semester)

One semester focusing on basic weaponry combat. In addition to the skill and technique building, the class prepares the choreographed violence portions of the classical dramatic text being performed through the Acting III class.

Physical Comedy (1 semester)

One semester of comedic movement focusing on commedia dell'arte, LeCoq or other techniques. In addition to the skill and technique building, the class prepares the physical comedy portions of the classical comedy text being performed through the Acting III class.

4th Year - Artistic Voice and the Future

Acting IV (2 semesters)*

Advanced acting and the development of a cohesive personal technique is explored through acting theory, monologues, collaboration/solo performance, scene study and ensemble acting with an emphasis on using works by contemporary playwrights with unique artistic voices.

Senior Project (2 semesters)

The creation and presentation of two senior showcases. In the Fall, students will present an Audition Showcase featuring monologues to be used for college and professional auditions. Following that, students and instructor will devise an original one-act play as a final ensemble project to be presented in the Spring. Performance Requirement: Senior Audition Showcase (Fall) and Senior Project (Spring).

Advanced Production (2 semesters)

The application of stagecraft and design techniques to realized productions, learning the process of developing a full finalized performance. This will culminate in the Spring with the design and construction of the Senior Project.

Directing (1 semester)

An introduction to the work of the director with an emphasis on text analysis and working with actors on scene study.

On-Camera and Voiceover Techniques (1 semester)

An introduction to the skills and techniques needed to act for the camera and behind the microphone as well as an overview of the audition process for film, television, radio, narration, animation and gaming.

* Credit bearing course required for graduation

Students must achieve at least a D in every Conservatory course every semester or they are in jeopardy of repeating the ENTIRE YEAR'S Conservatory sequence in the following year. This may result in not graduating on time.