

# Developing a Character

## THEA-2291

Fall 2020 Section 01 3 Credits 08/12/2020 to 12/05/2020 Modified 08/11/2020

### Description

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This course examines the process toward becoming an actor. Through improvisation, scene study, and monologue work, the student will begin to develop her/his own process toward developing a character.

#### Requisites

Prerequisites:

THEA 1291

Corequisites:

### Contact Information

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#### Instructor: Christine Fuchs (she/her)

Email: [cfuchs@westga.edu](mailto:cfuchs@westga.edu)

Office: Martha Munro 204A

Website: <https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/theatre/faculty-staff.php>  
(<https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/theatre/faculty-staff.php>)

Please email me only through UWG's gmail. Do not email me through CourseDen.

#### Office Hours

TBD

### Meeting Times

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Class meets Tuesday & Thursday 9:30am-10:45am

Class location: Old Auditorium

#### Productions

In addition to regular class meetings, students are required to view both shows produced by The University of West Georgia Theater Company this semester. Because of the COVID-19 crisis, performances will not be in-person. Performances will be available via Video On Demand. Details regarding Video On-Demand app, log-in, and other details will be shared later in the semester.

*Songs for a New World* by Jason Robert Brown. Video On-Demand available October 2, 2020.

*I and You* by Lauren Gunderson. Video On-Demand available November 11, 2020.

### Materials

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#### Audition

Author: Michael Shurtleff

## Respect for Acting

Author: Uta Hagen

## Required Materials

- Clothing that allowing adequate movement (no logos or writing)
- A notebook/journal, pen/pencil (ELECTRONIC FORMS OF TAKING NOTES IS NOT ALLOWED)
- Water in a non-spillable container

## UWG Theatre Company Handbook

<https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/theatre/assets/docs/theatreprogramhandbook20-21.pdf>

## Outcomes

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- Students will explain their process for creating a character.
- Students will identify the responsibilities of an actor.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to collaborate with others to create a scene.
- Students will break down a script in order to analyze it from their character's point of view.

## Evaluation

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### Criteria

Please see Assignments for point values of each assignment.

Grading structure and point scale:

500 - 448 A

447 - 348 B

397 - 348 C

347 - 298 D

297 - 0 F

Final grades are based on a total point system. There are 500 total points. You will be able to view your individual grades throughout the semester in Course Den.

### Breakdown

## Assignments

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### In-class exercises/class participation/readings

75 points

Every class you will participate in either partner or group activities, games or exercises designed to give you an experiential understanding of acting techniques and processes. You will be graded on your commitment, your focus and your willingness to engage in each activity. When not engaged in a class activity or presenting your own work, active listening and focus on your peers work is expected. Cell phone usage, doing work for other classes or engaging in side conversations disrupts the energy of the class and is disrespectful to the instructor and your peers. If you frequently engage in this behavior, it will be reflected in your participation grade. In short, show others the same respect you would like to be shown to you.

### Personal Warm-up

40 points

You will learn several techniques, exercises, stretches and positions that will guide you with: basic vocal hygiene, the proper breath and vocal support necessary for the stage, the ability to identify and release habitual tension, and cultivating permission for freedom of expression. In the first half of the semester, at the start of every class, I will teach you and guide you through these exercises. By the date designated in the Class Syllabus, you will be expected to have composed your own personal warm-up utilizing the exercises and techniques you have learned in class. I will observe your warm up and you will be graded on your proficiency in the exercises and the effectiveness of the warm up you create. I will observe how your warm up takes you from your starting place to a place of readiness. We will always start with a warm up in class; first lead/taught by me and then in the latter portion of the semester, you will be given a short amount of time to warm up on your own.

## Journals

50 points

By Monday 11:59 PM, you will upload a journal reflection to Course Den under Assignments from the previous week. Each journal entry is to have a **minimum of 300 words**. It must be typed and uploaded as a Word document. It must include your name on the top of the page. NO pdf's or pages.

**All journal entries are to be based off of the readings.**

These journals will serve as a way for you, through reflection, to track your learning process. You will be graded on the depth of your self- analysis and articulation of process.

## Monologue #1

25 points

The first monologue will be given to you. Criteria discussed in class.

## Monologue #2

30 points

You will find/select a second monologue. The second monologue should be selected and prepared with the intention that it could be used as an **audition monologue**. You will be graded on your creativity, your artistic risk, and how well you apply the techniques already introduced to you in the semester.

While I prefer contemporary (2000-present) monologues, any monologue taken from a play in the Theatre Company Handbook is also acceptable.

## Scene Work and Analysis

**Scene Work (40 pts 1st scene, 50 pts 2nd scene)**

**Analysis (25 pts 1st scene, 30 pts 2<sup>nd</sup> scene)**

You will be assigned two scenes to work on over the course of the semester that will require you to rehearse outside of class with your assigned scene partner. You will receive feedback and be coached on these scenes in class. On the day of your final presentation of each scene, you will turn in your analysis (written or typed) for the scene **AT THE TOP OF CLASS**. An assignment sheet on what is expected in the analysis will be handed out to you later in the semester.

The second scene will serve as your **final examination** in the course, and should be fully produced including: staging, set dressing, props, costumes, consideration to audience placement and lighting. For both scenes you will be graded on preparation, artistic risk, and the application of the techniques learned in the course.

You may choose your scene - with my approval. All scenes will be chosen from plays in the Handbook (or at the very least, a play from a playwright in the Handbook).

## Production Critique

35 points

Criteria TBD

## Research Project

50 points

With a partner(s), you will choose (from a selection) an influential acting or performance theorist to research. You will then put together a 20 minute presentation of that research that will include a participatory activity for the class. For 20 minutes, you will teach the class on your findings. I encourage the creative use of space, the use of music, media or any other element that will help you creatively share your findings. You must turn in a Works Cited page in MLA format.

Presentations:

- Pictures only
- No text (or very minimal text)
- No reading from slides
- Information must be on index cards if you can't memorize
- Face your audience
- Look up pronunciation of names beforehand
- Both Presenters and Audience are to wear movement clothing (for exercises)
- Other criteria will be addressed as we move closer to the assignment

## Self Reflection Papers

50 points (2 at 25 points each)

You will write two self-reflection papers: one at the beginning of the semester and one at the end of the semester.

The first will offer me some background about your relationship with acting before taking this course, as well as your expectations for the course and what you hope to learn.

The second paper will be a reflection of your semester journey.

Minimum 600 words each paper. Upload to Course Den, Word Document only, NO pdf's or pages.

## Schedule

*\*\*Syllabus is subject to revision by the Instructor at any point during the semester\*\**

DATE	CLASS	HOMEWORK
Thursday August 13	Discussion: Course Description & Syllabus Handout: E.E. Cummings Poem	Self Reflection paper due Tuesday August 18 Memorize poem Begin looking for a monologue** Answer the question: How do I find monologue for me?
Tuesday August 18	<b>DUE: Self Reflection paper</b> Discussion: How do I find a monologue for me?	Read Shurtleff pag 187-192 Read Hagen Chapter 16 <i>Talking to Yourself</i> Continue looking for monologues**
TH 8/20	<b>DUE: Off-book for E.E. Cummings Poem</b> Discussion of Readings	Read Hagen Chapter 3 <i>Substitution</i> Continue looking for monologues**
T 8/25	Discussion of Readings	Read Shurtleff pgs 33-41 <i>Relationship</i> Continue looking for monologues**

TH 8/27	<b>Presentation of Poem</b>	Finalize your monologue choice(s)** TYPE your (new) monologue(s), double spaced, 16" font, Due 9/03 Re-read Shurtleff's <i>Relationship</i>
T 9/01	Discussion of Experience Present (new) monologues (NOT performance) <b>DUE: Typed monologue, double spaced, 16 font</b>	Read Shurtleff pgs. 42-44 <i>Conflict</i> & pgs. 67-69 <i>The Moment Before</i>
TH 9/03	Discussion of Readings In class monologue work	Read entire play of monologue Read Hagen pgs 81-85, answer the questions (pertaining to your monologue) in your Journal Entry due 9/08 (9/07 is Labor Day - off)
T 9/08	Off-book for monologue In class monologue work <u>Research Presentation-Teams Assigned</u>	Read Hagen Chapters 4 and 5 <i>Emotional Memory, Sense Memory</i>
TH 9/10	Discussion of Readings Introduce Action Handout Action Sheets	Read Hagen Chapter 27 <i>The Action</i>

T 9/15	Action continued In class monologue work	
TH 9/17	Action continued In class monologue work	
T 9/22	Mock Auditions Discussion of experience Assign scene partners for 1st scene	Read Hagen pgs. 145-157 (Intro, Chapters 21 & 22) <i>Intro &amp; 1st contact with the play &amp; The Character</i>
TH 9/24	Discussion of Readings Discuss Performance Critique Criteria	Read Hagen Chapter 23 <i>Circumstances</i>
T 9/29	Discussion of Reading	Read Hagen Chapter 24 <i>Relationship</i>
TH 10/01	Discussion of Reading	Read Hagen Chapter 25 <i>The Objective</i> ***Prepare for Research Presentation***
T 10/06	Discussion of reading <b>Research Presentations – Groups 1 &amp; 2</b>	
TH 10/08	<b>Research Presentations - Groups 3 &amp; 4</b>	
	<b>Research Presentations - Groups 5 &amp; 6</b>	
T 10/13	Discussion of Experience	

TH 10/15	In Class work Day on Scenes	***Prepare to Present Scenes next week***
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T 10/20	Scene Presentations DUE: Hagen's Questions & Beats	
TH 10/22	Scene Presentations DUE: Hagen's Questions & Beats	<i>You will be given a new scene/partner Read entire play!!!</i>
T 10/27	Discussion of Experience	Read Hagen Chapter 6 <i>The Five Senses</i>
TH 10/29	Discussion of Reading	Read Hagen Chapter 7 <i>Thinking</i>
T 11/03 Election Day	Discussion of Reading	Read Hagen Chapter 8 <i>Walking and Talking</i>
TH 11/05	Discussion of Reading	Read Hagen Chapters 9 & 10 <i>Improvisation &amp; Reality</i>
T 11/10	Discussion of Reading	Read Hagen Chapter 12 <i>Three Entrances</i>
TH 11/12	Discussion of Reading	Read Hagen Chapter 13 <i>Immediacy</i> ***Prepare to present your 2nd scene next week***
T 11/17	2nd Scene Presentations DUE: Hagen's questions, beats and actions	

## \* Course Policies and Resources

- Each acting class is an unrepeatable experience. The majority of work we do happens inside the classroom. Therefore, you are required to attend each scheduled class meeting as indicated in the class calendar. Students are allowed ONE unexcused/excused absence (not on presentation days). Absences beyond the one, whether excused or unexcused, will result in a 5 point deduction (of the total points) for any absence. However, you may NOT miss a class in which your monologue/scene is scheduled for in-class rehearsal, critique or performance. In the case of illness, a second absence will be permitted IF the student provides written documentation from appropriate medical personnel (A parent does NOT constitute medical personnel).
- Any student not present when roll is called will be marked LATE. Two (2) lates will be considered equivalent to one absence and will affect your final grade.
- Be here. Be on time. PERIOD. As Woody Allen once said, "Eighty percent of success is just showing up". A final warning: I am very strict with this attendance policy. Attendance issues can easily lower your letter grade. It is not possible to receive an "Incomplete" grade for this class.
- Please wear clothing that facilitates movement and is soivable. Theatre and rehearsal room floors are notoriously dirty, so be prepared. Constrictive, revealing or formal clothing will make it nearly impossible to participate in the physical warm-ups that this class requires. This includes shoes – no platforms, no flip flops, no work boots. Also, no hats!
- Being here in body is only half the battle, your creative energy is required as well. Due to the active nature of this class, it will be very hard to catch up on sleep while you are here, so be prepared to participate. If you sleep, I'll ask you to leave, and it will count as an absence. Plus, it's just rude. During class exercises, it will be necessary at times for volunteers. However, I reserve the right to choose who goes when. A refusal to contribute, even if it means going first, will be noted as non-participation. The success of this class requires bodies and minds in motion. Please do not let yourself or your fellow classmates down. I take daily notes, so I do notice you!
- YOU are responsible for finding material. I am not a walking resource of monologues, scenes or plays for your type and age range. All monologues and scenes, unless directly handed out by me, must be contemporary – starting from 2000 to present. I will post script resources on Course Den. Do not wait until the last minute to find pieces you LIKE and are your "type." Further guidelines will be discussed in class and posted on Course Den. You are required to read the entire play for any and all assignments.
- Outside rehearsals: In addition to the work done in class, students are required to devote adequate time outside the scheduled class period to prepare scenes for presentation. Students will be responsible for scheduling and participating in rehearsals. Rehearsals are a crucial component to both the learning process and the cooperative working environment. Students should

respect those with whom they are working and support them in the process of making artistic choices. Failure to meet outside of class will be noted. If you find you are having a difficult time rehearsing with a scene partner, *it is your responsibility to meet with me privately to discuss the issue before the final performance of your scene.*

- A basic set of rehearsal furniture will be kept in/near the classroom. Students will be responsible for obtaining any costumes, props and additional furniture necessitated by their scenes. Make sure you have an available backpack or tote bag adequate to haul costumes and props. Toward the end of the semester, large props may be stored in my office. Your props and clothes never have to be authentic or elaborate, but they should be appropriate.
- COVID-19 Expectations: We will practice six feet social distancing, and you must wear a face mask when attending the face to face sessions. We will wipe down chairs and desks (when applicable) before and after each class session. Please wash your hands often, and use hand sanitizer when you are unable to wash your hands. Lastly, what you do outside this course now affects those with whom you are taking class. Please keep this in mind and be responsible when socializing outside of class.

## Institutional Policies

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### Academic Support

**Accessibility Services:** Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php).

**Center for Academic Success:** The [Center for Academic Success \(http://www.westga.edu/cas/\)](http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or [cas@westga.edu](mailto:cas@westga.edu).

**University Writing Center:** The [University Writing Center \(https://www.westga.edu/writing/\)](https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or [writing@westga.edu](mailto:writing@westga.edu).

### Online Courses

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the [UWG Online \(https://uwgonline.westga.edu/\)](https://uwgonline.westga.edu/) site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the [Online/Off-Campus Student Guide \(http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php\)](http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the [UWG Cares \(http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/\)](http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/) site. [Online counseling \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.

### Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses.

The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook \(https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php).

## UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

## Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

## HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: [http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional\\_information#](http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information#) ([http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional\\_information](http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information))

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php> (<https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>)

## Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](#). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](#). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](#).

## ELL Resources

If you are a student having difficulty with English language skills, and / or U.S. culture is not your home culture, specialized resources are available to help you succeed. Please visit the [E.L.L. resource page](#) for more information.

## COVID-19

**Proctored Exams/Online Instruction:** Students should be aware and plan ahead for the possibility of having to complete all courses and/or exams online or in a proctored environment. This means talking with your instructors about what minimum technical requirements (software and hardware) will be required should your class move online or a student's personal needs dictate. This also includes making plans for internet access at whatever location participation may occur.

Virtual or in-person proctored exams, if your instructor should require them, may result in an additional cost to the student. Please discuss these details with your instructor or see the information provided here.

**Face Coverings:** Effective July 15, 2020, University System of Georgia institutions, including the University of West Georgia, will require all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use will be in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing.



Face coverings are not required in campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area.

Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons.

**Student FAQs:** For more information about UWG COVID-19 guidance for students visit the [Student FAQ webpage](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/health/coronavirus-info/return-to-campus/students-faq-return-to-campus.php) (<https://www.westga.edu/student-services/health/coronavirus-info/return-to-campus/students-faq-return-to-campus.php>).

## Additional Items

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### **Mandatory Reporting**

UWG is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual misconduct – including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking – is also prohibited at our school.

Our school encourages anyone experiencing sexual misconduct to talk to someone about what happened, so they can get the support they need and our school can respond appropriately.

If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, want more information about filing a report, or have questions about school policies and procedures, please contact our Title IX Coordinator, which can be found on our school's website.

UWG is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore it cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, but it will consider a request for confidentiality and respect it to the extent possible.

As a teacher, I am also required by our school to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident.