

Yale University – Summer 2021

Session B, July 12 – August 13

DRMA S001 Yale Summer Conservatory for Actors

Course Instructors: Blake Hackler, blake.hackler@gmail.com

Brad Heberlee, bradheb@gmail.com

Course Overview

More than just acting or scene study, the Conservatory offers students an entire program comprised of a series of sections, each focused on a fundamental element of acting. Sections concentrate on the following:

- Text Analysis: to comprehend the material being acted
- On-Camera Acting: to explore story-telling in the visual medium
- Voice and Speech: to improve vocal production, articulation, and interpretive skills
- Movement: to strengthen the body and encourage its use in creative expression
- Clowning: to encourage risk-taking and a sense of play

We divide the students into small sections of 10-12 that permit significant focus on individual work. With a faculty to student ratio of 1:4, we make sure that each student gets the personal attention needed for individual artistic growth. We think of the Conservatory as an experimental lab, and because of this, we offer no public performance or production of a play. Removing the pressure of an audience allows our students to focus on honing their skills for use in future performances. The lab structure also allows the faculty to focus equally on all students: because there are no leading performers, every student receives the same amount of attention.

Outside of the classroom, students work, study, and play. Because the majority of class work is project-based and dependent on collaboration with other students, rehearsal time outside of class is valuable. Weekends are spent rehearsing and enjoying personal time.

Course Goal

The Yale Summer Conservatory for Actors is an intensive introduction to the basic techniques of acting. Based on the principles of Stanislavski, this five-week program focuses on building a foundation that is applicable to all further study in theatre.

Contact Hours

Students can expect to be in class 30 hours per week with an additional 10 hours of rehearsal/homework time.

Grading and Assignments

In addition to Acting Technique/Scene Study, each section of this course (Text Analysis, On-Camera Acting, Voice and Speech, and Movement/Clowning) will have specific syllabi that contain individual course goals, assignments, and grading rubrics. Below you will find a detailed breakdown of Acting Technique/Scene Study as well as a specific rubric helpful in defining how grades are determined in that section.

Acting Technique

Major Assignments

1. Neutral Scene Work
2. Monologue Work

Grading Breakdown

1. Neutral Scene – 100 points
2. Monologue Work – 50 points
3. Class Participation – 50 points
4. Professional Behavior – 50 points

Possible Points: 250

Neutral Scene and Monologue Work grade based on overall preparation, ability to build on improvements made in class, and ability to integrate coaching into overall work – see the attached assessment rubric for more detailed analysis.

Scene Study

Major Assignments

1. Scene #1 Work Session #1
2. Scene #1 Work Session #2
3. Scene #2 Work Session #1
4. Scene #2 Work Session #2

Grading Breakdown

Scene #1, Work Session #1 – 50 points

Scene #1, Work Session #2 – 50 points

Scene #2, Work Session #1 – 50 points

Scene 2, Work Session #2 – 50 points

Class Participation – 25 points

Professional Behavior – 25 points

Scene grade based on overall preparation, ability to build on improvements made in class, and ability to integrate coaching into overall work – see the assessment rubric below for more detailed analysis.

A	250	237
A-	236	225
B+	224	215
B	214	207
B-	206	200
C+	199	190
C	189	182
C-	181	175
D+	174	165
D	164	157
D-	156	150
F	Below 150	

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

PHYSICAL SKILLS

Relaxation

Control

Awareness of Physical Habits

Stillness

Expressiveness

Skill acquisition

AFFECTIVE TECHNIQUE:

Emotional Accessibility

Emotional Depth/Complexity

Emotional Expressiveness

Emotional Believability

Skill Acquisition

COGNITIVE COMPONENTS:

Comprehension of Text as it relates to acting work

Clarity of Communication in the work/rehearsal process

Intellectual Analysis/Synthesis of textual information into Psychophysical Technique

Artistic Investigation

Problem Solving

INTEGRATION AND OVER-ALL TECHNIQUE:

Over-all Acting Skills

Over-all Technical Synthesis

Over-all Artistic Impression

Professionalism Grade

In addition to grades for each subject, you will also receive an individual grade in professionalism that is averaged into your overall grade. This grade is determined by the **entire faculty**, and is based on several factors. Webster's defines professionalism as, "The conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a professional." Working from this definition, the qualities that we evaluate when determining your professionalism grade include:

Punctuality
Preparedness
Rehearsal Etiquette
Attendance
Participation
Ensemble Spirit

You will notice that many of your classes include some of these qualities, such as participation, attendance, and preparedness in their own individual grading rubrics. Does this mean that you could be penalized twice for being late, not bringing all materials to class, or failing to participate in class? Yes, it does. Learning to be a true professional, as a student, an actor, or whatever else you may become, is key to your future success. We place a high priority on it during your time at the Summer Conservatory.

This grade is more subjective, by its nature, but the following will act as a general guideline:

- A- You are exemplifying the qualities described above
- B- You are contributing and striving for the above qualities
- C- You are generally present and participating
- D- You are failing to meet one or more of the above qualities

Attendance Policy Yale Summer Conservatory

The Yale Summer Conservatory is an intensive program that packs a large amount of learning in a relatively short period of time. Classes are laboratories, where work and discovery take place in the room, in the moment. It is very hard, if not impossible, to "make-up" missed class work. Therefore, it is incredibly important that students make every attempt to attend every class, on time and ready to work. The Conservatory follows a very strict attendance policy outlined below:

- **All absences are considered unexcused unless:**
 - The Student has a Dr's note
 - The Student has a death in the family
 - The Student has prior approval from the Director or Co-Director

- **Students are allowed three unexcused absences, after which the student will be asked to leave the program.**

- **One class counts as one absence, so, for example, if a student were to oversleep and miss a morning of classes, this would constitute the 3 total absences required to remove the student from the program.**

- **Each instructor has specific grading penalties associated with absences. Please refer to the specific syllabi for details.**

- **Lateness is also unacceptable. Each lateness counts as ½ absence. So, if a student late twice, this counts as one absence.**

- **Each instructor has specific policies regarding latecomers. Some instructors allow the student to enter after class has started, and some do not. If the student is not allowed to enter, this will be counted as an absence. Please refer to specific syllabi for details.**

The student is responsible for familiarity with all attendance and lateness policies.