



“The fun is always on the other side of a Yes.” – Martin De Maat

(328) IMPROVISATION SYLLABUS

Course Description

Improvisation is an exploratory course that is designed to help the students create characters onstage using physical, vocal, and emotional choices. Through performances, character studies, and activities, the students will engage in an active journey from the first day to discover the how to create and sustain theatrical truth both in themselves and onstage.

Required Course Materials

- Pencils/ Pens
- College-ruled notebook
- Ditty Bags provided by instructor with stick, ball, veil, handouts, red nose, etc
- Google Classroom Code: nfoztm6

**Due to the active nature of this course, students recognize that the iPad will be used rarely, if at all when we are in-person in class.*

Learner Outcomes and Assessments

The following outcomes will be explored this semester through activities using a model of educational **triplicity**. We will **learn a new concept/ rule/ outcome, improvise and experiment with it**, then we will **perform it**.

- Define basic rules of improvisation in the creation of characters, scenes, and shows.
- Identify and Interpret how to begin a scene, move a scene forward, and cap a scene.
- Play strong objectives as well as maintain active subtext when playing a character.
- Devise characters psychologically and physically.
- Relate and utilize specific exercise work to help solve challenges faced in exercises.
- Collaborate with partners to devise exercise and scene work.
- Empathize and React off of partners to develop productive work relationships.
- Design and Perform a full-length Improvised performance.

Major Projects

- Knock Three Times: Students will create a short, improvised solo scene with a few different elements provided by the instructor.
- Scenes: Students will partner to create two-person scenes.
- Monologues: Students will create a character and present a monologue.
- Harold: Using a famous set of techniques from one of Chicago’s finest improv companies, we will create an evening’s entertainment in the style of the Harold.
- Sketch Comedy: Students will write sketches in the style of SNL.



For each class (In-person) a student needs to...

- Be punctual and attend every class, except in sickness and emergencies.
- Have the appropriate uniform and supplies required each day.
- Have read the assigned material and be prepared to discuss any readings.
- Listen attentively and participate through class discussions and group lessons.
- Respect everyone's point of views and ideas.
- Choose to learn as much as possible and show a positive attitude about the material.
- Develop positive learning habits throughout the class.
- Ensure that when you view another student's work, you will do so with an open mind.

For each class (Remote) a student needs to

- Follow all of the school's rules for remote learning.
- Sign on to Zoom Link within the first minute or so of class. I may be talking to the class, but as soon as you sign in, I (or the Remote Buddy*) will fill you in.

***Remote Buddy will be the student who sits near the computer and will help all students who are remote.**

Accommodation Statement

Students who may need accommodations/modifications in this class, are encouraged to contact me as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations/ modifications are implemented in a timely fashion. I will work with the Counseling Department to ensure that all students are provided equity in their education.

Equity Statement

The Fine Arts Department is deeply committed to ensuring an inclusive and welcoming environment in our spaces for people of all diverse backgrounds. All people should enjoy an educational experience free from any form of harassment, discrimination, or violence. It is our intent that all students be served by this course and that their learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the Fine Arts faculty will be responsive to concerns that disrupt the learning environment. As instructors, we recognize that we attend school and create art on the ancestral lands of the Kickapoo, the Sioux, the Miami, the Peoria, and the Potawatomi. We thank them for caring for the land since time immemorial. In creating a space that is both safe and brave, our hope is that every student will see themselves reflected in the work that we explore, create, and analyze. We believe that it is our duty to foster safe and brave spaces in which individual student strengths and perspectives will enrich the classroom community while building bridges to larger civic responsibilities. The importance of the arts should never be questioned.



Weekly Schedule

Date	Activities
Week of Aug 24-28	Learning the Three Rules of Improvisation 1. Take the FIRST Thing 2. "Yes, And" 3. Make your partner look good
Week of Aug 31- Sept 4	Starting the Scene -Endowment/ Object Work -Empathy and Engagement
Week of Sept 7-11	Status and Tension Creating a Ladder of Status/ Changes in Power
Week of Sept 14- 18	Moving a Scene Forward -Change the Routine/ Justify -Go Through an Unusual Door
Week of Sept 21- 25	Character Creation -Imaginary Bodies/ Stick, Ball, Veil -Archetypes
Week of Sept 28- Oct 2	Capping a Scene -Reintegration
Week of Oct 5- 9	Character Monologues
Week of Oct 12- 16	Character Monologues
Week of Oct 19- 23	Creating a Harold
Week of Oct 26- 30	Short form Games
Week of Nov 2- 6	Producing a Harold
Week of Nov 9- 13	Producing a Harold
Week of Nov 16- 20	Sketch Comedy
Mon, Nov 23- Tues, Nov 24	Sketch Pitching
Week of Nov 30- Dec 4	Sketch Development
Week of Dec 7- 11	Creating our own Improv Show Finals Week- good luck!