Department of Theater Arts

Courses

THTR 101, Christianity and the Creative Process, 3 Units

This course is a study of theater, film, and broadcasting vis-a-vis Christianity and the arts. Issues of ethics and social justice in the context of cultural studies are considered. Emphasis is placed on spiritual, artistic, and community development. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Humanities: Fine Arts.*

THTR 110, Introduction to Acting, 3 Units

This course introduces basic acting skills. Students learn how to break down a scene, choose an approach for playing a role, and express realistic emotion appropriate to a scene. Students also develop the ability to offer and receive constructive criticism. For non-theater majors only. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Humanities: Fine Arts.*

THTR 113, Acting Fundamentals, 3 Units

This introductory workshop covers acting techniques and styles, emphasizing voice, movement, improvisation, and interpretation. Monologues and scenes from plays are presented in class. This class is for theater majors only.
Prerequisite: Theater Majors only

THTR 115, Introduction to Theater, 3 Units

This course exposes students to all aspects of producing theatre, classic plays for reading and analysis, and the cognitive process of critiquing live theatre. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Humanities: Fine Arts.*

THTR 121, Fitness for Life: Dance for the Theater, 2 Units

This course teaches the skill of movement and dance as it relates to actors, including proficiency in various styles of dance that are most common in musical theater; learning dance terminology necessary for a working actor; gaining flexibility and dexterity to enhance stage performance; understanding what is required at a professional theater audition; and moral issues pertaining to presenting theater dance to an audience. It also teaches "fitness for life" concepts through various dance and aerobic conditioning exercises. May be repeated for credit. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Fitness for Life/Varsity Sport.*

THTR 171, Acting Fundamentals for the Stage, 3 Units

Students explore the nature of acting; develop and embrace fundamental concepts of imagination, ease, honesty, sense memory and concentration; and learn to break down a script for its events and to particularize these events in a series of expressive actions.
Prerequisite: BFA Acting for Stage & Screen majors only

THTR 173, Improvisation for the Actor, 3 Units

This course introduces students to the art of improvisation and develops the student's ability to react to situations and to trust their instincts. This course primarily focuses on improvisational games but also touches on character development and scene work. Students are expected to work with partners and teams. This course is for students wishing to improve their communication skills, audition skills, and overall performance awareness.
Prerequisite: BFA Acting for the Stage & Screen majors only.

THTR 200, Beginning Voice for the Actor, 2 Units

This course focuses on improving students' vocal expressiveness, specifically in the areas of resonance, articulation, breath control, relaxation, and physical alignment. Learning in these areas will be applied to various texts (both written and created) to explore how the clarity of meaning and the emotional content of the written word and movement expression is informed by the fully engaged voice and body. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Oral Communication (THTR 200 + THTR 250).*
Prerequisite: BFA Acting for Stage & Screen majors only

THTR 201, Beginning Movement for the Actor, 2 Units

This course attends to physical basics such as posture, core strength, and range of motion. It teaches the student to individuate internal energies of the body, to use these energies to move the body, and to begin to synthesize physical listening skills for ensemble acting. Skills taught may include Alexander, Pilates, and Feldenkrais.
Prerequisite: BFA Acting for Stage & Screen majors only

THTR 210, Fundamentals of Stagecraft, 3 Units

This course covers the fundamental principles of technical theater, emphasizing safety and technique while exposing students to the various areas of theatrical production, and the organizational structure of such, in the backstage environment. Students develop a vocabulary for technical discourse and engage in regular practice of the creation of technical theater elements in support of the APU main stage production season. Students establish a professional approach for further technical theater study and participation in production roles at APU, and also begin developing their portfolios for seeking work outside of APU and after graduation.

THTR 215, Script Analysis, 3 Units

This course is dedicated to bridging the gap between audience and artists through the act of analysis, equipping students with a better understanding of the methodologies of play reading while cultivating a new appreciation for the power and importance of the dramatic arts.

THTR 216, Performance Cast, 1 Unit

This course provides credit for student-actors working with instructors on productions. Course may be repeated for up to 12 units toward graduation.

THTR 217, Technical Theater Practicum, 1 Unit

This course gives students an opportunity to participate in a live theater production as a cocurricular educational component. Each student is assigned a position as part of the technical support crew, and receives credit for their practical participation and completion of a production assignment. Assignment areas may include set construction, stage (running) crew, props, lighting, sound, costumes, or stage management. Each student is required to schedule an interview with the professor of technical theater and the technical director to determine a production assignment, with each student completing a contract outlining assignment dates/times and specific evaluation criteria. Students are responsible for crew attendance, as scheduled. All technical crew positions are assigned at the discretion of theater faculty and staff.

THTR 218, Production Crew, 1-3 Units

Students in this course participate in a live theatre production. As a cocurricular educational component, students are assigned positions as part of the technical support crew and receive credit for their practical participation in and completion of a production assignment. Areas of crew assignments may include set construction, stage (running) crew, props, makeup, lighting, sound, costumes, stage management, or an individual production project. Each student schedules an interview with the director of design and the technical director to determine a production assignment, and completes a contract outlining assignment dates/times and specific evaluation criteria. All projects must receive technical faculty approval. Students are responsible for crew attendance, as scheduled. All technical crew positions are assigned at the discretion of theater faculty and staff.

THTR 221, Theatrical Sets and Properties, 3 Units

Lecture, 3 Hours: This technical theater course covers the theory and practice of theatrical sets and stage properties. Students explore historical styles, methods, and dramatic analysis for scenic design, as well as techniques in stage properties, furniture design, construction, and set dressing for a variety of theatrical spaces.

THTR 222, Theatrical Lighting and Sound, 3 Units

Lecture, 2 Hours; Lab, 3 Hours: This technical theater course covers the theory and practice of theatrical lighting and sound design. Students explore artistic lighting design for a variety of theatrical experiences, as well as basic equipment operation for the processing and mixing of live and recorded sound.

THTR 223, Theatrical Makeup, 3 Units

Lecture, 3 Hours: This course focuses on developing and applying makeup designs for theatrical characters, with particular attention to facial structure, use of highlight and shadow, color theory, and application techniques. Students emerge with a completed reference binder that serves as a design source for future use.

THTR 224, Introduction to Stage Management, 3 Units

This technical theater course covers the theory and practice of stage management. Students explore the relationship between artistry and execution of theater as a fine arts discipline, and acquire the basic skills and industry-standard vocabulary needed to begin working in the field. Lecture, 2 hours; lab, 3 hours.

THTR 225, History of Theater to the Nineteenth Century, 3 Units

This course is an introduction to theater history from the beginnings of theatrical practice to the nineteenth century. Students encounter readings in the philosophy and practice of theater, as well as plays written during the historical scope of the period. Focus on the social and cultural context of a given historical period, alongside the particular study of plays, playwrights, and theatrical movements, encourages a broader perspective on theater history. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Intercultural Competence.*

THTR 226, History of Theater: 19th Century to the Present, 3 Units

This course is an introduction to theater history from the 19th century to the present, with students encountering readings in the philosophy and practice of theater, as well as plays written during the historical scope of the period. Focus on the social and cultural context of a given historical period, alongside the particular study of plays, playwrights, and theatrical movements, encourages a broader perspective on theater history.

THTR 233, Improvisation, 3 Units

This course trains students in the basic skills of stage and screen improvisation, originating material, finding relationships and story within teams, and enhancing acting skills by training in spontaneity, physical and vocal acuity, stage presence, and truthfulness.

THTR 250, Intermediate Voice for the Actor, 2 Units

This course is designed to continue the work begun in Beginning Voice for the Actor and deepen the actor's ability to speak text and communicate orally with power, conviction, and connection to audience. Particular attention is given to developing breath support and enhancing facility with the spoken word. Students study rhetorical devices used in theatrical and poetic literature and how to utilize these devices when bringing voice to a wide variety of texts and extemporaneous speaking. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Oral Communication (THTR 200 + THTR 250).*

Prerequisite: THTR 200

THTR 251, Intermediate Movement for the Actor, 2 Units

The course provides training in stage combat. Skills include fencing, rapier and dagger, broadsword, and numerous conventions of physical, unarmed stage combat.

Prerequisite: THTR 201

THTR 260, Advanced Voice for the Actor, 2 Units

This course is a continuation of the voice curriculum including the study of the International Phonetic Alphabet, iambic pentameter and dialect/accent work.

Prerequisite: THTR 250

THTR 271, Intermediate Acting for the Stage, 3 Units

This course builds on foundational skills from THTR 113 Acting Fundamentals by focusing on preparing text-based scenes and monologues. Course material incorporates warm-up, scene work, written critiques, journaling, and performance to encourage an understanding of the acting process from all angles.

Prerequisite: THTR 171

THTR 273, Acting Shakespeare, 3 Units

This course introduces actors to core techniques for mapping the text of Shakespeare, interpreting the language, scanning the meter, locating the operative action and images in the verse and prose, and examining the punctuation and overall structure of the text to discover relevant acting choices. While the course requires a great deal of individual preparation, it functions primarily to reinforce skills while an actor is working on his or her feet. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Humanities: Fine Arts.*

Prerequisite: THTR 271

THTR 274, Story and Character, 3 Units

This course acquaints students with universal principles of storytelling and character development. Students examine short stories, classic myths, and fairy tales in order to identify archetypal stories and characters as part of the adaptation process. By studying classic stories and characters from literature and film, students learn to create their own for use in dramatic writing.

THTR 301, Advanced Movement for the Actor, 2 Units

This course provides training in historical movement, including selected dances, manners, and action of the 16th through the 20th centuries, focusing on the embodiment of the style of those periods. Absurd Theatre and world styles of movement are explored, and Viewpoints and Suzuki techniques are taught and practiced.

Prerequisite: THTR 251; BFA in Acting majors only

THTR 355, Theater Education, K-12, 3 Units

The emphasis is on basic elements of K-12 play production beginning with choosing age-appropriate material, auditions, crews, budgeting, directing, and understanding the role of the drama educator. Textbook reading, journal reviews, observations, classroom presentations, classroom participation, and creation of dramatic education plans are the primary elements of this course.

THTR 360, Studies in Popular Culture, 3 Units

This course carefully examines popular cultural forms, institutions, rituals, artifacts, icons, communication practices, thought patterns, worldviews, value systems, and ideologies possibly created thereby. Topics range from the private and public experiences of popular culture in movies, television, and recordings to fast food, automobiles, and blue jeans, along with their relationship to wider cultural contexts and Christian faith.

THTR 361, Acting Fundamentals for the Screen, 3 Units

This course explores the nature of acting for film and television. Students learn fundamental concepts of acting for the camera in order to become comfortable in front of it. Particular emphasis is placed on the different camera angles used by filmmakers and how actors should appropriately adjust for each type.

Prerequisite: THTR 171, THTR 273

THTR 365, Theater for Social Change, 3 Units

This is a service-learning course intended to enlighten, encourage, and entertain the citizens of Azusa through imaginative, well-executed, redemptive theater involving a variety of themes, styles, and venues. Performances range from the heavily traditional to the avant-garde and may include interactive theater, children's theater, street theater, readers' theater, educational theater, nouveau Commedia Del arte, and realism. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Civic Knowledge and Engagement.*

THTR 371, Intermediate On-Camera Scene Study, 3 Units

This on-camera scene study course emphasizes the relationship between actors, the camera, and the director. Topics include camera blocking and camera angles, and the course culminates in shooting scenes to be viewed by an invited audience.

Prerequisite: THTR 361

THTR 374, Writing 3: Playwriting, 3 Units

This course is an introduction to the workshop method of writing and revising plays for live performance. Students learn the fundamentals of dramatic structure, characters, theme, and dialogue, and in addition to completing numerous writing exercises, students conceive, develop, and write an original one-act play. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Writing 3: Writing in the Disciplines.*

THTR 388, Sketch Comedy for the Writer/Performer, 3 Units

This course covers the writing, performance, and production of original sketch comedy. Building upon basic improvisation and creative skills, students will sharpen their writing and performance techniques to create truthful and original characters and sketches. Topics include constructing a scene, maximizing comedic potential, integrating popular culture and societal conversation, and experimenting with new media platforms. Students will collaborate to produce a show performed before a live audience at semester's end.

Prerequisite: THTR 374 or CINE 375

THTR 423, Directing, 3 Units

This course teaches students the practical application of directing the actor. The student is introduced to the various levels of involvement with the play as he or she selects the script, auditions the actors, stages the script, and promotes the production.

THTR 424, Advanced Directing, 3 Units

This course follows on from our Introduction to Directing class and trains students in directing for the stage through a combination of hands-on creative work and the study of craft. The course seeks to follow APU's mission statement particularly in its call to develop a Christian perspective of truth and life through reading, observation and practice of a variety of directing techniques. The end product of this course will be the public performance of one-act plays directed by students from this course in a One-Act Festival offered as part of APU Theater's Season.

Prerequisite: THTR 423

THTR 435, Acting Styles and Techniques, 3 Units

This course intends a comprehensive study of manifold schools of acting, from classical and Renaissance training and technique through that of the Russian theorists and modern dramatists. Special attention is paid to the philosophical and social context framing of each school as well as the particular vocalization, movement, and staging demands of each style.

Prerequisite: THTR 233

THTR 440, Musical Theater Workshop, 3 Units

A comprehensive approach to the professional auditioning process designed to teach through written and oral critique of solo and duet performances is examined. Students build a personal repertoire of songs for auditioning. Course may be repeated for up to 6 units toward graduation.

THTR 455, Theater and the Church, 3 Units

This course prepares students for vocational and volunteer ministry in the dramatic arts. Topics include: the biblical basis for drama in the Church, practical uses for church drama, how to put together and maintain a team, sketch writing, and directing amateurs. The course provides a survey of all forms of church drama including sermons, sermon illustrations, announcements, pageants, outreach events, dinner theatre, mystery theatre, mime, and missions.

THTR 460, Dramatic Theory and Criticism, 3 Units

This course examines theories and analyses of dramatic genres, from ancient to modern times. A specific emphasis is placed on the historical-critical method, as students learn how drama reflects the social context in which it was created.

Prerequisite: THTR 225, THTR 226

THTR 471, Advanced Acting for the Camera, 3 Units

This course is a continued intensive approach to acting for film and television, preparing students for the real-world demands of auditioning, current styles, and professional protocol used in the entertainment industry and on set. Students perform in several scenes shot on digital video and assemble a demo reel of their work.

Prerequisite: THTR 371

THTR 472, Business of Acting/Hollywood Showcase, 3 Units

This course prepares graduating seniors for professional acting protocol and teaches them current auditioning styles and material. Topics include resumes, cold readings, audition copy, working with agents and casting directors, and how to produce a show. Students will produce, rehearse, and perform a showcase for agents and casting directors in Hollywood. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Integrative and Applied Learning.*

Prerequisite: THTR 471, Senior status, BFA in Acting majors only

THTR 490, Internship, 1-3 Units

This course provides an opportunity for field experiences in the cinematic or theater arts. Internships are approved and supervised directly by the instructor in conjunction with a workplace supervisor. Some scheduled course meetings are also required. Course may be repeated for up to 6 units toward graduation.

THTR 491, Classroom Practicum, 1-3 Units

This course gives students practical experience in classroom teaching and tutoring. Students assist in classroom duties as well as complete assignments related to the development of a communication perspective. Three units must be taken for the communication major; an additional 3 units may be taken for credit toward graduation.

THTR 495, Special Topics, 3 Units

This course presents topics not covered by regular department courses. Trends in the entertainment industry or special interests of faculty and students may be targeted under this category. Examples have included the American film musical, science fiction film, sound design, post colonial theater, and world theater. Course may be repeated for up to 6 units toward graduation.

THTR 496, Writing 3: Ethics in Theater, Film, and Television, 3 Units

This seminar will help students understand the ethical dilemmas faced by practitioners of theater, film, and television in a variety of situations. Students will study the powerful ways in which the entertainment media define, create, maintain and/or change cultural realities and understand the ethical implications therein. This study will culminate in a heavily researched thesis designed to influence a professional audience. Writing instruction will be provided in the development and completion of this project. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Writing 3: Writing in the Disciplines.*
Prerequisite: Writing 2

THTR 498, Directed Research, 1-3 Units

This course provides instruction in research design and technique, and gives students experience in the research process. The 1-unit expectation encompasses no fewer than 30 hours of work with accompanying reading, log, writing, and seminar presentation within the department or in a university research symposium. No more than 1 unit may be used to fulfill preparatory readings requirement. An independent study fee is assessed for each enrollment in this class.
Prerequisite: Junior or Senior Standing

THTR 499, Capstone Project in Theater Arts, 3 Units

This course gives each student the opportunity to create a culminating work that integrates learning from previous major courses and production experience as a project/crew leader in the major. This project is an in-depth study of a particular area of theater production or research study, including but not limited to stage management, playwriting, directing, designing, performance, critical research/dramaturgy, or an internship position. Project components are based on the student's topic and reflect an understanding of that production area. The project must encompass at least 100 hours of work, and department faculty overseeing the course must approve all projects. *Meets the General Education Requirement: Integrative and Applied Learning.*
Prerequisite: Junior or senior standing