

Syllabus
Improvisation Workshop
Porter 141W, Summer 2023

Instructor: Bob Giges
Email: otom@ucsc.edu
Office hours by appointment

This course will develop participants' acting improvisational knowledge and skill through practical and theoretical readings, by viewing recorded performances, and by improvising in class and in rehearsal groups outside of class.

The course's key learning objectives are:

- a) To develop facility with improvisational techniques, including those related to physicality, characters, environment, storytelling, and the actor's preparation. Our ultimate goal is to strengthen each student's ability to perform with spontaneity, with abandon, and with fearlessness while taking (emotional) risks.
- b) To demonstrate an understanding of techniques and theory of improvisation in discussion, in writing, and primarily in practice.
- c) To develop skills in listening, observation, and ensemble-building in order to improvise.
- d) To organize, rehearse for, and perform in the final improvised performance.

Most of our class time will center on improvisation training/coaching; your focused and sustained engagement with in-class proceedings will be essential. In addition to participating in exercises and discussions I lead, you prepare improvisation assignments in your group which require 2 hours per week of rehearsal. With a partner, you also present an exercise in one class inspired by the week's readings. You watch 3 videos outside of class, writing a very brief synopsis for each one. At the end of the quarter, you write a short paper exploring an improv topic of your choosing, integrating the assigned readings of the course (1000-1200 words). You also participate in the final class performance which will be open to people you invite.

A note about attendance: While I would like you to be part of all class meetings, I understand that illness, emergencies, etc. may preclude perfect attendance. You should know, however, that **you must attend eight of our ten class meetings in full** to earn any credit for the class because so much of the substance of the course occurs in class. Naturally, any absence will affect your grade for the course; on the other hand, perfect on-time attendance in class gives you an A+ for the class component of your attendance grade.

Grades are computed as follows:

20% attendance

33% participation and engagement in class/group assignments/final performance including 4 rehearsal assignments

47% other written work:

4 readings assignments (20%)

Final paper on the readings (18%)

3 video shows assignments (9%)

Texts/Readings:

Acting on Impulse by Carol Hazenfield (available through the Bay Tree Bookstore)

Improvisation at the Speed of Life T.J. Jagadowski and David Pasquesi (available through the Bay Tree Bookstore)

Assigned shows on video

Weekly Readings on Canvas

See our course site at **canvas.ucsc.edu for readings and assignments.**

Co-Creating a Safe Space

To achieve the learning outcomes stated above, we need to build a classroom space that is inclusive and safe for all. Towards this end, students are encouraged to develop characters and scenarios that resist stereotypes, particularly those that demean others based on ethnic, gender, or sexual identity. Students are encouraged to perform roles and scenes that are expansive and inclusive, portraying relationships that work against the constriction of an individual based on their identity.

Recording:

Out of respect for your fellow students' privacy, recording of class proceedings is prohibited. Documents we discuss will be posted to Canvas for your later review.

Guests/Visitors:

Because of the nature of the work we do with each other that relies on mutual trust developed over time, guests/visitors are not permitted in this class.

Summer Session Deadlines

Session 2:

Drop: Monday, August 7

(tuition reversed)

Request for "W": Sunday, August 20 (no tuition reversal)

Change Grade Option: Sunday, August 27

Summer is unique. You will not be dropped for non-attendance or non-payment. You must drop yourself. Dropping before the deadline results in a full-tuition reversal/refund. Withdraw posts a W for the grade and full tuition is charged (no refund).

For other dates and deadlines, see <https://summer.ucsc.edu/studentlife/index.html>. For questions about dropping, requesting a W grade for a course, or withdrawing from the summer quarter, email summer@ucsc.edu.

DRC Remote Accommodations:

The Disability Resources Center reduces barriers to inclusion and full participation for students with disabilities by providing support to individually determine reasonable academic accommodations. If you have questions or concerns about exam accommodations or any other disability-related matter, email the DRC Schedulers at drc@ucsc.edu for an appointment.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is the cornerstone of a university education. Academic dishonesty diminishes the university as an institution and all members of the university community. It tarnishes the value of a UCSC degree. All members of the UCSC community have an explicit responsibility to foster an environment of trust, honesty, fairness, respect, and responsibility. All members of the university community are expected to present as their original work only that which is truly their own. All members of the community are expected to report observed instances of cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty in order to ensure that the integrity of scholarship is valued and preserved at UCSC.

In the event a student is found in violation of the UCSC Academic Integrity policy, he or she may face both academic sanctions imposed by the instructor of record and disciplinary sanctions imposed either by the provost of his or her college or the Academic Tribunal convened to hear the case. Violations of the Academic Integrity policy can result in dismissal from the university and a permanent notation on a student's transcript. For the full policy and disciplinary procedures on academic dishonesty, students should refer to the [Academic Integrity page](#) at the Division of Undergraduate Education.

Title IX:

The university cherishes the free and open exchange of ideas and enlargement of knowledge. To maintain this freedom and openness requires objectivity, mutual trust, and confidence; it requires the absence of coercion, intimidation, or exploitation. The principal responsibility for maintaining these conditions must rest upon those members of the university community who exercise most authority and leadership: faculty, managers, and supervisors. The university has therefore instituted a number of measures designed to protect its community from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, and other related prohibited conduct. [Information about the Title IX Office](#), the [online reporting link](#), applicable campus resources, reporting responsibilities, the [UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment](#), and the UC Santa Cruz Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Reports of Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment can be found at titleix.ucsc.edu. The Title IX Office is actively responding to reports and requests for consultation. If you are not currently working with someone in the office and want to make a report/request a consult, you can expect the fastest response by using our [online reporting link](#). For more information please visit the [Title IX Operations under Covid-19](#) page.