

# **THEA 296 SPECIAL TOPICS IN THEATRE: STAGE COMBAT**

**Three Credits**

**MON 1:00pm – 3:30pm**

**Instructor:** Nicolas Logue

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**Office Hours:** M and W 10:00am – 11:30pm; T 11:00am – 1:00pm

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**Effective Date:** Spring 2015

## **Windward Community College Mission Statement**

*Windward Community College is committed to excellence in the liberal arts and career development; we support and challenge individuals to develop skills, fulfill their potential, enrich their lives, and become contributing, culturally aware members of our community.*

## **Humanities Dept. Learning Outcomes for the Fine and Performing Arts**

1. See the Arts as a necessary and transformative aspect of human experience.
2. Develop an appreciation of the variety of aesthetics.
3. Develop artistic skills and creativity.

**Catalog Description of THEA 221 Acting I:** A performance course concentrating on voice, relaxation, body-awareness, and freedom from self-consciousness through theatre games, improvisation, and exercises. Emphasis on ensemble work.

**Activities Required at Scheduled Times Other Than Class Times:** Students must see one play and write about it or use the Service-Learning Option instead.

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the semester, you should be able to

1. Articulate and project your voice well.
2. Devise and execute pantomimes and improvisations.
3. Explore dramatic scenes.
4. Identify, analyze and critically evaluate the technique and believability of dramatic performances.

## **Requirements the Course Satisfies:**

AT WCC: AA Degree Humanities Requirement

AT UH MANOA: One of several selections that meet a requirement in several programs.

**Prerequisites:** None

### **GENERAL INFORMATION: “What are we REALLY doing here?”**

This class is an introduction to theatrical combat techniques in both the Unarmed and Single Rapier disciplines, as it applies to the stage. The training on this course will be in accord with the working principles of Dueling Arts International and their unique and excellent training methodology. Your work will be very “hands on,” with few take home assignments. The focus of this class is on work in the classroom, and active participation in rigorous training, exercises, and performances serves as the evaluation of each student’s grade.

This class is focused on three elements of stage combat – SAFETY, VERSIMILITUDE and DRAMA, all detailed below.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. You will learn to represent violence on stage safely, without ever putting yourself or any of your fellow performers at significant risk of accident or injury – this is the PRIMARY GOAL of this course. If at any time your lack of proper technique or negligence results in the injury of a class mate or instructor, you will fail this class. Be clear, safety is number one.
2. Once techniques are safely practiced you will learn to apply them with a sense of VERSIMILITUDE: “the appearance of being true or real.” Note that is a far cry from “real” or effective martial techniques, most of which ironically neither read well nor look interesting on stage.
3. This course is also an Acting course – you will learn to bring physical conflict to life with a strong sense of nuanced DRAMA – and you will be required to create or find scenes or short pieces (plays most likely) where physical violence occurs and bring the entire scene to life, violence and all the blocking, words, action around it, thus learning to seamlessly mesh your combat training into a performance.

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. **Unarmed Fight Scene:** You will be asked to prepare, rehearse and perform two unarmed fight scenes in this class – one will be assigned choreography, the other will be your own choreography developed with a partner.
2. **Sword Fight:** You will be asked to prepare one sword fight for presentation in class, based on assigned choreography.

### **PUNCTUAL ATTENDANCE NECESSARY:**

There is only one way you can do badly in this class – fail to show up. If you don’t come to class you aren’t just letting yourself down you are letting your classmates down too. If you miss even one class session, you may be excluded from further training, as now you are a safety liability.

You will be allowed NO “free” absences if you are sick or overwhelmed by the tide of life. **No absences will be excused for ANY REASON**

For this class, you get one free tardy as long as you arrive in the first ten minutes of class – if you are later than 10 minutes you are officially absent, though the instructor may allow you to take part in class if they like (up to the instructor – they may ask you to leave). **The next time you are late (even if it is just 1 minute late) you will be penalized heavily on your grade.** Plan to be at class a few minutes early so you can warm up and get your mind ready to think and react.

### **LAULIMA – STAYING CONNECTED TO THE CLASS:**

Laulima is a useful way for us to stay connected and a great location for information about assignments, trips to see plays, and extra credit opportunities and other elements of the class. Please check Laulima regularly for updates and please post questions and comments as you need – I will be quick in my response.

### **CLASSROOM ETTIQUETTE:**

Cellphones and the constant invasion of the virtual world upon all aspects of our life are my nemesis and most hated foe. Our class will be a cellphone-free zone – you will turn off your cellphones and put them away (off your person) as you arrive, and take them when we are finished. Fear not. I promise your texts and facebook notifications will be waiting for you one hour and fifteen minutes later.

Distractions aren't just a nuisance in this class - they are a safety liability. If your phone creates a distraction, or you allow yourself to be distracted by it, your grade will be severely penalized at complete and utter discretion of your instructor in a draconian, callous and uncaring fashion. You are warned.

Additionally please observe the following etiquette.

- No food or drink (other than water) can be consumed in the class room.
- Respect one another at all times. **Any disrespect of your classmates, or actions that make them uncomfortable will not be tolerated and result in your ejection from class for the day** (which will then count as an absence, effecting your grade). The work we do is collaborative, if any of us feel uncomfortable; none of us can achieve excellence.
- Wear comfortable clothing allowing you to run, jump and lie down without restricting or embarrassing yourself. Failure to wear appropriate clothing results in an absence.
- Be aware of your body's limitations. Sometimes I will ask you to do strenuous physical activity, if you suffer from palpitations, consumption, or tennis elbow, I need to know.

### **GRADING:**

You will be graded on your attendance, as well as written and performance assignments. You will not be graded on your talent, charm or cleverness, but on your work overall. Your effort, commitment, energy, concentration, willingness to extend yourself, your discipline, and finally the amount of growth that occurs as a result of all of the above matters most.

1. Unarmed Fight Scene	20 points
2. Sword Fight Scene	30 points
9. Class Participation	50 points
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS=	100 points

Letter Grades will be assigned as follows:

A (Excellent Achievement) = 100 – 90 points

B (Above Average Achievement) = 89 – 80 points

C (Average Achievement) = 79 – 70 points

D (Minimal Passing Achievement) = 69 – 60 points

F (Failure) = 59 – 0 points

N grade indicates that the student has worked conscientiously, attended regularly, finished all work, fulfilled course responsibilities and has made measureable progress. However, either the student has not achieved the minimal student learning objectives and is not yet prepared to succeed at the next level, or the student has made consistent progress in the class but is unable to complete the class due to extenuating circumstances, such as major health, personal, or family emergencies.

### **SERVICE LEARNING OPTION:**

Service Learning is a way of using work in the community to enhance your in-class education. In performance, the best way to learn is to do. You can get more from your education if you find ways to make connections between your academic work and your experiences. Service-Learning can be a valuable and enriching experience. You may discover that you have strengths and talents you didn't know you possessed.

You may request a Service Learning option for this section of THEA 221. If your application is accepted you will work a minimum of 10 hours in a Honolulu area theatre, including WCC's own Paliku Theatre. Other volunteer teaching or performing activities may qualify; check with the instructor.

The Service Learning Option can replace the Performance Analysis Paper. You will be required to write a paper (1-2 pages) reflecting upon and analyzing your learning activities and experiences. You may also make a presentation to the class on your experiences.

**Service Learning Objectives:** Develop your knowledge of the practical aspects of theatrical production, either backstage or onstage. Develop particular skills in a variety of areas, such as acting, technical theatre, public relations, or teaching a particular aspect of theatre.

**Possible Tasks and Activities Include:** Work in some capacity in or for a production at Paliku Theatre, or in another theatre on Oahu. Teach theatre games for a children's organization. Etc.