THIS COURSE is designed to train students in the techniques of improvisation in order to develop the foundational performance skills for success in any fast-paced, unpredictable business environment.

Most all theatre games and improvisation exercises are refinements of the work of the great Viola Spolin, who explains, “Everyone can act. Everyone can improvise. Anyone who wishes to can play in the theatre and learn to become stageworthy... If the environment permits it, anyone can learn whatever he or she chooses to learn; and if the individual permits it, the environment will teach everything it has to teach. ‘Talent’ or ‘lack of talent’ have little to do with it.”

The overriding objective of the course is to create an environment where every member of the class is comfortable and free to break personal boundaries and grow as an improvisational thinker. This is an ACTIVE class. You will move, run, yell, crawl, and otherwise break the boundaries of your desk. A large percentage of your grade is based on participation according to individual ability. Please dress in comfortable clothing that allows freedom of movement.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

• Develop sensory awareness, observation, and collaboration skills
• Train their minds to achieve quick, instinctual responses from the top of their intelligence
• Become part of an ensemble of improvisational actors
• Hone personal communication tools and storytelling ability
• Evaluate progress of self and group in “soft skills”

REQUIRED TEXT


improvisation
/im prav zaSH( )n/

Intelligence in Concert with Instinct

improvisation isn’t simply panicky reaction; it’s a way in which people can actively explore possibilities, synthesize available information, and innovate in response to a challenge in real time. Improvisation thrives where planning meets execution, and the art of improvisation is really about making fast decisions and adapting when faced with unanticipated situations. (5)

– Bob Kuhlah, Getting to Yes And

As entrepreneurs we continuously face uncertainty. A substantive part of ‘thinking like an owner’ is cultivating the ability to think and act creatively and consistently in situations where we feel we have no control. But we do have control – the improvisational mind opens up the reality that uncertainty is more certain for us.”

– Dr. Mike Stull, Director, Inland Empire Center for Entrepreneurship (IECE)

– Bob Kuhlah, Getting to Yes And

entre.csusb.edu

#ThinkLikeAnOwner #IECEimprov
RULES OF THUMB
• Two excused absences, each subsequent absence: -4 pts
• Unexcused late arrivals/early disappearances: -2 pts
• IF YOU MISS CLASS YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING CLASS NOTES FROM A CLASSMATE. Do not expect the instructor to re-teach what you missed.
Written work must be typed and proofread.
I do not accept emailed assignments.

ALL ELECTRONICS MUST BE SILENCED AND PUT AWAY DURING CLASS!

ACCOMMODATION POLICY
If you are in need of an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in this class, please see the instructor and contact Services to Students with Disabilities at (909)537-5238.
If you require assistance in the event of an emergency, you are advised to establish a buddy system with a buddy and an alternate buddy in the class. Individuals with disabilities should prepare for an emergency ahead of time by instructing a classmate and the instructor.

ASSIGNMENTS/ DUE DATES/ & POINT VALUES
This course uses a cumulative point system; all assignments and projects have a point value totaling for your final course grade. All assignments are reduced two points for each day they are late. I will not accept work over 3 days late.
Participation in this class is essential to get the full benefit of class discussions and projects. What the instructor interprets as excessive absences or tardies will result in the lowering of your final course grade, regardless of the total number of points earned from assignments. The same goes for your positive participation in class. Any behavior that compromises a safe space for the ensemble will not be tolerated.

SPOLIN SHARING
You will be put in small groups and assigned a section of our textbook (by Viola Spolin, hence the name “Spolin Sharing!”) You are to work together to teach a foundational improv concept in your assigned section. You will all explain the concept(s). Then each group member needs to take the lead in facilitating one exercise from your section (using your fellow class members as players). Do not take more than three minutes for each game – move quickly and get through an example so the class gets the concept.
I will be grading your FACILITATION. Hence, do not stand and read from your textbook – that’s not teaching us anything. Make the concepts understandable through your own words and demonstration of a game. I will also be grading your support of your fellow group members.

NAME TEST
Exactly what it sounds like. You are required to know everyone’s first name in the class and spell it correctly!

SELF - AUDITS
This assignment is a written response to prompts provided by your instructor to help you evaluate your “soft” skills and identify improvement goals.
You will bother this audit after training and identify personal improvement and further goals. More information will be provided in class.

TA3141

CLASS TUE & THUR 2-3:50pm | CH 117
PROFESSOR Johanna Smith
(909) 537-5881
johanna@csusb.edu
OFFICE HOURS PA 103 | TUE & THUR 12-1:30pm and by appointment
ASSISTANT Carley Bennecke
carleybennecke@gmail.com
THEATRE DEPT (909) 537-8576

GRADING/ ATTENDANCE POLICY/ & ASSIGNMENTS
TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE
(It’s improv – be prepared to be spontaneous!)

DATE TOPIC ASSIGNMENTS
Tues 4/3 Introduction to improv Read Spolin I and II
Tues 4/5
Tues 4/10
Thurs 4/12
Tues 4/17 Ensemble Skills Due: Self Audit
Thurs 4/19 Facilitators:
Tues 4/24 Facilitators:
Tues 4/26 Facilitators:
Tues 5/1 Facilitators:
Thurs 5/3 Name Test Facilitators:
Tues 5/9 Facilitators:
Thurs 5/10 Facilitators:
Tues 5/15 Review
Tues 5/17 Ensemble Skills Test
Tues 5/22 Focus on Storytelling
Thurs 5/24
Tues 5/29
Thurs 5/31
Tues 6/5 Due: Revised Self Audit
Thurs 6/7 Practice Run
Thurs 6/14 Storytelling Final Challenge 2 pm CH 117

ASSIGNS/ DUE DATES/ & POINT VALUES
20 Participation and other pro-social actions (instructor gives this grade after final!!)
10 Spolin exercise facilitation (due when you sign-up)
10 Name test (5/3)
20 Ensemble Skills Test (5/17)
10 Self-Audit (4/17)
10 REVISED Self-Audit (6/5)
20 Storytelling Final Challenge (6/14)
Final exam week

TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE

DATE TOPIC ASSIGNMENTS
Tues 4/3 Introduction to improv Read Spolin I and II
Tues 4/5
Tues 4/10
Thurs 4/12
Tues 4/17 Ensemble Skills Due: Self Audit
Thurs 4/19 Facilitators:
Tues 4/24 Facilitators:
Tues 4/26 Facilitators:
Tues 5/1 Facilitators:
Thurs 5/3 Name Test Facilitators:
Tues 5/9 Facilitators:
Thurs 5/10 Facilitators:
Tues 5/15 Review
Tues 5/17 Ensemble Skills Test
Tues 5/22 Focus on Storytelling
Thurs 5/24
Tues 5/29
Thurs 5/31
Tues 6/5 Due: Revised Self Audit
Thurs 6/7 Practice Run
Thurs 6/14 Storytelling Final Challenge 2 pm CH 117

ASSIGNS/ DUE DATES/ & POINT VALUES
20 Participation and other pro-social actions (instructor gives this grade after final!!)
10 Spolin exercise facilitation (due when you sign-up)
10 Name test (5/3)
20 Ensemble Skills Test (5/17)
10 Self-Audit (4/17)
10 REVISED Self-Audit (6/5)
20 Storytelling Final Challenge (6/14)
Final exam week

NAME TEST
Exactly what it sounds like. You are required to know everyone’s first name in the class and spell it correctly!

SELF - AUDITS
This assignment is a written response to prompts provided by your instructor to help you evaluate your “soft” skills and identify improvement goals.
You will revise this audit after training and identify personal improvement and further goals. More information will be provided in class.

THEATRE DEPT

CLASS TUE & THUR 2-3:50pm | CH 117
PROFESSOR Johanna Smith
(909) 537-5881
johanna@csusb.edu
OFFICE HOURS PA 103 | TUE & THUR 12-1:30pm and by appointment
ASSISTANT Carley Bennecke
carleybennecke@gmail.com
THEATRE DEPT (909) 537-8576

GRADING/ ATTENDANCE POLICY/ & ASSIGNMENTS
This course uses a cumulative point system; all assignments and projects have a point value totaled for your final course grade. All assignments are reduced two points for each day they are late. I will not accept work over 3 days late.
Participation in this class is essential to get the full benefit of class discussions and projects. What the instructor interprets as excessive absences or tardies will result in the lowering of your final course grade, regardless of the total number of points earned from assignments. The same goes for your positive participation in class. Any behavior that compromises a safe space for the ensemble will not be tolerated.

Spolin Sharing
You will be put in small groups and assigned a section of our textbook (by Viola Spolin, hence the name “Spolin Sharing!”) You are to work together to teach a foundational improv concept in your assigned section. You will all explain the concept(s). Then each group member needs to take the lead in facilitating one exercise from your section (using your fellow class members as players). Do not take more than three minutes for each game – move quickly and get through an example so the class gets the concept.
I will be grading your FACILITATION. Hence, do not stand and read from your textbook – that’s not teaching us anything. Make the concepts understandable through your own words and demonstration of a game. I will also be grading your support of your fellow group members.

Name Test
Exactly what it sounds like. You are required to know everyone’s first name in the class and spell it correctly!

Self - Audits
This assignment is a written response to prompts provided by your instructor to help you evaluate your “soft” skills and identify improvement goals.
You will revise this audit after training and identify personal improvement and further goals. More information will be provided in class.

TA3141

CLASS TUE & THUR 2-3:50pm | CH 117
PROFESSOR Johanna Smith
(909) 537-5881
johanna@csusb.edu
OFFICE HOURS PA 103 | TUE & THUR 12-1:30pm and by appointment
ASSISTANT Carley Bennecke
carleybennecke@gmail.com
THEATRE DEPT (909) 537-8576

GRADING/ ATTENDANCE POLICY/ & ASSIGNMENTS
This course uses a cumulative point system; all assignments and projects have a point value totaled for your final course grade. All assignments are reduced two points for each day they are late. I will not accept work over 3 days late.
Participation in this class is essential to get the full benefit of class discussions and projects. What the instructor interprets as excessive absences or tardies will result in the lowering of your final course grade, regardless of the total number of points earned from assignments. The same goes for your positive participation in class. Any behavior that compromises a safe space for the ensemble will not be tolerated.

Spolin Sharing
You will be put in small groups and assigned a section of our textbook (by Viola Spolin, hence the name “Spolin Sharing!”) You are to work together to teach a foundational improv concept in your assigned section. You will all explain the concept(s). Then each group member needs to take the lead in facilitating one exercise from your section (using your fellow class members as players). Do not take more than three minutes for each game – move quickly and get through an example so the class gets the concept.
I will be grading your FACILITATION. Hence, do not stand and read from your textbook – that’s not teaching us anything. Make the concepts understandable through your own words and demonstration of a game. I will also be grading your support of your fellow group members.

Name Test
Exactly what it sounds like. You are required to know everyone’s first name in the class and spell it correctly!

Self - Audits
This assignment is a written response to prompts provided by your instructor to help you evaluate your “soft” skills and identify improvement goals.
You will revise this audit after training and identify personal improvement and further goals. More information will be provided in class.