

MOVEMENT FOR THE GRADUATE ACTOR 2

TPP 6535, 2 Credits

Instructor: Lee Soroko
Class Time: T/R 9:00-10:50AM
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Office Hours: Wed.2:30-3:30PM
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Give yourself the means whereby to make a change. - - - F.M. Alexander

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The Alexander Technique will be studied to address physical patterning and habitual movement choices of the graduate actor. The emphasis will be on the release of physical tension in performance, a more aligned posture, and more efficient use of the body as a storytelling instrument.

COURSE OVERVIEW: Through guided exercises and physical exploration, this thought centered physical work provides a clear, systematic look into the head/neck relationship and how this affects movement. The graduate actor will learn to recognize and release unneeded tension that causes an inefficient physical patterning and misuse of the body to support the foundational technical skills required for becoming a better actor.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Identify personal habits of use and miss-use while performing individual activities
- Identify and implement other choices allowing greater ease and efficiency in movement
- Describe and perform the basic mechanics of movement
- Articulate the origins of The Alexander technique
- Articulate the major tenets of the Alexander Technique
- To enhance the student's movement skills and body awareness as a means of creative expression.
- For each student to understand their unique physical habitual patterns and body usage.
- Understand the correlation between breath, thought, and physical action.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

How You Stand, How You Move, How You Live by Missy Vineyard
Body Learning by Michael J. Gelb

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Movement clothes (athletic pants, shorts, shirt—blacks would be best)
- We will go barefoot
- Remove all jewelry,
- Secure your long hair so that it is pulled back and away from your face, before class and then leave it alone. If your hair is long you can use it in compositions.
- The room temperature varies so you will want a sweatshirt on hand.
- Bring something to write with and something to write on.

COURSE POLICIES:

- **Attendance Policy Statement.** Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives as outlined by the instructor. The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor, and the University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities. It is the student's responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting. Instructors must allow each student who is absent for a University-approved reason the opportunity to make up work missed without any reduction in the student's final course grade as a direct result of such absence. This course is experiential learning and missed work performed in class cannot be make up, however you will not be penalized due to your excused absences as articulated above.
- **Punctuality and Attendance.** Being late or absent hurts the ability of the class to proceed quickly with the topics we are learning. On time is being early. Be on your feet and in a circle at the start of class. Lateness and absences are not acceptable. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class you are absent (based on my watch). Excessive tardiness will seriously affect your grade (three times tardy equates to one absence). Every absence past your 2nd will lower your grade one full letter grade. You are responsible for all information and assignments given when you are absent.
- **Sitting Out.** Are you ill?—then go to the health center and get better. If you need to sit out more than three times in the semester, then you are not doing A level work. Your job is to listen to your body. Push yourself to achieve at a higher level, yet keep strong active and healthy.
- **Attention to deadlines.** If you are absent when a project is due without an accepted cause, you will fail the project.
- **Active Engagement** (open and sincere participation). Required of all students every day. Bring probing questions, open minds, consideration, and respect to every class. Failure to do so will severely affect your Active Engagement grade. Not being present in class will factor a zero into your level of positive active engagement for that day. If you are not physically able to participate in this work due to injury, you must see me privately so as to ensure the educational demands of the material are met.
- It is your responsibility to check Canvas and that you check your email for this class on a regular basis.
- Be sure your telephone is in airplane mode. If it goes off I will ask you to leave and you will earn an absence. If you have an i-watch or fit-bit, take it off prior to class. If you check your phone during class, I will ask you to leave, and you will have earned an absence. It is rude to check your phones while others are working. Period.
- Proper Attire is required for each class, and failure to have the proper attire will inhibit you from participating that day and you will receive an absence for that day.
- Workspace. Food and drink are not permitted in the rehearsal studio (water is highly encouraged).

- MLA format must be used in all written work. Failure to follow this **specific writing protocol** will result in a significant reduction of your grade for this assignment. For MLA help visit http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_mla.html#General. It is understood that [A] level written work operates from a supported thesis statement where seminal points are buttressed by textual support.
- It is your responsibility to retain an e-copy of all written work for this course.
- **E-mail.** Be advised that I do not check e-mail after 3:00 PM on Friday. E-mail is impersonal and I can better help you succeed in person so please take advantage of this and see me during my scheduled office hours or by appointment.
- **Touch.** There is physical contact required in this course. Students should expect to be touched at various times in the semester by other students and by me. This physical contact is never intended to be sexual in nature nor demean the student in any way. I will always ask permission prior to touch. You have the right to say no and this will not affect your grade. However, we will then have to work together to discover another method to communicate what is most often a kinesthetic and tactile experience.
- **Disability Policy Statement.** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), students who require reasonable accommodation due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU's campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses. For more information, please visit the SAS website at www.fau.edu/sas/.
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center.** Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to www.fau.edu/counseling/.
- **Code of Academic Integrity Policy Statement.** Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001.

GRADING SCALE:

A	93-100%	B-	80-82%	D+	67-69%
A-	90-92%	C+	78-79%	D	63-66%
B+	88-89%	C	73-76%	D-	60-62%
B	83-87%	C-	70-72%	F	59% or below

[A] interesting and provocative choices that demonstrate intent, specific moment-to-moment action with clear communication to the audience. Highly polished with virtually no surface errors. EXCELLENT WORK

- [B] clarity of thought and clear, specific choices, emotional commitment to exploration, perspectives; polished, but some surface errors persist. SUPERIOR WORK
- [C] obvious preparation, complete presentation with beginning, middle and end with a tendency to remain at the surface level of ideas and performance. ADEQUATE WORK
- [D] poor preparation, no commitment to exploration, less than adequate work marked by superficial thinking, poor execution, memorization in performance, and sloppy work
- [F] work not performed, unprofessional demeanor, work that fails to meet any of the stated objectives; contains misunderstandings of basic concepts, sloppy, unfocused, lines are fed

GRADED PROJECTS:

Active Engagement and Attitude	10%
Paper, <i>Free Play</i>	10%
Paper, <i>Body Learning</i>	10%
Class Room Explorative Exercises	50%
Journal	10%
Final Examination	<u>10%</u>
Total Percent Possible	100%

GRADED PROJECT CRITERIA:

Active Engagement

- As a collective, you and your classmates set the tone, the speed, and the environment in which we work. Make it a positive tone that inspires joy. Your level of sincere active engagement in the course is evaluated each day and you are awarded a score [1-10] at the end of each class. Attending class with an adequate level of interest and commitment is a [7], unprepared OR not positively engaged [5]. Failure to attend class is a [0], maximum score when tardy is [7]. Mathematically a Zero significantly reduces your overall score in this grading opportunity.

Paper, *Free Play* by Stephen Nachmanovitch

- You are to write a 5-page paper that should synthesize in exciting ways the knowledge you've gained from what you have read.
- Start with a thesis statement (your idea boiled down to a singular arguable statement).
- [A] level work is supported textually and properly via (MLA).
- Due Thursday, October 12

Paper, *Body Learning* by Michael J. Gelb

- You are to write a 5-page paper that should synthesize in exciting ways the knowledge you've gained from what you have read.
- Start with a thesis statement (your idea boiled down to a singular arguable statement).
- [A] level work is supported textually and properly via (MLA).
- Due Thursday, November 16

Class Room Explorative Exercises. You will be evaluated on your daily routine and development in the classroom on your commitment and understanding of:

- Head/Neck Relationship
- Awareness, Inhibition and Direction
- Kinesthetic Response
- Self-Use
- Growth
- Discussion

Journal. Students will keep a journal throughout the entire semester. This work depends upon observation so journal entries should include personal (self) observations, reflections on topics covered in class and your own experiences as you carry the work into your everyday activities and performance work.

- There should be a minimum of three journal entries per week although daily entries
- Journal entries are about self-discovery of patterning and habitual use of the body
- Students who wish to share a journal entry during class discussions are welcome to do so.
- Journals will be collected every four weeks
- All journals are confidential (unless they contain self-destructive, or criminal behavior, whereupon I am obligated to report such things as per University Policy)

CLASS ATMOSPHERE

- Cultivate joy, breath
- Work to be an acrobat of the human heart, start by being generous.
- Don't worry about trying to "get it," just do it.
- Fill yourself with confidence as you attend to the self

Final thoughts...

I am here to help you succeed, so please take advantage of me so I can help you. As Stephen Nachmanovitch adroitly says:

To do anything artistically you have to acquire technique, but you create through your technique and not with it. Faithfulness to the moment and to the present circumstances entails continuous surrender...I am in the surrender business. Improvisation is acceptance, in a single breath, of both transience and eternity...Surrender means cultivating a comfortable attitude toward not-knowing. (Free Play)

COURSE OUTLINE and SCHEDULE

(subject to change)

Week 1

What is the Alexander Technique?
The head/neck relationship
Kinesthetic Awareness

Week 2

The power of breath and thought for change
Self Use and Presence
Head/Neck/Spine Relationship

Week 3	Recognition of Habit Holding tension in the Chest/Ribs Weight and direction
Week 4	Mapping the ribs, shoulders, and arms Arm sequencing Animal poses
Week 5	Constructive rest Tension and the pelvis Centering The legs Standing
Week 6	Legs/Pelvis continued - Lunging The knee and ankle The feet Walking Review pages 35-24 of <i>Body Learning</i> (Use and functioning)
Week 7	Observation and Awareness Exploring kinesthetic awareness through outdoor activities Recognition of Habit Revisited Observation and Awareness
Week 8	Suspension and Support Review pages 35-41 of <i>Body Learning</i> (Use and Functioning) Kinesthetic Experience
Week 9	Primary Control Review pages 42-51 of <i>Body Learning</i> (Primary Control) Primary Control
Week 10	Sensory Appreciation Review pages 52-58 of <i>Body Learning</i> (Unreliable Sensory Appreciation) The Art of Inhibition Review pages 59 – 67 of <i>Body Learning</i> (Inhibition)
Week 11	The Art of Inhibition

Exploring the pause between stimulus and response
Direction
Exploring the art of walking
Review pages 68 – 78 of *Body Learning* (Direction)

Week 12

Means Whereby
Doing and non-doing
Recognizing Endgaining
Review pages 79 – 86 of *Body Learning* (Ends and Means)
Direction
Read pp. 139-142 of *Body Learning* (The Alexander work and organizational change)

Week 13

The Art of Breathing Revisited
Application of A.T. principles to daily activities
Alexander and the Monologue (Adjustment while performing)

Week 14

Alexander and the Monologue (Adjustment while performing)

Week 15

Alexander and the Monologue (Adjustment while performing)

FINAL EXAM