

Advanced Acting [Proposed New Course]

MISSION STATEMENTS

DISTRICT

The mission of the School District of Shorewood is to provide a liberal arts education that prepares students to embrace the challenges of the future. We will foster a love of learning and the acquisition of knowledge and skills that will serve as the foundation and catalyst for a lifetime of learning.

HIGH SCHOOL

The mission of Shorewood High School is to educate students, to cultivate a desire for life-long improvement, and to nurture a sense of responsibility, integrity, and good citizenship, within the framework of a challenging curriculum.

SUMMARY

This new course proposal outlines the need for an advanced acting course at the high school level. It includes curriculum and requirements for the course. The timeframe for introduction of this course is as follows:

- Board Approval, December 2012
- Inclusion in Shorewood High School course catalog, January 2013
- Student sign-up, February 2013
- Begin new course, September 2013

BACKGROUND

Shorewood High School currently offers an introductory course in Drama, which covers basic skills for students with little to no experience in acting. The current course is offered at ½ credit per semester. Students enrolled in the current course may or may not be involved in extra-curricular productions and it is open to anyone who signs up. This semester, NONE of the students in the introductory course have taken part in drama outside of class. In other words, of all the actors involved in Shorewood extra-curricular productions this year, NONE are taking a drama class during the school day. The new course would be designed for more advanced students with an intense interest in acting, dramatic literature, and performance. The new course would go beyond the introductory level and will attract students who plan to do theatre during high school, in college, and/or stay involved in theatre throughout their lives.

The current SHS Drama Director taught a similar course for 15 years at his previous school. Attaining a spot in the course was highly coveted. Routinely, 50 students would audition for 25 spots. Students who completed the course have studied theatre at New York University, University of Michigan, Indiana University, Carnegie Mellon University, Northwestern University, University of Wisconsin, Florida State University, University of Southern California, University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, University Of Evansville, Vanderbilt University, etc. Typically, about half of the students who took this course would major or minor in performing arts (theatre, vocal music, musical theatre, instrumental music, dance, etc.) in college.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Advanced Acting (Full year – 1 credit per semester – may be repeated – grades 10-12)

Proficient students in grades 10-12, who have successfully completed the Drama Performance Course OR who have the permission of the instructor, are eligible to audition for Advanced Acting. The course includes advanced training in improvisation, acting scenes, body movement, voice and diction, auditioning, and monologue work. Students will read dramatic literature, see live theatre, and prepare one-act plays and children's theatre for performance. Every other year, this class will make a voluntary trip to New York City/Broadway to attend theatre and to participate in workshops and master classes with working Broadway actors.

Prerequisite for Advanced Acting:

- Students must have completed one semester of an introductory Drama Performance Course, OR
- Students must have the permission of the instructor (based upon previous involvement in theatre/productions).
- Students must audition for the course. Auditions will include a memorized monologue, improvisation, and other performance activities prepared by the instructor.

COURSE GOALS

Students will:

1. Acquire and increase theatre vocabulary;
2. Become comfortable with voice and body;
3. Increase exposure to theatrical works;
4. Understand the careers available in performing arts;
5. Appreciate the societal context and power of theatre;
6. Create dynamic and diverse characters;
7. Develop and improve performance skills;
8. Harness and understand the power of collaboration.

UNITS OF STUDY (and direct ties to Wisconsin Standards for Theatre)

- Advanced Improvisation (B.12.1-7)
- Acting and Acting Theory (E.12.1-10)
- Voice/Diction/Vocal Performance (B.12.1-7)
- Auditioning (D.12.1-2)
- Monologues (B.12.1-7, E.12.1-10)
- Scene Work (D.12.1-2, E.12.1-10)
- Directing (E.12.6-8)
- Producing (E.12.5)
- Children's Theatre/One-Act Play Performance (E.12.1-10)
- Reading Plays/Dramatic Literature (A.12.2)
- Experiencing Live Theatre/Criticism (A.12.1, C.12.1)
- Broadway Travel/Master Classes (A.12.1, C.12.1)

COURSE BUDGET

The cost for Advanced Acting would include the cost of textbooks and the cost of traveling to New York City (every other year). The instructor would provide ample opportunities for fund-raising (in coordination with school administration). The proposed textbook is:

- Miller, Bruce J. The Actor as Storyteller. Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000. (\$24.99)

For a course of 20 students, the textbook costs would be about \$500.