

NCAL 419I: IMPROVISATION FOR OLDER ADULTS

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Winter 2026
Units:	0
Hours:	3 lecture, 3 laboratory per week (72 total per quarter)
Degree & Credit Status:	Non-Degree-Applicable Non-Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Non-GE
Transferable:	None
Grade Type:	Non-Credit Course (Receives no Grade)
Repeatability:	Unlimited Repeatability

Student Learning Outcomes

- Apply foundational premises inherent to universal standards of improvisational performance, while investing themselves into multiple functional social and employment situations with a newfound sense of expediency and collaboration.
- Demonstrate increased confidence, flexibility, versatility and committed expressiveness applicable to multiple aspects of performance both within and beyond the acting process.

Description

This noncredit course is targeted towards older adults. Presentation of the fundamentals and graduating skills of organic performance without script or text. Practical application of the theories of improvisational basic skills, universally translated to virtually all forms of improvisation, towards performance.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Enhance their confidence as an actor with applications towards multiple performance facets.
 - a. Self-realization of thought clarity and the ability to commit to specific ideas.
2. Broaden their ability to receive, process, and act on new ideas through listening enhancement.
 - a. Improve receptivity to ideas from multiple sources and individual perspectives of gender, age, ethnicity, etc.
 - b. Cooperative discovery.
3. Comprehend and incorporate multiple layers of skill acquisition as applied towards improvisational performance.
4. Identify and apply the standards of improvisational performance towards varying improvisational genres, e.g., short form, long form, obstacle games.

Course Content

1. Synthesize the relationship of impulse identity into 100% performance commitment as it relates primarily to improvisation,

but with applications to other performance forms, through numerous "reaction oriented" activities

2. Engage the student in active "listening oriented" activities targeting the notion of cooperatively building ideas through mutual offers
 - a. Premise of "Yes and"
 - b. Building stories from single thread, inviting multiple inputs
3. Embrace the progressive nature of skill development through activity introduction and re-incorporation
 - a. Environment and use of mime
 - b. Relationship
 - c. Instant characterization
 - d. Scene initiation
 - e. Scene development
 - f. Narrative enhancement/execution
4. Practice for enhancement multiple strategies of varying improvisational styles and genres through fully active participation in activities identified with varying forms

Lab Content

1. Individual and partner exploration and self-analysis of concepts and exercises introduced in class.
2. Attend and analyze live performances.
3. View and study media materials.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. Clothing suitable for rehearsal work.
2. A flexible, open-space classroom.
3. Rehearsal furniture and props.
4. Video recording and playback equipment.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Demonstrating growth and development in progressive skills incorporation through numerous class and public performances
Providing verbal and/or written evaluation of peer work incorporating language and skill elements appropriate to course content
Self-reflective written analysis comparing assigned reading with self development

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture: presentation of theory and foundational premises
Discussion: assessment and analysis of theory and practice discoveries
Cooperative learning exercises: scene and partner performance projects
Oral presentations: solo performance exercises
Laboratory: rehearsal and preparation
Demonstration: peer and instructor modeling and self-assessment through performance presentations
Field trips: observation and analysis of performance presentation

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Salinsky, Thomas, and Deborah Frances-White. The Improv Handbook: The Ultimate Guide for Improvising in Comedy, Theatre and Beyond. 2017.

Halpern, Charna, Del Close, and Kim Johnson. Truth in Comedy. 1994.

Johnstone, Keith. Impro. 1987.

Despite being older than five years, all of these texts continue to be pillars, standards, and staples of improvisational training within the industry.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Write personal reflection journal of reading assignments as related to coursework and participation.
2. Write live performance critique of a professional improvisation performance, comparing differences and relations to prepared theatre.
3. Read assigned text for application, reflection, and comparison leading to writing or discussion assignments.

Discipline(s)

Theater Arts