



UCLA PIT ORCHESTRA SUMMER INSTITUTE

Session B Summer 2025

“URINETOWN”

THEATER PRODUCTION (50) SYLLABUS

Instructor: Paul Kay pj1kay@gmail.com

Course Description:

The UCLA Pit Orchestra Summer Institute is an immersive two-week program designed to equip high school musicians with the skills and knowledge essential for thriving in the dynamic world of playing in a pit orchestra. This year the production is “URINETOWN.” Participants will embark on a musical journey, learning the intricacies of preparing a musical production, refining sight-reading abilities, exploring the music business and various platforms in technology, and honing a wide array of musical and collaborative skills. From rehearsal techniques and orchestration to networking in the industry, this program offers a comprehensive exploration of the pit orchestra landscape.

Experience: All applicants **must be proficient** on their respective instruments. A solid understanding of instrument technique and performance is required. Excellent music reading skills are essential to playing in a pit orchestra. Applicants should be able to sight-read music accurately and adapt to various musical genres and styles. Previous participation in a pit orchestra, either within a school or community theater setting, is a prerequisite.

Goals and Objectives:

- Acquire a solid understanding of the process involved in preparing and performing in a pit orchestra.
- Strengthen sight-reading skills with music from various Broadway shows.
- Explore a range of musical concepts: rehearsal techniques, orchestration, instrumentation, score analysis, multi-instrumentalism, and interpretation.
- Elevate music theory comprehension.
- Collaborate closely with a conductor/musical director, singers, actors, and production crew.

- Gain music industry insights, covering self-marketing and technology's role in pit orchestras.
- Benefit from the wisdom shared by guest artists that may include accomplished pit musicians, conductors, directors, and orchestrators.
- Produce a successful final project and performance of a fully staged Broadway musical.

Course Offerings:

Full Pit Rehearsals

Intensive “Urinetown” rehearsals with the full pit orchestra ensemble. Focusing on ensemble playing, dynamics, synchronization, and more.

Individual Practice Sessions

Instrument-specific solo or sectional sessions. Addressing technical challenges and specific parts within the score.

Script and Score Analysis

Analyzing the musical score in the context of the script and storyline. Understanding character themes, mood changes, and musical cues.

Industry Insights - Life as a Pit Musician

Guest speaker sharing their experiences as professional pit musicians. Discussing career paths, challenges, and strategies for success.

Sitz-Probe Rehearsal

A rehearsal where cast members and the pit orchestra come together. Focusing on synchronization, communication, and overall performance.

Masterclass - Audition Mastery for Pit Musicians and Nailing the Gig

Expert-led session on audition techniques and preparation.

Sight-Reading Boot Camp and Exploring Theatre Repertoire Across Eras”

Intensive practice in sight-reading music on the spot. Developing skills to adapt quickly to new material.

Alexander Technique Sessions

In this course, you will learn the principles of Alexander Technique, including the language used when talking about Alexander Technique.

Assessment:

- Pre-Arrival Preparation: 50%
- Attendance and Participation: 45%
- Return of music score: 5%

Students needing academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at (310) 825-1501. When possible, students should contact the CAE within the first two weeks of the term as reasonable notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. For more information visit www.cae.ucla.edu

Title IX prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, you can receive confidential support and advocacy at the CARE Advocacy Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, 1st Floor Wooden Center West, CARE advocate@caps.ucla.edu, (310) 206-2465. In addition, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) provides confidential counseling to all students and can be reached 24/7 at (310) 825-0768. You can also report sexual violence or sexual harassment directly to the University's Title IX Coordinator, 2241 Murphy Hall, titleix@conet.ucla.edu, (310) 206-3417. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD at (310) 825-1491.

Faculty and TAs are required under the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment to inform the Title IX Coordinator should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.

University of California, Los Angeles
Department of Music, UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

MUSIC 50 Alexander Technique

PIT Orchestra Summer Institute, 2025

TBD - Ostin Ensemble Room

Noel Cano Hearn, Lecturer, UCLA

Tel: (601) 573-3597 **Email:** ATwithNoel@gmail.com

Course Description: In this course, you will learn the principles of Alexander Technique, including the language used when talking about Alexander Technique. We will also work together to apply these principles to performance technique and ability. We will learn to accurately observe habitual responses to stimuli, learn how to choose something more efficient, and how to apply those observation skills to performance.

Course Activities:

1. Alexander Technique is a hands-on technique which involves hands-on guidance from the teacher. Consent is always required and students are allowed to withhold and/or reverse consent at any time.
2. We will be doing some body mapping and learning about anatomy so we know how important musculoskeletal elements are meant to bend or move in order to release excess tension and find poise.
3. We will be reading a book by F.M. Alexander called *The Use of the Self*. It is available online at no cost here:
<https://sd5bb08e12f75bcf7.jimcontent.com/download/version/1574522895/module/8782402085/name/The%20Use%20of%20the%20Self%20%281946%29%20Frederick%20Matthias%20Alexander.pdf>
4. Breath coordination is important for all of us. We will work together to learn about how to release the muscles that interfere with free breath and how to apply that to performance.
5. We will use basic/universal movements, like sitting, standing, and walking to explore our habits with those movements.
6. One activity we do is called Active Rest. This involves lying on the floor in a semi-supine position. You may consider bringing a yoga mat or towel.
7. We will have opportunity to apply the principles we learn to actual performance, working in a master class sort of setting.
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Assessment

1. **Attendance (20%)**

Each punctual attendance will receive 10 points. Each late arrival will receive 5 points. Each absence will receive 0 points. Absences and late arrivals can be excused if justified in writing (e.g. doctor's certificate, letters from other professors, etc.). Letters must be received within one week of absence to receive points.

2. Observation Journal (40%)

In the class, we will learn some basic principles of the Alexander Technique. This demands that students learn to increase their biomechanical awareness. As such, an Observation journal must be kept. Daily entries are required each week. Entries may vary in length, depending on personal experience.

3. Video and Written Assignments (40%)

Students are expected to improve their AT skills throughout the course by learning effective performance techniques and practicing them on their instruments. Daily practice (specifically applying AT principles) of at least 15 minutes is required to achieve the progress needed for a satisfactory grade. Video submissions will be required throughout the term. These videos should show an improvement in Alexander Technique as well as a higher level of comfort in performing the material.

Schedule:

Week One

- Introduction to Alexander Technique principles and the story behind F.M. Alexander's discovery. Introduction to our text, *The Use of the Self* by F.M. Alexander. The language of Alexander Technique. Assignment: read the first preface of *The Use of the Self*
- Discovering Habit. We will apply Observe-Inhibit-Direct to begin to accurately identify habitual responses to stimuli. Assignments: begin observation journal; video submission of student playing a short passage in their habit first, then after applying AT principles to find poise
- Bending without pain. Working with anatomy, we will learn "monkey," tiny bend looking up, and tiny bend looking down. We will also do Active Rest and begin our conversation about breath. Assignments: Observation Journal; read chapter 1 up through page 21 of *The Use of the Self*
- Breathing and breath coordination. How do we interfere with our breath, how does it affect the way we play or sing, and how might we improve it? We will add Whispered Ah to our Active Rest. Assignments: Observation journal; video submission of student demonstrating Whispered Ah as prep for performing their instrument followed by playing a short passage.

Week Two

- The "means whereby" versus "end-gaining." The power of inhibition in the process of doing the Work. How the AT thought process begins when you decide to play rather than when you already

have the instrument in your hands. Active Rest and Whispered Ah. Assignments: Observation Journal; short essay about ways you might be habitually end-gaining during performance and how you could apply the means-whereby to improve your experience and performance.

- Psycho/Physical/Emotional Re-education. How these three things are inextricably linked, what our individual relationships are with each, and how we can one component to positively affect the others. Active Rest, Whispered Ah. Assignment: Observation Journal; read the rest of chapter 1 of *The Use of the Self*
- How arms connect to the back. Tiny hands on back of chair, practicing with a pen, applying these activities to using arms and fingers on instruments. Active Rest, Whispered Ah. Assignments: Observation journal; video submission of tiny hands of back of chair with emphasis on shoulder girdle released and elbows out/wrists in.
- The class will be invited to bring their instrument with a prepared piece to perform while being observed by classmates and having hands-on from the instructor. Active Rest, Whispered Ah. Assignments: Observation Journal; read chapter 3 (The Golfer) from *The Use of the Self*

Homework Policy

No homework will be accepted late. If it is not handed in on time, the student will not receive credit. Homework must be completed and submitted by **12:00 (noon) the Monday before the next class meeting.**

Letter grades and grades expressed as percentages counterchange according to the following table

A+: 99-100%	C+: 77-79%
A: 93-98%	C: 73-76%
A-: 90-92%	C-: 70-72%
B+: 87-89%	D: 60-69%
B: 83-86%	F: 0-59%
B-: 80-82%	

Academic Accommodation

Students needing academic accommodations must be registered through the UCLA Center for Accessible Education (CAE). Please visit www.cae.ucla.edu for more information All accommodations must be communicated in writing to the instructor at the beginning of the

quarter (no later than Week 2) with proper documentation from CAE. CAE is located in A255 Murphy Hall.

Academic Integrity

UCLA is a community of scholars. In this community, all members including faculty, staff, and students alike are responsible for maintaining standards of academic honesty. As a student and member of the University community, you are here to get an education and are, therefore, expected to demonstrate integrity in your academic endeavors. You are evaluated on your own merits. Cheating, plagiarism, collaborative work (where not authorized), multiple submissions without the permission of the professor, or other kinds of academic dishonesty are considered unacceptable behavior and will result in formal disciplinary proceedings, usually resulting in suspension or dismissal. Please see Student Code of Conduct for more details at:

<https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/studentconductcode>