

AN EXPLORATORY AND DESCRIPTIVE INQUIRY INTO THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE GOALS OF GENERAL EDUCATION AND DISCIPLINARY
CONTENT IN ACTING FOR NON-MAJORS COURSES IN COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

A foundational requirement of undergraduate education in the United States is the completion of a general education curriculum. One goal of general education is to introduce students to habits of mind leading to the development of intellectual character. Acting for Non-Majors is a course that is included in the general education curriculum of many colleges and universities across the United States. I reviewed the relevant literature and found a scant amount of material addressing the relationship between acting pedagogy and the development of intellectual character. I then asked the question: What is the relationship between the development of intellectual character and pedagogies used to teach acting to non-majors in institutions of higher education in the United States.

I analyzed two types of documents, course syllabi and institutional documents. I used content analysis to identify recurring themes, concepts and pedagogies. My analysis of course syllabi revealed four signature pedagogies: experiential learning, scene work, writing, and observation of productions. I concluded these four pedagogies may combine to create a mode of inquiry into the nature of humanity resulting in the development of empathy, one of sixteen habits of mind identified by Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick and an essential element in the development of intellectual character as defined by Ron Ritchhart. The data is presented in the form of dense narrative and descriptive statistics.