



## Master of Fine Arts, Acting Midpoint Review Handbook

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This handbook contains the Acting Midpoint Review requirements, planning guides, and resources. Please read through all of this information carefully before preparing your materials for Midpoint Review. If you have any questions or need clarification on any aspect of your upcoming Midpoint Review, you will find information about who to contact on page 15 of this handbook.

It is your responsibility to use the latest version of the Midpoint Review Handbook. If you are uncertain if this is the latest version, please refer to the Acting page on the Graduate

Showcase: <http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/>

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## 1. ELIGIBILITY FOR MIDPOINT REVIEW

### A. Eligibility

Prior to scheduling your Midpoint Review, you must have done the following:

- Completed 24-36 Units
- Completed or be in progress of completing all core requirements (listed below)
- Completed 6 units of Liberal Arts

These core courses must be taken by all Acting students \*

- ACT 635 Acting Techniques: Meisner
- ACT 615 Voice & Speech
- ACT 640 Movement: Creating Physical Character
- ACT 637 Meisner 2
- ACT 617 Voice and Speech 2
- ACT 620 Movement: Alexander Technique
- ACT 639 Acting for Performance 1 (Concurrent to review)
- ACT 645 Improvisational Techniques (Concurrent to review)
- ACT 625 Vocal Production(Concurrent to review)

\* Core courses may be waived with academic director approval only

**Note:** International students who are tested into or choose to take EAP 605S or 605W: English for Art Purposes should do so immediately after taking EAP 604: MS: English for Art Purposes and before they plan to do their Midpoint Review.

Plan ahead and be prepared to present your proposal by the beginning of the semester.

## 2. SCHEDULING YOUR MIDPOINT REVIEW

### A. Review Date

Midpoint Reviews are conducted in the spring and fall semesters. Monologue and scene presentations are held in the ACT 639 Acting for Performance 1 class generally in week 12. When group performances are completed, you will have an individual follow-up meeting (typically 1-2 weeks following the group performance). Actual

dates and times for the group performances will be announced in class. Your individual meeting times will be assigned and sent to you from the Midpoint Review Coordinator.

**NOTE:** Please communicate with your Graduate Advisor about when would be the most appropriate time to schedule your Midpoint Review. It is important to know the final cut-off date for scheduling your review. You should receive an email from the Midpoint Review Coordinator approximately one week prior to the start of the semester you will be presenting your Midpoint with details on how to sign-up. The email will direct you to the Graduate Midpoint and Final Review Showcase <http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/>.

## **B. Review Orientation**

You are required to watch the online Midpoint Review Orientation prior to completing the Midpoint Review sign-up form online. Please [contact](#) the Midpoint Review Coordinator if you have any questions.

## **C. Attendance & Cancellations**

Midpoint Review is a required component of your Master's level program and must be completed before commencing the directed study or final portfolio portion of your program. Cancellations or postponements must be organized through the Midpoint Review Coordinator at least 5 working days prior to the scheduled review date. Late cancellations or postponements will be considered "No Show" and fail the Midpoint Review.

## **3. DELIVERABLE DETAILS & DUE DATES**

Your Midpoint Review will consist of the following three components: portfolio, thesis book, and oral presentation. [Link to tutorial on uploading work to LMS](#)

**IMPORTANT:** If your Thesis Book and Portfolio are not received in time, your Midpoint Review will be cancelled and you will need to present the following semester.

**Portfolio:** Portfolio consists of material performed in class (ACT 639). Both contemporary and classical material will be included. Video recordings of your group performances will be made available for each student to upload individual portfolio examples to the Portfolio Icon in LMS. Specifics of performance material and where to locate your video sample will be discussed and assigned in class.

[Link to more detailed portfolio checklist](#)

<b>Upload/Deliver To:</b>	Upload to the Portfolio Icon in LMS
<b>Due Date:</b>	No later than your individual review meeting date.
<b>Format:</b>	Performance video recording (preferred format: MPEG-4 (.mp4), with h.264 video compression at HD quality)

**Thesis Book:** Your written thesis book must be clear, complete and concise. The book must be loaded up to your student home page by the due date below.

Professional Editing: The proposal must be professionally executed, grammatically correct and free of spelling errors and typos.

[Link to more detailed thesis book checklist](#)

<b>Upload/Deliver To:</b>	Upload to the Thesis Portfolio Icon in LMS
<b>Due Date:</b>	One week prior to review date
<b>Format:</b>	Adobe PDF, the font should be an appropriate style and 10 pt. or larger

**Oral Presentation:** You will have an in class performance followed by an individual discussion with the Midpoint Committee from the Graduate School of Acting

[Link to more detailed oral presentation checklist](#)

<b>Where:</b>	The performance will take place in your ACT 639 class and your individual discussion will take place at your scheduled Midpoint Review
<b>Due Date:</b>	At the scheduled day/time of your review
<b>Format:</b>	Supporting materials are contained in the designated midpoint book. No PDF or board necessary.
<b>Practice and Prepare:</b>	Practice your oral presentation in advance of your review to ensure your comfort level during the presentation. Be prepared to answer questions when you are finished.

## 4. MIDPOINT REVIEW PROCESS

### A. Review Expectations and Structure

Midpoint Reviews are done in two sessions, the performances and the review. The performances are held during week 12 with your class. The Individual discussions are held in week 13 or 14 depending upon schedule. The Midpoint Review meeting will follow this structure:

Week 12: In Class	
<b>Scene and Monologue Introduction</b>	<b>30 seconds</b>
Scene Performance	10 minutes
Monologue Performance	5 minutes

Week 13/14: Individual Discussions	
<b>Midpoint Review Committee Introduction</b>	<b>5 minutes</b>
Process Discussion	10 minutes
Committee Discussion, Question & Answer Session	20 minutes
Results/Comments	10 minutes

**Review Committee:** The Midpoint Review Committee is comprised of faculty and/or industry professionals approved by the Graduate School and the Department Directors.

**Committee Question & Answer Session:** After your presentation, questions will be asked by the Committee for clarification on your project.

**Committee Discussion, Decision, & Feedback:** After the question and answer session, the committee will recess in private to discuss the merits of your proposal.

## **B. Results**

Upon reconvening, the committee will present you with one of the following outcomes:

**Approved:** You have passed, and can now proceed with Directed Study for the following semester.

**Not Approved:** You have NOT passed, and are NOT allowed to proceed with Directed Study until one of the following has been completed and the Midpoint Proposal is approved by the Midpoint Review Committee:

**Resubmit:** Following specific Midpoint Review Committee requirements, your project requires small changes that must be corrected and re-submitted within 3 weeks. If the re-submission meets the requirements, then the Midpoint Proposal is approved and you can proceed with Directed Study the following semester.

**OR**

**Represent:** Following specific Midpoint Review Committee requirements, you must complete additional studio work, rethink Final Project, and/or sign up for a new Midpoint Review next semester.

Please follow directions outlined in the link below to view your results and written feedback after your Midpoint Review.

<http://gradstudents.academyart.edu/assets/pdf/ReviewResults.pdf>

## **C. EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

The work you submit will be assessed using the Graduate School of Acting program learning outcomes. At the Midpoint Review the review committee is looking at your progress towards achieving the stated outcomes.

<http://www.academyart.edu/academics/acting/graduate-degrees>



## 5. CHECKLISTS

### PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

<b>Portfolio Contents:</b>	<p>Portfolio consists of material performed in class (ACT 639). Both contemporary and classical material will be included. Video recordings of your group performances will be made available for each student to upload individual portfolio examples to the Portfolio Icon in LMS. This will serve as an archived example of your progress at midpoint. Specifics of performance material and where to locate your video sample will be discussed and assigned in class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> One (1) AMERICAN partnered contemporary scene from a play (post 1930) not to exceed 8 minutes</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> One (1) classical monologue in verse not to exceed 5 minutes<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Presentation of additional material may be included in the review at the discretion of the ACT 639 instructor</li><li>*Please note, scene and monologue specifics will be discussed and assigned in class (ACT 639).</li><li>*Video of your in-class portfolio reel will be provided in ACT 639 class to upload to the LMS Portfolio area.</li></ul></li></ul>
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## THESIS BOOK CHECKLIST

<b>Thesis Book Contents:</b>	In your thesis book, you must include the following sections, in this order and with a separate heading for each: <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Cover Page</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Self-Analysis</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Table of Contents</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Scripts</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Headshot with Acting Resume</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Rehearsal Journal</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Statement of Introduction</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Timeline</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Cover Page	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/> Table of Contents	<input type="checkbox"/> Scripts	<input type="checkbox"/> Headshot with Acting Resume	<input type="checkbox"/> Rehearsal Journal	<input type="checkbox"/> Statement of Introduction	<input type="checkbox"/> Timeline
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<b>Cover Page:</b>	The cover page must include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Midpoint Presentation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Your Name</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student ID Number</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Academy of Art University, Graduate School of Acting, Master of Fine Arts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Date of Presentation</li> </ul>								
<b>Table of Contents:</b>	All Midpoint proposals must have a table of contents (TOC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Number each page of the proposal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> List each topic section and its corresponding page number in the TOC</li> </ul>								
<b>Headshot:</b>	Industry standard headshot. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Size: 8x10 <span style="margin-left: 100px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Color: Full-color</span></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Your name printed on the lower left side of your portrait</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Style (see examples from links): Your photographs should embrace the elements evident in these professional examples; you are NOT required to use these photographers. <b>These links are for visual reference only.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Lisa Keating Photography</b> <a href="http://www.lisakeatingphotography.com/index.html">http://www.lisakeatingphotography.com/index.html</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Lois Tema</b> <a href="http://www.loistema.com/commercial.htm">http://www.loistema.com/commercial.htm</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Stuart Locklear</b> <a href="http://www.stuartlocklearphotography.com/#/79162">http://www.stuartlocklearphotography.com/#/79162</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Kirsten Lara Photography</b> <a href="http://www.klgphotography.com">http://www.klgphotography.com</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>								
<b>Statement of Introduction:</b>	One (1) page Biographical information, including why you want to pursue a career in acting.								
<b>Self-Analysis:</b>	Three (3) thorough and detailed paragraphs describing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prior to entering the program, what were your strengths and weaknesses as an actor?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Up to this point, how has the program influenced your strengths and weaknesses as an actor?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What specific goals do you want to achieve moving forward as an actor in your training at AAU?</li> </ul>								
<b>Scripts:</b>	Include the scripts for your scene and monologue. Scripts must be from a published play: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One (1) American partnered contemporary scene (post 1930)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> One (1) Classical monologue (in verse)</li> </ul>								
<b>Rehearsal Journal:</b>	Describe in detail the daily/weekly rehearsal process for both your scene and monologue. Please include the following for each entry:								





- Date/Time
- Discovery and process
- Adjustments and choices
- Instructor critique and input (where available)
- Self-assessment and problem solving
- Personal reflection

**Timeline:**

The timeline must layout specific classes. The timeline must include the following:

- List by semester the courses that you have taken to date, including the course number, title, instructor, and final grade
- List future courses that you are considering by semester, including course title
- Identify your anticipated graduation date (semester/year)
- Verify total units will not exceed 63 by expected graduation date



## ORAL PRESENTATION CHECKLIST

Academy of Art University's Acting students will present their Midpoints at the end of the ACT 639 class.

Scenes and monologues will be assigned in class. You will present:

- One (1) AMERICAN partnered contemporary scene from a play (post 1930) not to exceed 8 minutes
- One (1) classical monologue in verse not to exceed 5 minutes
  - Presentation of additional material may be included in the review at the discretion of the ACT 639 instructor

\*Please note, scene and monologue specifics will be discussed and assigned in class (ACT 639).

At your individual appointment the panel will discuss your process with you.

- Ability to use your body as an instrument to physicalize a character and demonstrate truthful behavior
- Ability to demonstrate vocal proficiency utilizing breath, diaphragmatic support, articulation and projection
- Ability to develop subtext and craft beats
- Ability to listen actively and respond truthfully and with meaning to your partner
- Ability to personalize the circumstances of a scene, creating a rich and dynamic internal life
- Ability to articulate specific scene elements including; objective, action, beats, obstacles, scansion (where applicable) and specific textual meanings and references

## 6. PREPARATION TIMELINE

3 to 4 months before your performance	<p>Read Acting specific Midpoint Review Handbook</p> <p>Watch the Midpoint Review Orientation</p> <p>Begin sourcing material for scene and monologue work</p>
2 to 3 months before your performance	<p>Check <a href="#">graduate website</a> for Final Review sign-up schedule</p> <p>Scenes and monologues assigned in ACT 639</p>
6 weeks before your performance	<p>Prepare your thesis book</p> <p>Work with an editor or contact <a href="#">ARC</a> to make sure your thesis book is grammatically correct and typo-free.</p>
1 month before your performance	<p>Once your thesis book has been proofread, incorporate changes and have proofread once more</p> <p>Prepare and revise thesis book content</p> <p>Rehearse scenes and monologues with acting partners</p>
3 weeks before your performance	<p>Scenes and monologues fully memorized and prepared for group presentation</p>
2 weeks before your performance	<p>Finalize thesis book</p> <p>Organize all props and wardrobe for group presentation</p>
1 week before your performance	<p>Upload your thesis book to your home page</p> <p>Make final preparations for group performance</p> <p>Continue to rehearse scenes and monologues with acting partners</p> <p>Prepare final wardrobe and prop lists to assure all materials will be brought to the group performance</p>
Tips for the day of your performance	<p>Get plenty of rest the night before</p> <p>Arrive early to prepare physically and vocally for the group performance</p> <p>If you will be using a cellphone, make sure the battery is charged</p>
Following your performance	<p>Watch for your personal portfolio video to upload to your Portfolio (video will be made available to you through ACT 639 course)</p> <p>Confirm time for your individual review meeting</p>



Tips for the day of your individual review	Upload portfolio video of performance to LMS Portfolio area Plan your attire and dress professionally for your individual appointment Arrive at your Midpoint Review on time and ready to go Have a glass of water available during your presentation Greet your committee members prior to beginning your presentation Listen to the committee’s advice and take notes Maintain professionalism during the entire review
Following your review	View your Midpoint Review results <a href="#">here</a>
Directed Study	Once you have passed your Midpoint Review with an Approved score you will be able to start your Directed Studies. Please review Directed Study information here: <a href="http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources">http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources</a>
Directed Study Documentation	Throughout all units of Directed Study coursework you will be keeping progress notes for each course through a Directed Study Journal, or online Thesis Progress Tracking. This documentation will record the progress you have made with your project between your Midpoint and Final Review. Be sure to keep drawings, diagrams and other documents pertaining to the progress of your Final Project. For details on format requirements for your department please refer to the Directed Study Guidelines found here: <a href="http://www.academyart.edu/content/dam/assets/pdf/gradstudents/directed_study_guidelines.pdf">http://www.academyart.edu/content/dam/assets/pdf/gradstudents/directed_study_guidelines.pdf</a>

## 7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When can I schedule my Midpoint Review?	Midpoint Reviews are as part of the ACT 639 Acting for Performance 1 class in Spring and Fall semesters. You will not need to sign up for your review appointment: you are included on the list up for a review date when enrolled in ACT 639. You will be scheduled by the Midpoint Review Coordinator for an individual follow-up meeting (typically 1-2 weeks following the group performance). Dates and times for the group performances will also be announced in class.
How many pages should the thesis book be?	Approximately 20-30 pages. The thesis book must be thorough, detailed, complete and well written. Please note that spelling, grammar and content will be considered. Written work must demonstrate academic standards expected of a graduate student.
If I'm an online student, do I need to send in physical samples of my class work?	Online version of ACT 639 does not currently exist. Students must be onsite to present their midpoints.
Can we include work we've done outside of the Academy?	Work not executed at the Academy of Art University should not constitute more than 10% of your portfolio presentation.
Am I supposed to have a fully developed thesis or portfolio prepared for the Midpoint?	No. Thesis and final portfolio requirements will be addressed with department director or coordinator.
Can I use fancy text, borders and custom backgrounds for my PowerPoint presentation?	We would recommend against it. Simple, easy to read and easy to see content is best.
Why do I have a follow up appointment the week after presenting my scene and monologue? Do I schedule that?	The committee will see the work of the entire class during class time (including scenes and monologues). Run order will be determined by the instructor. The individual appointments are then conducted one to two weeks following. Individual appointments are assigned by the Midpoint Review Coordinator.
How do I select material?	Choose pieces that you feel strongly about and are able to connect with on a personal level. Find pieces that are challenging but that also utilize your strengths as an actor. Discuss material with your ACT 639 instructor, he/she will provide you with feedback.
What happens if I don't pass my midpoint review?	The committee strongly encourages you to prepare fully for the review, both in the written portion and in the presentation. You will need to make changes until approved.

## 8. IMPORTANT LINKS

Graduate Student Homepage	<a href="http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources">http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources</a>
Academy Resource Center (ARC)	<a href="http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academy-resource-center">http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academy-resource-center</a> Your resource for proofreading, ESL assistance, Midpoint Review, Writing Lab.
Accessing Your Review Results	<a href="http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/ReviewResults.pdf">http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/ReviewResults.pdf</a>
Online Chat Schedules & Recordings	Chat Schedule: <a href="http://online.academyart.edu/innovative-learning/chats.html">http://online.academyart.edu/innovative-learning/chats.html</a>  Graduate Chats: <a href="http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/graduate-chats.html">http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/graduate-chats.html</a>  Twitter: @aauchats
Department Specific Websites	<a href="http://www.academyart.edu/academics/acting">http://www.academyart.edu/academics/acting</a>
Graduate School Calendar	<a href="http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources">http://www.academyart.edu/students/my-academy/academic-resources/graduate-student-academic-resources</a>
Graduate Review Showcase	<a href="http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/">http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/</a> Here you will find a link to the Midpoint Review Orientation, and links to the Midpoint Review Guidelines and Handbooks.
Acting Review Showcase Page	<a href="http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/schools/acting.html">http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/schools/acting.html</a>
Uploading Review Content	<a href="http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/Uploading_Review_Content_WI15.pdf">http://gradshowcase.academyart.edu/content/dam/Grad%20Showcase/home_page/pdf/Uploading_Review_Content_WI15.pdf</a>
Photographing & Submitting Artwork	<a href="http://media.academyart.edu/howto/index.html">http://media.academyart.edu/howto/index.html</a> <a href="http://howto.academyart.edu/submitting-artwork">http://howto.academyart.edu/submitting-artwork</a>



## 9. CONTACT INFORMATION

Midpoint Review Coordinator: [midpointreview@academyart.edu](mailto:midpointreview@academyart.edu)  
(415) 618-6390

Department Contact: Jen Schiller  
School of Acting – Administrative Assistant  
Tel: (415) 618-8647  
Email: [JSchiller@academyart.edu](mailto:JSchiller@academyart.edu)

Damon Sperber  
School of Acting – Coordinator  
Tel: (415)345-1565  
Email: [DSperber@academyart.edu](mailto:DSperber@academyart.edu)

Send Materials To: Academy of Art University  
  
School of Acting  
Midpoint Review  
  
79 New Montgomery  
San Francisco, CA 94105

**NOTE:** Please obtain a tracking number or return receipt of delivery for your shipments.