

THFM-1001-003 (6 credit hours)

INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE: PERFORMANCE

Fall/Winter, 2013-2014
Wednesdays, 2:30 -5:15 pm
Room: 0T09

Instructor: Hope McIntyre
Office: 2T09
Phone: 786-9957
E-mail: h.mcintyre@uwinnipeg.ca
Office Hours: Wednesdays 13:20 -14:20
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed as an introduction to the basic concepts of theatre with an emphasis on the art and craft of the performer.

The course begins with basic acting exercises, including improvisation and movement work. These are designed to help the student develop the skills which are the foundation of contemporary acting technique. In the second half of the course the student applies these skills to scripted scenes. Each student must rehearse and perform two scenes drawn from the modern and/or contemporary theatre. The stylistic form of the course and the scene work is Realism. Students will be required to keep a continuing rehearsal journal for the duration of the course which will form the basis of an essay on acting. The student will also be introduced to various forms of modern drama and script interpretation through an examination of plays representing a range of modern and contemporary work.

In terms of practical skills, the course objective is for the student to be able to generate a dramatic action in a given circumstance in such a way that an audience believes it. In regards to analytical skills, the course objective is for the student to be able to examine a script from the perspective of an interpretive artist.

TEXTS

Bruder, et al. *A Practical Handbook for the Actor*
Chekhov, Anton. *The Seagull* (Talon Books edition, translated by David French)
Churchill, Caryl. *Top Girls* (Methuen Drama Edition)
McIntyre, Hope and Moore, Cairn. *Jail Baby*

Students may also be required to purchase additional scripts to support scene or project work later in the year. As well, students will be required to attend performances as part of this course and should be prepared to pay for tickets.

MARK DISTRIBUTION

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Performance Skills Evaluation (Nov 6, 2013) | 5% |
| Test One (Nov 13, 2013) | 10% |
| Scene One (Jan 29, 2014) | 15% |
| Play Analysis/Quizzes | 10% |
| Test Two (Mar 19, 2013) | 10% |
| Scene Two (Apr 2, 2013) | 20% |
| Acting Essay (Apr 9, 2013) | 10% |
| Journal (November 20, 2012 & April 9, 2013) | 10% |
| Class Participation | 10% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

All work submitted for evaluation must be either typed or text processed. E-mail submissions will not be accepted.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation includes:

- preparation
- meeting outlined deadlines for in-class activities
- participation in class activities and discussions
- demonstrated commitment to the course and work in class

CONVERSION SCALE

For the calculation of the final grade the following conversion table will be used:

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------------|-----|------|----|------------|-----|-----|
| A+ | 90 – 100% | GPA | 4.5 | C+ | 65 – 69.9% | GPA | 2.5 |
| A | 85 – 89.9% | GPA | 4.25 | C | 60 – 64.9% | GPA | 2.0 |
| A- | 80 – 84.9% | GPA | 4.0 | D | 50 – 59.9% | GPA | 1.0 |
| B+ | 75 – 79.9% | GPA | 3.5 | F | below 50% | GPA | 0 |
| B | 70 – 74.9% | GPA | 3.0 | | | | |

Work not submitted will be graded as 0%

DEFINITIONS OF GRADING DESCRIPTIONS

A+ Exceptional. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill **AND** great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment.

A Superior. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill **OR** great originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment.

A- Excellent. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment.

B+ Very Good. Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment.

B Good. Good level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment.

C+ Competent. Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment.

C Fairly Competent. Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment.

D Barely Passing. Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment.

F Failing.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments will **NOT** be accepted after the due date. Extensions may be granted but only **BEFORE** the due date and with a valid reason, at the professor's discretion. Assignments are accepted in class or at the Department Office (3T03).

REHEARSALS

During the Winter Term all students will be required to take part in ongoing scene rehearsals outside of scheduled class time. This requirement will involve a **MINIMUM** of two to four hours per week. Students unable or unwilling to comply with this requirement are asked to withdraw from the course immediately.

Any student who repeatedly misses rehearsals, comes late, or fails to rehearse adequately will be asked to withdraw from the course. This includes all classes and out of class rehearsals. This provision has been established to protect the educational interests of scene partners and other classmates.

Scenes must be approved by the instructor **PRIOR** to the start of the allotted rehearsal period.

JOURNALS

The student is expected to keep a journal of the knowledge and experience that s/he acquires in class and any knowledge gained outside of class that has bearing on creative work. The entries should be of a reflective nature regarding classroom exercises, technical assignments, focused answers to specific questions, play/scene analysis, and observed discoveries about theatre, performance, and personal growth. This is also a good place to document your rehearsals and scene work that is being done outside of the classroom. This journal will form the research basis for the final essay assignment and will be submitted with the Acting Essay. It is required that the journal be submitted to the professor at least once during the first term for feedback and a preliminary mark.

The Acting Essay is a composite summary of the individual student's personal journey, process, and theory of Acting and Performance based on the text *A Practical Handbook for the Actor*, class lectures and discussions, log/journal, personal discoveries, and rehearsal/performance experiences.

PLAY ANALYSIS AND QUIZZES

The following plays will be studied and used in the classroom:

Jail Baby by Hope McIntyre and Cairn Moore

The Seagull by Anton Chekhov

Top Girls by Caryl Churchill

The plays are to be read for the class in which they will be discussed, on this day a short quiz exploring your response to the play will take place.

In addition, you will be required to see three performances and submit a short analysis on each.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**Fall Term:**

| DATE | CLASS ACTIVITY | DEADLINE |
|--------------|---|------------------|
| September 4 | Course Intro / The Role of the Actor | |
| September 11 | "Jail Baby" discussion / Improvisation workshop | "Jail Baby" quiz |

| | | |
|------------------|--|---|
| September 18 | Attend “Dreaming in Autism” performance / “Jail Baby” rehearsal workshop | |
| September 25 | Realism / Subtext workshop / “Jail Baby” scenes | |
| October 2 | <i>A Practical Handbook for the Actor</i> intro / Skills Workshop | Read Part One (pages 3-66) of “Practical Handbook” |
| October 9 | Skills Workshop “Dreaming of Autism” discussion | Read Part Two (pages 67-86) of <i>Practical Handbook</i> “Dreaming of Autism” analysis due |
| October 16 | Physical action, vocalization / “Top Girls” discussion | “Top Girls” Quiz |
| October 23 | “Top Girls” workshop | |
| October 30 | Performance Skills Evaluation assignment | |
| November 6 | Performance Skills Evaluation | Scene #1 Submissions |
| November 13 | Test #1 / Performance Skills debrief | Test (Room 3M57) |
| November 20 | Scene Text Work / Rehearsal Workshop | Finalize scenes / Last day for first journal submission |
| Nov. 20 – Dec. 8 | Attend performance of “Social Studies” at Prairie Theatre Exchange | |
| December 4 | One-on-One interviews* | |

*For midterm “one-on-one” interviews, every student will be asked to sign up for a 15-minute slot. If arrangements need to be made for an appointment on another date, please speak to the instructor well in advance.

**You will be required to attend a production and design lecture outside of class on a date to be announced.

Winter Term:

| DATE | CLASS ACTIVITY | DEADLINE |
|------------------|--|---|
| January 8 | Scene Work – character / “Social Studies” discussion | Scene plays read / Character analysis due / “Social Studies” Analysis due |
| January 15 | Scene Work – blocking | OFFBOOK Scene #1 |
| | JANUARY 21 WITHDRAWAL DATE | |
| January 22 | Dress Rehearsal Scene #1 | |
| Jan. 23 - Feb. 8 | Attend performance of “The Seagull” at Manitoba Theatre Centre | |
| January 29 | Final Presentation Scene #1 | Scene #2 Submissions |
| February 5 | “The Seagull” discussion | Finalize new scenes & partners / “The Seagull” Quiz |
| February 12 | “The Seagull” workshop / show discussion | “The Seagull” Analysis due |
| February 17-22 | Reading Week - NO CLASSES | |
| February 26 | Laban physicality | |
| March 5 | Scene Work - character | Scene plays read, Character analysis due |
| March 12 | Scene Work- blocking | OFFBOOK Scene #2 |
| March 19 | Test #2 / Scene Work | Test (Rm 3M65) NOTE CHANGE |
| March 26 | Dress Rehearsal Scene #2 | |
| April 2 | Final Presentation Scene #2 Course Evaluation | |
| April 9 | | Final Acting Paper and Journal due |
| April 16 | One on One interviews* | |

*For final "one-on-one" interviews, every student will be asked to sign up for a 15-minute slot. If arrangements need to be made for an appointment on another date, please speak to the instructor well in advance.

SCENE GRADING CRITERIA

1. Are you playing action, i.e. is your character doing something to the other character(s)? (Specificity)
2. Is your character interacting impulsively with the other character(s) moment to moment (i.e. is the scene a "pinch/ouch" ping pong game?)?
3. Is your character reacting with a point of view and an attitude? (Vulnerability)
4. Does the character have a logical "through line" where required?
5. Are you meeting particular demands of the script? For example:
 - a) special language requirements (rhythm, timing, diction, lyricism, poetic imagery, etc.)
 - b) special style requirements (depth of character for realism and naturalism, stepping in and out of character for didacticism, massive variety and the surprise use of pauses for absurdism, ease in breaking the fourth wall for feminism, etc.)
6. Is there sufficient **commitment** to the action and circumstances to make the scene believable and emotional as opposed to merely intellectual? (Impulse)
7. Are the numerous shifts in action occurring clearly?
8. Are you taking advantage of the ironies available in the scene?
9. Is there progression in the scene, i.e. does something change?
10. Is the tension (leading to conflict) strong and clear?
11. Can we hear you comfortably?
12. Are the stakes sufficiently high to make the scene exciting?
13. Is the physical world in which the scene takes place used to strengthen the action?
14. Are the actor's voice, body, and inner impulse in harmony? (Unity)
15. Is the actor using her/his body effectively to carry the action of the scene? (Physical character, blocking and physicalization of action)

NOTE: The list above is a summary of the key considerations which regularly arise when qualified adjudicators evaluate scene work. At various stages of training, some of these considerations may be weighted above others. However, it is difficult, at any point, to ignore any of the above criteria, particularly when some of the performers are achieving mastery in an area where others are not.

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS (for first-year Performance classes)

Given that this is a practical studio course, extensive participation and professionalism are required. As a result, punctuality and attendance at class and in out-of-class rehearsals are of the utmost importance. Unexcused absences from lecture, lab, or out-of-class rehearsal will be penalized at a rate of 1% per instance. Unexcused lateness for lecture, lab, or out-of-class rehearsal will be penalized at a rate of .5% per instance. Attendance and punctuality will be recorded at the beginning of every class. After a **THIRD** late or absence, the instructor will schedule a meeting with the student to discuss withdrawal from the course. After a **FIFTH** unexcused absence the student will be required to meet with the Chair of the department to discuss withdrawal from the course.

Excused absences or lates require a medical note or prior arrangement with the instructor. It is at the instructor's discretion whether or not to excuse a non-medical absence. After **FIVE** excused absences the student will be required to meet with the Instructor to discuss whether it is realistic for him/her to continue in the course.

Given the rigorous, practical nature of studio courses, and the demands these courses make in terms of attendance and punctuality, students with chronic medical conditions that will require extensive absence should meet with the instructor at the beginning of the term to discuss whether the course is appropriate for them.

"THE REAL THING" LECTURE SERIES

The Department of Theatre and Film is presenting a series of six lectures which will be held on Wednesdays during the free period (12:30-13:20) in Theatre 1T15. Please note the dates in your diary **NOW**: Sept 18, Oct 23, Nov 13, Jan 15, Feb 12, Mar 12. This series will feature speakers from a range of areas in the performing arts: technical, performance, design, management, film, directing, playwriting, etc. These speakers will specifically address issues related to "the business of the business."

Attendance for potential Theatre Honours/majors and for Film majors is optional but highly recommended.

NOTES FOR PERFORMANCE COURSES

Rehearsals for final presentations and public exercises are scheduled well in advance; students must arrange their university and work schedules so as not to conflict with them. Students must attend **ALL** scheduled rehearsals.

Any student who repeatedly misses rehearsals, comes late, or fails to rehearse adequately will be asked to withdraw from the course.

As many of our classes are physical in nature, students are asked to wear comfortable clothing.

Outdoor footwear **must be removed** before entering **ANY** of the Studios: **0T09** (Concourse Studio), **0T19** (Mime Lab), **1T15** (Theatre), **2T05** (2nd Floor Studio), **2T15** (Movement Studio). We suggest you bring suitable dance shoes or slippers to wear in class. Your professors will monitor and enforce this regulation in order to preserve the integrity of the special flooring in these rooms. Please respect this rule.

Student actors, like professionals, are expected to provide their own basic makeup supplies where required for public exercises. Due to the potential for the transmission of skin diseases it is not recommended that students share makeup.

Senior acting students scheduled to perform in a departmental public exercise are asked not to modify their hair colour or style without first checking with the instructor/director.

Students who bring props, costumes, or furnishings to support scene presentations please note:

- the University will **NOT** be responsible for the loss of any such materials;
- students are responsible for the **IMMEDIATE** removal of such materials after **EACH** use – the department does not provide storage;
- materials not claimed **WILL BE DISPOSED OF** at the student's expense. Grades may be withheld until such costs are recovered;
- **students MUST NOT move existing furnishings from their current locations.**

ORIENTATION ASSEMBLY

Each year in September we hold an *Orientation Assembly* to introduce our new students to faculty and other students; to provide information about the department, its various activities and those of its professors; and to provide news about what's coming up. This year our *Orientation Assembly* will be held on **Wednesday, September 11, 2013, 12:30-13:20 in Theatre, 1T15. ATTENDANCE IS COMPULSORY** for all Majors and Honours students. Those considering Honours are strongly recommended to attend. All others are welcome and encouraged to attend.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., access to volunteer note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 786-9771 or email accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca to discuss appropriate options. Specific information about AS is available on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.

BUILDING SECURITY

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (which houses the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. weekdays. Students are permitted to be in the building between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. seven days per week (except statutory holidays when the University is closed) **BUT PLEASE NOTE:** outside of regular building hours, it is **MANDATORY** that everyone in the building **EITHER** carry an access card **OR** have a booking confirmation form in their possession (hard copy or electronic). **ALL EVENING STUDENTS in the building for classes MUST have an access card.** If a Security Guard checks and you do not have proper accreditation, **you may be evicted.**

These rules are in place to protect our students and our equipment; please respect them.

ELECTRONIC COURSE OUTLINE ADDENDA

Students must check our website at <http://theatre.uwinnipeg.ca/tbooking.htm> and read the menu items called *Access Card/Building Use Policy* **AND** *Room Booking Instructions*. The link to the electronic *Online Room Booking Form* is also found at this location. Please read and note all instructions carefully.

GENERAL NOTES

This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.

Archival records such as videotapes, sound recordings, and photographs may be made or taken during class or lab times. The University uses such materials primarily for archival, promotional, and teaching purposes. Promotional use may include display at open houses or conferences, or use in advertising, publicity, or brochures. In reading and accepting the terms in this course outline, students acknowledge consent for such use by the University. Should a student not wish to convey such consent, s/he should withdraw from this course immediately.

The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of fellow classmates and the instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposure to perfumes and other scented products (such as lotion) can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines, or chemical sensitivities.

Cellular phones **MUST** be turned off during classes and examinations; texting is **NOT** permitted in class.

Any student attending a test or final examination may be required to present proof of identity; photo identification is preferred.

It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or computer disk copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.

Students are strongly advised to read the section of the *University of Winnipeg Calendar* (found on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/index/cms-filesystem-action/pdfs/calendar/RegulationsandPolicies.pdf>) for information on Registration, Grading, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2014 is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses which begin in September 2013 and end in April 2014 (2013/14 Fall/Winter Term).

STUDENT PARTICIPATION POLICY

Theatre is a communal art form in which a number of interdependent artists and crafts people co-operate to create a work of art. This fact is necessarily transferred to the learning situation, and is reflected in many of the Department's courses. Consequently, it is the Department's policy that students are required to: complete homework such as reading, line-learning, script analysis, prop lists, design drawings, etc.; attend classes; attend rehearsals both within and outside of class times; and, in short, to exhibit commitment towards the inevitably shared endeavours of our field of study.

Any student failing to fulfil these requirements is harmful to the progress of dedicated students and may, after due warning, be asked to withdraw from any individual Departmental course.

COURSE CONTENT NOTE

All Theatre and Film Classes

Dramatic Literature depicts a wide variety of human action, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. The Department of Theatre and Film will not undertake to censor the subject matter of dramatic works.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of content and style in drama/film are urged to discuss these concerns with the course instructor.

Performance-Related Classes

Much of an actor's work is based upon actual experiences of life which become translated into fictional circumstances. Because of this, the teaching of acting may involve encouraging the student to examine

personal and even intimate areas of life to help him or her access life experiences appropriate to the demands of the work.

Dramatic literature depicts a wide range of human actions, both elevated and base, public and private, physical and psychological, sexual and non-sexual, etc. Acting students must learn to simulate life truthfully in interaction with other students in the safety of the acting class and the rehearsal hall through exercises, discussions, and directions which address rather than avoid truthful, particularized, personalized action.

Performance classes often require strenuous physical activity. Classes may also involve physical interaction between students as part of class exercises or character development and occasional physical contact by instructors for purposes such as the demonstration of a technique or to make a posture correction. Students are responsible for wearing clothing appropriate to these activities.

Students who have concerns about dealing with the full range of actions and subject matter involved in drama are urged to discuss these concerns with their course instructor.