

THFM-2920-001 (3 credit hours)

## INTRODUCTORY DANCE FOR MUSICAL THEATRE

Fall, 2013  
T/Th 8:30-9:45 a.m.  
Room 0T09

Instructor: Brenda Gorlick  
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Office Hours: TBA

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course serves as an introduction to dance with an emphasis on learning dance-related vocabulary and training the body in new physical disciplines.

The course focuses on building the skills necessary to dance in musical theatre reviews and musicals. It will cover the practical study and practice of the styles and techniques associated with musical theatre: jazz, tap, ballet, and character dance. Students will learn proper placement and alignment while focusing on basic dance movements.

The exercises and movement sequences presented are designed, through attentive repetitive practice, to enable the student to understand and execute choreography with a sense of style and musicality. In addition, emphasis is placed on developing the techniques necessary to convey the story behind the movements including timing, delivery, and intention. Major focus will be placed on the ability of the student to repeat movement patterns and sequences demonstrated by the instructor.

Material is pulled from both "contemporary" and "historic" musicals. Students will be introduced to a cross-section of styles which will serve as a launching pad for future dance-related study.

The student's responsibility includes: professionalism, i.e. regular attendance, preparation, assignments and practical work completed on time, professional etiquette and disciplined working attitude, ability to work well with peers, prompt communication with the teachers if problems arise, and a conscientious effort to meet course goals.

### **TEXTS**

#### **Books (for reference; NOT required)**

*The Musical - A Look at the American Musical Theatre*, Richard Kislak, Applause Books  
*Razzle Dazzle: The Life and Work of Bob Fosse* (St. Martin's Press)  
*So You Want To Dance On Broadway*, Tina Paul (Heinemann)

### **REQUIRED DANCEWEAR**

Comfortable but form fitting tops and bottoms: jazz pants and body suits are recommended.

\*No midriff tops \* No jewellery \* No chewing gum

Footwear: jazz oxfords, jazz runners or track shoes with flexible soles. Tap shoes are recommended for the tap section of the program

\*Hair should be pulled back

\* Bring a water bottle.

**MARK BREAKDOWN**

Term Test (September 24)* .....	10%
Notation Assignment (October 17)** .....	15%
Final paper (due November 19)*** .....	15%
Mastery of physical patterns .....	25%
Practical Dance Exam, November 26 (this will be a practical exam on jazz and tap combinations and will take the form of a physical dance audition) .....	25%
Professionalism and participation (see definition under Course Description) .....	10%
Total.....	<u>100%</u>

Late work will **NOT** be accepted without prior arrangement.  
All homework assignments are due on the date assigned.

Description of class work assignments:

- \*1. Written quiz based on in class usage of dance terminology and technical knowledge.  
Students will receive hand-outs supplementing this information. .... Grading: 10%
- \*\*2. The introduction of choreographic notation. Students will be expected to convert a  
physical dance pattern into its written form. Guidelines will be distributed in class ..... Grading: 15%
- \*\*\*3. Final written assignment will be based on a specific dance-related topic . It will  
require personal research into the field of musical theatre and will be graded on a  
combination of clarity of ideas, critical commentary, and overall writing ability. .... Grading: 15%

Students will receive an ongoing critique of their practical work through personal consultation with the instructor.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE****September 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24, 26**

- Intro to body placement and posture, warm-up and warm-down exercises
- Preliminary work on jazz-based dance technique
- Introduction to dance terminology and notation
- Locomotion skills
- Basic floor patterns
- First selection of dance choreography (ensemble piece)

**October 1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17**

- Continued work on jazz technique
- Introduction to small group choreography
- Basic partnering movement
- Second selection of dance choreography (duo based)

**TAP SHOES REQUIRED****October 22, 24, 29, 31, November 5, 7, 12**

- Introduction to tap basics including terminology
- Continued work on previous choreographies
- Centre work warm-ups and traveling combinations
- Third selection of dance choreography based on tap technique

**November 14, 19, 21**

- Completion of choreographic elements
- Review and refinement of all work
- Preparation for final presentation

**\*\*November 26**

Final class – Dance exam date: Formal dance presentation

### **ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS (for 2nd- through 4th-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 rehearsal will be penalized at a rate of 2% per instance. Unexcused lateness for lecture, lab, or rehearsal will be penalized at a rate of 1% 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.

In performance courses that cast and rehearse a show, unexcused lateness and absence will not be tolerated and may result in the recasting of your role after **ONE** incident.

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](mailto: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.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2013** is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses which begin in September and end in November, 2013 (Fall 2013 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.