

THFM-3503-002 (3 credit hours)

STAGE COMBAT FOR ACTORS

Fall 2013
TR 1:00-2:15 p.m.
Room 2T15

Professor: Rick Skene
Office: 4T05
Phone: 786-9486
E-Mail: rickskene@shaw.ca
Office Hours: TR 10:30 a.m.-11:30 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is designed to introduce performers to basic stage physicality and the techniques of both victim and perpetrator of illusory violence. The focus of the course is on the day-to-day skills required by all professional actors, regardless of age or gender, to cope safely with slaps, falls, kicks, rolls, and an assortment of other physical challenges that are routinely met in modern theatre and film. All skills are learned and evaluated in a dramatic context and are designed to enhance the actor's overall physicality and body awareness on stage and on screen.

TEXTS

Required:

There is no required text for the course. Actors must purchase a dedicated notebook to record class activities in note and diagram form.

EVALUATION

Students will be required to perform at least three evaluated presentations. These presentations will be marked on a pass/fail basis. The instructor will retain a numerical (percentage) grade for each assignment with assignments scoring over fifty percent receiving a pass grade. Assignment results will be reported to students as a pass/fail only and the final grade will be submitted to Student Services as a pass/fail only.

MARK BREAKDOWN

Assignments will have the following weights. A final grade calculation that is 50% or greater will be reported to Student Services as a pass grade. A final grade calculation that is BELOW 50% will be reported as a failure. **Failure to complete and present each assignment will result in failure of the course.**

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Presentation one (sequence/exercise) September 26, 2013..... | 30% |
| Presentation two October 10, 2013..... | 30% |
| Presentation three, November 19, 2013..... | 40% |
| TOTAL..... | 100% |

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%

WARNING!

Safety is the primary consideration in stage combat. Students must be committed to a high standard of disciplined behaviour and attendance. Failure to punctually attend every class or failure to measure up to a high standard of disciplined professional behaviour will result in your removal from the course.

TENTATIVE BASIC SCHEDULE

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Weeks 1 - 3 | Basic rolls and falls – stage combat basics |
| Week 4 | Presentation One |
| Weeks 5, 6 and 7 | Striking and kicking, basic throws |
| Week 8 | Presentation Two |
| Weeks 9, 10 and 11 | Contact improvisational combat – advanced teardowns and finishes |
| Week 12 | Final presentations |
| Nov 26 | Lectures end |

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 from 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.

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.

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.