

## INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE: PERFORMANCE

2015/16  
Tu/Th 10:00 am-11:15 pm  
Room OT09

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Office Hours: Tu/Th 1:15 - 2:00 and by appointment

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### 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. S/he must rehearse and perform two scenes drawn from the modern and/or contemporary theatre. 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 journal should chart the students' discoveries and experiences with acting and (although not graded) will be submitted to the instructor for review and feedback.

A central goal of the course is to enable students to create the look, sound, and feeling of real life under fictional circumstances. "Acting is real human behavior under fictional circumstances"; "The foundation of acting is the reality of doing." – Sanford Meisner

The student will also be introduced to various forms of modern drama and script interpretation through viewing play productions (see below) and through an examination of three plays representing a range of modern and contemporary work: *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill, *fareWel* by Ian Ross, and *The Things We Do for Love* by Alan Ayckbourn. The student's knowledge of these plays will be evaluated through written tests. In addition students will attend a production of *The Things We Do For love* at the RMTC Warehouse Theatre. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of Winnipeg's vital theatre scene by attend professional theatre productions and the department's major productions.

### TEXTS

#### Required

#### Books:

Bond, Laura, *Team for Actors*  
Churchill, Caryl, *Top Girls*  
Ross, Ian, *fareWel*  
Ayckbourn, Alan, *The Things We Do for Love* (script)

#### Live Production:

***RMTC Warehouse: The Things We Do For Love (Required)***

#### Recommended:

RMTC Warehouse four play season: *Seminar* (Oct. 21-Nov. 7); *Wiesenthal* (Nov. 18-Dec. 5); ***The Things We Do for Love*** (Feb 3-20) and *Myth of the Ostrich* (March 9-26).

#### Reference Texts (not required)

Meisner and Longwell, *Sanford Meisner on Acting*  
Bruder, et al. ***A Practical Handbook for the Actor***

**MARK BREAKDOWN**

Performance Skills Evaluation .....	12%
Quiz, <i>Top Girls</i> (Sept 24, 2015) .....	2%
Quiz, <i>fareWel</i> (Oct 22, 2015) .....	2%
Test #1: <i>Top Girls</i> and <i>fareWel</i> (Nov. 5, 2015) .....	12%
Scene One February 10/12.....	15%
Test #2: <i>TEAM for Actors</i> (Jan. 21, 015) .....	10%
Test #3: <i>The Things We Do For Love</i> (Feb 23, 2016) .....	8%
Acting Essay (due Apr 08, 2016 10-12 am, Room 4T04) .....	15%
Scene two, during Exam Period, TBA (check exam schedule) .....	20%
Class Participation .....	4%
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>100%</b>

All work submitted for evaluation must be either typed or text processed.

**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 or course.

**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 or course.

**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 or course.

**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 or course.

**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 or course.

**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 or course.

**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 or course.

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

**F Failing.**

## LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Class assignments will be accepted only at the start of class on the due dates. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior arrangement has been made.

## 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 with their partner 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. **Unexcused absences will be penalized 1% of the final grade.**

Scenes and rehearsal schedules must be approved by the instructor prior to the start of the allotted rehearsal period. **When choosing a scene partner establish a regular rehearsal schedule at the outset. If a schedule cannot be established, find another partner.**

## JOURNALS

The student is expected to keep a journal of the knowledge and experience that s/he acquires in class as well as knowledge gained outside of class that has bearing on creative work. Although no marks are formally assigned to this writing, the journal will be an invaluable tool when writing the acting essay, worth 15% of the final course mark and due April 8, 2016. It is required that the journal be submitted to the professor at least once during both the first and second term for feedback. Individual meetings with the instructor will be arranged in both first and second term to discuss the journal and progress in the course.

## 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:
  - special language requirements (rhythm, timing, diction, lyricism, poetic imagery, etc.)
  - 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)
16. **Is the actor avoiding such pitfalls as:**
  - **histrionics**
  - **stained shouting**
  - **mugging**
  - **acting in a bubble**
17. Is the actor willing and able to **make effective use of direction**?

**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.

**The following is a list of intended outcomes the student should demonstrate by the end of the course:**

- ability to imaginatively enter fictional circumstances;
- beginning ability to embody a fictional character;
- ability to interact freely and imaginatively with others in fictional circumstances;
- increased connection to and awareness of the body as a means of expression;
- increased awareness of and ability to apply the process of relaxation/concentration/focus;
- increased ability to access emotion in fictional circumstances without losing artistic focus;
- ability to make the fictional appear real;
- increased ability to access the playful and imaginative in her/himself;
- increased ability to live spontaneously in the present in fictional circumstances in both improvisations and scripted scenes
- ability to raise **stakes** in fictional circumstances;
- ability to understand and play “action” as it applies to acting;
- ability to play “scene objective”;
- application of correct theatre ethics;
- increased understanding of scene and play structure /progression and polarity;
- ability to recognise and apply time in fictional circumstances;
- ability to execute beats individually, clearly and progressively;
- ability to **take and use direction** effectively;
- a recognition of the communal nature of theatre
- ability to analyse the process of acting and connect theory to practice both as an audience member and an artist.
- ability to effectively help and be helped by fellow actors in the class

### **Fall Term**

Sept. 10 Course Introduction / Skills Workshop **Read TEAM For Actors p 1-22**  
 15-17 **Top Girls:** Discussion / Skills Workshop **Read Top Girls**  
 22-24 **Top Girls Quiz 24th/** Workshop / Skills Workshop **Read TEAM p. 22-44**  
 29-Oct. 1 Skills Workshop **Read TEAM p. 44-68**

Oct. 6-8 Skills Workshop **Read fareWel**

- 13-15 Discussion of **fareWel** with documentary **Read TEAM p. 44-75**  
 20 Production Lecture Professor Tim Babcock or Professor Erin Frost  
 22 **farewel Quiz** Skills Workshop  
 27-29 **fareWel** Workshop / Skills Workshop **Read TEAM p. 75-85**

- Nov. 3-5 Skills workshop (3rd) / **TEST #1 on Top Girls and fareWel (5<sup>th</sup>) Read TEAM p. 85-106**  
 10-12 Skills Workshop **Read TEAM p. 106-133**  
 17 TBA  
 19 Skills Workshop **Read TEAM p. 134-164**  
 24-26 Skills Evaluation Practice and find partners and scenes

Dec 1 Finalize Term 2 scenes and partners

**Skills Evaluation during Exam Period – Please See Exam Schedule posted on WebAdvisor**

**Winter Term:**

- Jan. 5-7 Scene Work **Read TEAM p.164-186**  
 12-14 Scene Work **Read TEAM p. 186-206**  
**20 Final date to withdraw without academic penalty**  
 19-21 Scene Work (off book by Jan 21) **Read TEAM p. 206- end**  
  
 26-28 Scene Work **Test #2 on TEAM for Actors (Jan 28)**
- Feb. 2-4 Discuss *The Things We Do For Love* and other theatre issues  
**Note : *The Things We Do For Love* runs Feb 3-20.**  
 9-11 **SCENE 1 PRESENTATIONS** / Finalize New Scenes and Partners  
**15-19 Reading Week – No Classes**  
 23-25 **Feb. 23 Test #3 *The Things We Do For Love* /Feb 25 Scene**  
 Work
- March 1-3 Scene Work  
 8-10 Scene Work  
 15-17 Scene Work  
 22-24 Scene Work
- Mar 29-31 Scene Work

**Scene 2 TBA, see Exam Schedule**

**N.B. FINAL ACTING PAPER DUE FRIDAY. APRIL 8 2016, between 10 and 12 am, my office Room 4T04 or my mailbox on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. No need for date stamp.**

## **ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT**

This class involves physical, cognitive, and/or vocal demands. Those with challenges in these areas must seek departmental guidance PRIOR to registration: 204-786-9955 or [theatre@uwinnipeg.ca](mailto:theatre@uwinnipeg.ca).

## **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 (except where noted) during the free period (12:30-13:20) in Theatre 1T15. Please note the dates in your diary **NOW**: **FRIDAY** Sept 18, Oct 21, **FRIDAY** Nov 13, Jan 13, Feb 10, Mar 9. 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.

### **2015 ORIENTATION ASSEMBLY**

Each year in September we hold an *Orientation Assembly* to welcome students to the new term, 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 16, 2015, 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.

### **BUILDING SECURITY**

The Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (home to the Department of Theatre and Film) is open from 8:00 am and 5:30 pm weekdays only. Students are permitted to be in the building between 8:00 am and 10:00 pm 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 *Fire Safety Instructions in the Asper Centre for Theatre and Film, 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.

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 with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 204-786-9771 or <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility> to discuss appropriate options. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.

Students are strongly advised to read the section of the *University of Winnipeg Calendar* (found on-line at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/new-faculty-handbook/appeals-and-academic-misconduct.html>) for information on Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals.

Students facing a charge of academic or non-academic misconduct may choose to contact the University of Winnipeg Student's Association (UWSA) where a student advocate will be available to answer any questions about the process, help with building a case, and ensure students have access to support. For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit our website at <http://www.theuwsa.ca/academic-advocacy> or call 204-786-9780.

We ask that you please be respectful of the needs of classmates and instructors/professors by avoiding the use of unnecessary scented products while attending lectures. Exposure to scented products can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities. Please consider using unscented necessary products and avoiding unnecessary products that are scented (e.g. perfume).

Students who plan to conduct research interviews, focus groups, surveys, or any other method of collecting data from any person, even a family member, must obtain the approval of the appropriate ethics committee before commencing data collection. Exceptions are research activities in class as a learning exercise. See <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/research/human-ethics.html> for submission requirements and deadlines.

All students, faculty and staff have the right to participate, learn and work in an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination. The UW Respectful Working and Learning Environment Policy may be found online at [www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect](http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/respect).

Students may choose not to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religion, but they must notify their instructors at least two weeks in advance. Instructors will then provide opportunity for students to make up work examinations without penalty. A list of religious holidays can be found at <http://uwinnipeg.ca/academics/calendar/docs/important-notes.pdf>

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2016** is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses which begin on September 9, 2015 and end on April 5, 2016 (2015/6 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.