

Spring 2014 COM241—Introduction to Oral Interpretation

Instructor

Office:

Office Hours:

Office Phone:

Email:

Course Description:

Oral Interpretation of Literature is concerned with the analysis and interpretation of literature and the communicative sharing of that interpretation. It is an opportunity to combine rhetorical and dramatic analysis of a text with the experiential knowledge of the body and voice. This course is a part of the performance studies curriculum in The Hugh Downs School. Performance offers us a place to study communicative texts in an embodied way.

Course Objectives:

1. To utilize critical frameworks to analyze literature.
2. To experiment with voice and body in creative interpretation of literature.
3. To more fully appreciate the role of the audience member in an aesthetic experience.
4. To develop an understanding of the complexity of human interaction and communication.
5. To explore literature that includes diverse experiences regarding race, sex, sexuality, gender, religion, class, nationality and other aspects of identity.
6. To work creatively with others.
7. To risk.
8. To play.

Required Materials:

Halpern, D. (1987). *The Art of the Tale: An international anthology of short stories*. New York, N.Y., U.S.A: Penguin Books.

Gillan, M. M., & Gillan, J. (1994). *Unsettling America: An anthology of contemporary multicultural poetry*. New York: Penguin Books.

Reading Packet: located at Alternative Copy—1004 S. Mill Ave. 480-829-7992.
<http://alternativeprintandcopy.com/>

A two-pocket folder that will be used to accumulate your written and oral performance comments and grades. **Important:** Keep all submitted and returned materials in this folder, and bring it to class every time we meet. Do not use this folder for class notes or assignment handouts. Put your name and my last name (Linde) on the front of this folder.

Useful Sources:

The Empty Space, located at the NE corner of Rural and University, is the creative workshop space for The Hugh Downs School of Human Communication. It is available to faculty, graduate

students, and undergraduate students who are interested in presenting performance scholarship to the public.

You will find more information about performances at The Empty Space by visiting our website: <http://humancommunication.clas.asu.edu/content/current-performances>

Grading:

I believe that grades are earned rather than given. It is your responsibility as a student to set goals and contribute to the experience of earning a chosen grade. It is my responsibility as a teacher to set a clear standard for determining that grade. I offer the following description of what I judge to be A, B, C, D, and E work in my class.

A—an A is earned when you have excellent attendance and participation and show significant preparation for class discussion, exams, and performance. You must turn in written work that indicates elevated thinking and conscientious presentation, as well as offering stellar contributions to classroom atmosphere through your interactions with fellow students, and the instructor.

B—a B is earned when you turn in “above average” written work and demonstrate responsible preparation and good effort in performance. Your attendance and participation must be good to earn this grade.

C—a C is average work. This means that you have met the minimum requirements asked of the performance and written assignments in this course. Attendance and participation is adequate.

D—a D means that you have not met all the requirements of the course. This grade might reflect poor work on one or more assignments, poor preparation for class participation and exams, or poor attendance.

Point Scale:

Attendance:	80 points
Participation:	20 points
Midterm Exam:	50 points
Final Exam:	50 points
Outside event critiques (2 @ 25):	50 points
Storytelling (round 1):	25 points
Prose (round 2):	100 points
Poetry (round 3):	150 points
Group (round 4):	<u>75 points</u>
Total:	600 points

A+ = 582-600	A = 552-581	A- = 540-551	B+ = 522-539	B = 492-521	B- = 480-491
C+ = 468-479	C = 420-467	D = 360-419	E = 359-below		

Assignments:

Performances: In this class we use the words *performance* and *interpretation* interchangeably. That does not mean that this is an acting class! The course is an introduction to performance studies, and, as such, the expectation is that you may have never acted in the traditional sense or interpreted any kind of literature. You will be asked to complete four graded performances this semester. All of these performances include some type of writing assignment. There will also be performance workshop moments in class that will be included in your participation grade.

Performance #One: You will share a story about one of the following: a) a favorite memory of a family member, b) an object that has significant meaning to you, c) a place that has significant meaning to you. You must work alone on this performance.

Performance #Two: Performance of a prose selection from *The Art of the Tale*. You must work with a partner on this assignment.

Performance #Three: Performance of a poem (or poems) from *Unsettling America*. You must work alone on this performance.

Performance #Four: A collage performance using literature selected from the anthology *or* literature of your own choosing. You will work in a group on this assignment.

For each of these performance assignments you will be given a handout that will explain my expectations for the assignment. It will include instructions on literature selection, guidelines for written analysis, time limitations, presentation format, due dates, and other requirements of the assignment.

It is very important that you do not miss class on the day of an assigned performance. You are responsible for trading places with someone if you have a conflict with the assigned date. I will give you a zero on the performance and reduce your written assignment points by half if I do not have knowledge of your absence ahead of time. Only students with documented and absolutely unavoidable reasons for missing a performance will be given an opportunity to make up the performance at a reduced grade.

Reading: You are expected to complete the assigned reading from the course reading packet as well as assigned introductory material from *The Art of the Tale* and *Unsettling America*. You should also plan to read several selections in each book so that you can make informed choices for your performances.

Exams: You have two exams in this class. They will cover any assigned readings and class lectures/discussions.

Written Work: For performances two and three you will be asked to write an analysis of the selected literature. I will give a detailed handout with guidelines for each of the written assignments. These papers are due on the day that you perform in class. Late papers will receive a

ten percent deduction for each day (not class period) they are late. I will not take papers that are more than three days late. You may not submit these papers to me by email.

You are required to attend two outside performance events and write a 2-3page (typed/double spaced) description and personal evaluation of each performance. At least one of these performances must be at The Empty Space. Your critique should evaluate the text, performance choices, and overall impact of the performance. You should utilize ideas from class in your critical discussion of the performance. Additional guidelines will be available to you on Blackboard. Please attach your ticket or program to your essay. Check Blackboard for approved outside event critiques.

Attendance and Participation: It is vitally important that you come to class! You will have a much better experience with performance if you are present and participating in class exercises and discussions. You will earn points for attending and participating. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have put your name on the attendance sheet each class period. So, if you are late to class, be sure that you do so at the end of class. An absence is an absence. I do not differentiate between illness, car trouble, out of town obligations, jury duty, etc. The only absence that will not be counted is one that involves a university sanctioned event. I require documentation of these types of absences. Participation points are given and removed for the following: class discussion, workshop performance pieces, audience etiquette, knowledge of assigned readings, and commitment to a productive performance space.

Classroom Atmosphere: During this class, please unplug yourself from ALL electronic devices – cell phones, tablets, and laptops – and store them out of sight once class has started. Cell phones must be in silent mode (not vibrate). You should never enter or leave the classroom when a performance is in progress.

Policy on Academic Integrity: Honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

Disability Accommodations: Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. **Note:** *Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.*

Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations: Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Important: Since the literature in this class, and therefore the performances, may contain adult language and some material that may be considered offensive by some individuals, you should review samples of literature from the anthology to make sure that you are comfortable with this material. Your continued enrollment in the course indicates to me that you have done so.