COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Provides an introductory course in voice and speech for effective communication. Exercises and practical applications in a variety of speaking contexts focus on vocal function, breath, resonance, articulation and coping with performance stress. Prerequisites: None.

SPECIAL FEATURES

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS, MEDIA, PERFORMANCE & DESIGN
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE
COURSE OUTLINE

Course: THEA 2060 3.0 VOICE AND SPEECH
Term: Fall Term 2017-2018
Prerequisite / Co-requisite: Course Credit Exclusion: AK/THEA2060 3.0.

COURSE DIRECTOR: Laurel Paetz Smith

Course Instructors

- Laurel Paetz Smith (Lab 01, 05)
  Email: lpaetz@yorku.ca
  Office: CFT 323 Course consultation hours: by appointment

Ausar Stewart (Lab 02, 03)
  Email: ausarstewart77@gmail.com
  Office: CFT 323 Course consultation hours: by appointment
The primary focus of this university course is dedicated to the art of communication based on an understanding and employment of the human voice, and on the preparation and presentation of oral and spoken skills. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, we are witnessing a shift away from the powerful tradition of the written and the spoken word as the two main forms of language communication. The dominant modes of communication now are: 1) visual, including print advertising and commercials, 2) electronic, e.g.: e-mail and text messaging, 3) the tight throat-locking voice reflecting the stress of modern society.

The human voice is a physical event, therefore the primary focuses of this course are:
1. To aid the students in developing a tangible physical experience and freedom in their vocal sound.
2. To develop an understanding of how breathing is the basic working tool of the human voice and human communication.
3. To develop confidence in an active engagement with the breath and the physical body, thereby reducing performance stress, which in turn will help to develop specific skills for handling performance stress situations.
4. To develop interpersonal vocal skills so that we know when we are effectively communicating.
5. To develop skills in exploring an idea on one’s feet and articulating it in a manner to which another person can respond.
6. To examine, through practical exercises, the tension or stress patterns that inhibit our voices, and then evolve skills in reducing vocal and performance stresses.
7. To develop a personal practice or warm up for improving your voice.
8. To develop a confidence in the preparation and rehearsal for an oral presentation.

Each three-hour studio session is divided into two parts. The first part is focused on a series of physical and vocal exercises designed to free your voice and develop an individual personal vocal warm up. The training will be though a combination of group and individual experiences led by the instructor. The second half of the session will be devoted to the application of the physical and vocal skills to specific performance situations. Students will gain valuable experience in the oral presentation of research material, as well as personal, poetic, political, and rhetorical materials.

There will be some written assignments. In addition, students will be expected to keep a journal of their practice. As this course involves exploring the physical, emotional, vocal basis of language, we are asking you to record your experiences and explorations in a physical handwritten or typed form. We ask that you not use cell phones or computers in the studio sessions. In the studio, students will be required to bring hard copies of any chosen texts.

Course Learning Objectives:
1. That each student has developed an understanding of how the human voice works.
2. That each student has an understanding of the practice through which he/she can improve his/her spoken voice.
3. That each student has skills for preparing for oral performance situations.
4. That each student has begun to develop ease in speaking before a group.
5. 

Course Text / Readings

No texts are required for this course
Additional readings may be assigned or recommended during the course.
Suggested readings are:  Linklater, Kristin. “Freeing the Natural Voice”
Rodenberg, Patsy. “The Right to Speak”

Evaluation *

Each student who comes to a studio course is arriving with a unique set of skills and potential. The class work grade reflects the individual’s attitude in exploring new concepts, their respect for their own and for their colleagues’ unique development and the degree of mastery of the various studio investigations. As each studio session builds on the previous session, the familiarity and repeatability through practice is also noted.

Class work (attendance, participation, attitude)  45%
Assignments, Presentations  35%
Final Assignment  20%

IMPORTANT NOTE:

As this is a studio course, attendance at all sessions is a requirement. If you are late three times, it will count as one absence. If you arrive past the halfway point of the class, it will count as an absence.
Three absences is one quarter of the studio work. As studio work cannot be made up, three absences is a failure. This is a Department regulation for a studio courses. It is impossible to make up the loss in a studio course.

Last date to drop course without receiving a grade – November 10th
You will receive at least 15% of your overall grade by that date.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE: In order to understand fully the physical relationship of breath and voice there may be minimal ‘hands-on’ activity. (partner to partner, instructor to student). Please speak to instructor if this poses any concern.

DRESS:

As the work may be very physical, it is suggested that the students wear comfortable clothing that they can move around in: sweats, yoga pants, etc. Tight jeans or skirts are not appropriate. Wearing them will inhibit your ability to move, and that, in turn, will affect your Participation grade. You will be working in socks or bare feet.

CLASS STRUCTURE:

Each class will be divided into two sections. The first half of each class will focus on physical and vocal exercises. The second half of each class will be the direct application of these skills to various texts. The text assignments to be presented in class will cover a wide range of prose and poetry.

ATTENDANCE:
Students are reminded that Department of Theatre rules require attendance at all classes. There is no differentiation between excused and unexcused absences - an absence is an absence and will affect your chances of success in this course. **As this is an experiential course, 3 absences will result in failure.**

**Please be reminded that three lates are equivalent to one absence.**

**PARTICIPATION:**

Students will be assessed based on their willingness to participate fully and openly in all activities. Students are encouraged to contribute to any and all class discussions. Grading on participation includes assessment of attitude, commitment, and growth in the work.

*Failure to attend classes will result in either academic penalty or a request that the student withdraw from the course.*

---

**THEA 2060 FALL 2017-2018 DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS**

(due dates below pertain to Monday or Tuesday classes, respectively)

**Voice Paper   Due Date: Sept 18/19**

This paper is an account of the history, influences and development of your voice. You will be given a questionnaire, but do not feel you need only cover the questions given. This paper is about YOUR VOICE, so please include anything else that you feel is pertinent. Papers will be graded on their level of honesty, depth and insight. Grammar and punctuation will count for .2% of the mark. Papers must be typed and stapled.
A record to be kept by each student, detailing each class- the exercises, the assignments and presentations, along with the student’s experience of them as a participant or a spectator. Each individual journal should be at minimum, two pages, 12 point font, normal margins. Journals will be collected twice during the term, on the above dates. They will be graded for clarity of thought, quality of observation, depth of reflection and completeness.

The journal is a way to connect with what you are thinking and feeling about what is happening in class. The journal should contain a description of what we did in class. What did we do? How did we do it? Why do you suppose we did what we did? Describe how the exercise or class made you feel, and what you thought about while you were participating. What happened to your body and your breath? Don’t be afraid to be honest. Be observant rather than judgmental of both yourself and of others. What changes do you notice in yourself and in others as a result of the work in class? Comment on how the class work will apply to your life professionally and personally. Record observations and experiences had both in and out of class. Your responses to the work should be thoughtful and specific. They may include feelings, thoughts, images and drawings.

NOTE: it is not enough to say something is “uncomfortable” or “I didn’t like it” or “I liked it”. These types of statements are too general and not useful by themselves. Feeling ‘uncomfortable’ (physically, emotionally, psychologically) is usually a clear clue that there is something new you are experiencing or some old/familiar, habitual pattern getting in your way, which should be investigated further. Rather, articulate the precise physical information and possible steps (based on the concepts and principles introduced) you can practice in order to move through what is not easy. Don’t worry if you don’t have answers; it is the willingness to investigate that counts. “It worked for me” or “it didn’t work for me” are also too general and usually based in personal judgement, preference or expectation of a result rather than ongoing practice of a technique. If something ‘worked for you’ it must be placed in some context in order for the work to carry forward. “I didn’t feel anything” is fundamentally untrue; is it that you didn’t feel anything or that you did not feel what you expected you should feel?

Stay away from intellectualizing concepts; articulate your experience in concrete, physical, do-able terms.

Anatomy Presentation Due Date: Oct 2/3

This is a research project on an aspect of anatomy and its connection to voice and breath. Students will be expected to present their findings orally to the class. Your presentation should be 3 minutes in length. You will be timed. You must understand the material and how it applies to voice and speech. You may use handouts and diagrams in your presentation. You may refer to notes, but you must have a thorough knowledge of your material in order to keep that to a minimum. A research paper, 250-500 words in length must be submitted on the due date. Please cite all sources. Note: your paper will not be the script for your oral presentation.

Oratory Presentation Due Date: Nov 6/Oct 31

A student-selected piece of historical prose (a speech, address or lecture), designed to be communicated to a large group of people. Choose something in which you have an interest or a personal connection. Speeches should be no more than 45-60 seconds in length (may be edited from the original), and approved by the instructor. Speeches MUST be memorized, with a hard copy presented to the instructor. Speeches will
be graded on preparation, clarity, application of class concepts and presentation.

**Spoken Word Presentation**  **Due Date: Nov 28/Dec 4**

Choose a poem from the Spoken Word/Slam Poetry genre. Poems MUST be memorized for oral presentation, and a copy of the text brought into each class. Choose one that both challenges you and evokes a strong emotional response in you. Poems must be 75-90 seconds in length (may be edited from the original), and approved by the instructor. Poems will be graded on preparation, clarity, application of class concepts and presentation.

*Note regarding late assignments:* 10% will be taken off grade for each day that assignment is late. Do not assume that you can receive an extension on any assignments, including presentations.

Please note the following evaluation breakdown:

- **Class Work (attendance, participation)** 45%
- **Voice Paper** 10%
- **Anatomy Assignment** 5%
- **Voice Journals** 10%
- **Oratory Assignment** 10%
- **Spoken Word Assignment** 20%

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

**A Note on Challenging Content**

One of the central educational goals of the Theatre Department is to produce socially conscious artists — artists who are aware of and capable of participating in challenging dialogues about social injustice and inequality. This means that our courses, public events, and productions often grapple with difficult subject matter, including sex, violence, terror, and illness (among other topics). While these presentations will no doubt provoke strong emotions and cause discomfort, we feel that the diverse experiences they promote are also essential to the development of our students’ critical faculties, empathy, and understanding of the world. Rather than warning our students in advance about every potentially uncomfortable topic that they might encounter in the course of their studies, we instead encourage students to meet them head on in the classroom, in rehearsals, and performances, and to engage in civil and compassionate debate about the possibilities and effects of staging difficult knowledge.
If you require an accommodation related to your participation in Theatre experiences, please ensure that you share relevant documentation with your course director. Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

**ACADEMIC POLICIES / INFORMATION:** The Senate Academic Standards, Curriculum and Pedagogy Committee (ASCP) provides a Student Information Sheet that includes:

- York's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures / Academic Integrity Web site
- Access/Disability
- Ethics Review Process for Research Involving Human Participants
- Religious Observance Accommodation
- Student Code of Conduct
- Alternate Exam and Test Scheduling

"20% Rule" - No examinations or tests collectively worth more than 20% of the final grade in a course will be given during the final 14 calendar days of classes in a term. The exceptions to the rule are classes which regularly meet Friday evenings or on Saturday and/or Sunday at any time, and courses offered in the compressed summer terms. Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles. [http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/files/CourseInformationForStudentsAugust20121.pdf](http://secretariat.info.yorku.ca/files/CourseInformationForStudentsAugust20121.pdf)

Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy -

The Senate Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy stipulates that (a) the grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and that, (b) under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for 'full year' courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade.

**The Key Points of York's Policy on Academic Honesty**

York's Senate Policy on Academic Honesty affirms and clarifies the general obligation for all members of the University to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty.

In particular, the policy:

- Recognizes the general responsibility of all faculty members to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of students to be mindful of and abide by such standards;
- Defines the types of conduct that are regarded as offences against the standards of academic honesty, including plagiarism, cheating, impersonation, and other forms of academic misconduct;
- Defines the penalties that can be imposed on a student who is found to have committed plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct;
- Outlines the procedures for dealing with students who are accused of violating the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty.

**Note:** a lack of familiarity with the Senate Policy cannot be used as a defence by those accused of academic misconduct.

**Range of Penalties for Plagiarism**
When verified, violations of academic honesty may lead to the following penalties – imposed *singly or in combination* depending on the severity of the offence:

- Written disciplinary warning or reprimand
- Required completion of an academic honesty assignment
- Make-up assignment, examination or rewriting a work, subject to a lowered grade
- Lower grade on the assignment, examination or work
- Lower grade in the course
- Failure in the course
- Permanent grade of record
- Notation on transcript
- Suspension from the University
- Expulsion from the University
- Withholding or rescinding a York degree, diploma or certificate

If the offence is a second or subsequent one for the student, or is in combination with another offence, the Senate Policy recommends consideration of a severe penalty.

For further information on the penalties for academic misconduct, please see [York's Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

**HARASSMENT GUIDELINES:** Sexual harassment is not anyone’s favourite topic, but we ask you to take a few minutes to read this section carefully. These guidelines explain what sexual harassment is, and what it is not, in the context of the Department of Theatre. We also hope to decrease any chance for misunderstanding surrounding activities, such as costume fitting, that are absolutely essential to the teaching and craft of theatre. What should you expect? What are the warning signals that something might be wrong?

As we know, theatre reflects life; and life has its share of sex, violence, murder, insanity, cruelty and terror, as well as romance and hilarity. To teach students to evoke an empathetic response in audiences involves the simulation of physical violence and dealing with strong emotions in the classroom, in rehearsals and in performances. Clearly, we cannot avoid these topics, so we meet them head-on in the classroom.

The York policy lists "unnecessary touching or patting" as behaviour indicative of sexual harassment. However, in the Department of Theatre, touching routinely happens in acting/directing classes and in costume fittings.

In acting, voice and movement classes, students will be touched in the abdomen, diaphragm area, rib cage, chest, spine, back, shoulders, limbs, neck and head to assist the student in proper breathing, relaxation of tensions, alignment or similar instruction. At no time should a teacher, without the student’s permission, touch those parts of a student’s body that would normally be covered by a two-piece bathing suit. At no time in an acting class will a student be asked to remove intimate apparel.

The removal of clothing, however, is integral to a costume fitting. Getting changed into or out of a costume is done in the privacy of a closed fitting room, but then the costume designer and/or the cutter building the costume will have to touch the costume (and therefore the student in the costume) anywhere that it needs fitting. The costume may also include undergarments that are not the student’s (e.g. corsets for women), that require the removal of the student’s own undergarments, and costume undergarments also require fittings. No students will be asked to put on or remove any item of underclothing in the presence of any other person.
A danger signal in physical contact could be unnecessarily prolonged touching, or touching body parts not involved in the current teaching. Students who feel uncomfortable about touch from the teacher, staff member or another student have a responsibility to speak to the teacher about opting out, or to discuss the problem with York’s Centre for Human Rights, South Ross, Suite 327, 416-736-5682 / TTY: 416-650-8023, rights@yorku.ca

As well as physical contact, there is also psychological contact and gender harassment. Sexual harassment can occur with no physical contact at all: psychological contact can therefore be a more difficult area to ascertain than physical contact since it involves words, intonations or body language. Theatre training must deal with sex. For example, some of the discussions needed in acting classes are of a sexually explicit nature. There is no way for students to fully explore the nature of acting without being honest, to some level, with their personal lives.

Gender harassment consists of derogatory or degrading remarks directed towards members of one gender or sexual preference group. These are most often directed at a woman, women in general, or homosexuals. Gender harassment is definitely sexual harassment.

If you feel that sexual harassment may have occurred, speak to the teacher, the class rep, your faculty advisor, or to the Centre for Human Rights, South Ross, Suite 327, 416-736-5682 / TTY: 416-650-8023, rights@yorku.ca

Sexual assault awareness and resources information is available on the York website and we encourage you to also carefully review this information.

You shouldn’t ever feel guilty or be made to feel guilty about reporting a problem!

DISPUTES: The following steps are the steps to be taken in the event of unresolved issues within the class:
- If your class has a tutorial leader or studio instructor, speak to your instructor first.
- If unresolved, speak to the Course Director.
- If unresolved, contact the Chair of the Department at thechair@yorku.ca

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY SESSIONAL DATES (where you will find classes and exams start/end dates, reading/co-curricular week, add/drop deadlines, holidays, University closings and more.
http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/index.htm
Manage my Academic record http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/

- Last date to drop a fall term (F) course without receiving a grade: November 10, 2017
- Last date to drop a winter term (W) course without receiving a grade: March 9, 2018
- Last date to drop a full year (Y) course without receiving a grade: February 9, 2018

DEGREE STATUS – BA AND BFA: All students accepted into the Department of Theatre in the School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design (AMPD) enter as Specialized Honours BA Theatre-Theatre Studies majors. The first year is a program common to all Theatre students, and offers courses in Acting, Production/Design and Performance Creation & Research. At the end of the first year, there is a selection
process (either by audition or interview) to proceed into the various areas of interest.

**POLICY REGARDING LOSS, DAMAGE AND THEFT OF PERSONAL EQUIPMENT AND BELONGINGS:** The School of Arts, Media, Performance & Design at York University will not be held responsible for the loss, damage or theft of personal equipment or any other personal belongings that are left in studios, classrooms, storage areas or any other space within the School. It is each individual’s responsibility to take care of their own property. Under no circumstances will the School incur liability for loss, damage or theft of such property.

Please take all reasonable measures to protect your personal belongings. If you do experience loss, damage or theft of personal property, please report it immediately to the Department of Security Services at (416) 736-5333 or extension 33333 from any University phone.

**ROOM BOOKING POLICY:** Rehearsals for mainstage productions take precedence when assigning rooms, followed by faculty assigned work. Personal projects, including playGround, will be considered only if space allows.

First-year Theatre majors are not eligible to book studios.

Adopt professional standards by agreeing on a rehearsal schedule with group members and by having one group member do the arranging of the space in advance. Please ensure that the floors and walls are clean. **All garbage must be removed.** Please treat the studios with respect.

The studios are available only within the following hours: **Mon-Fri 8:00am-10:00pm and Sat-Sun 10:00am-6:00pm**

All spaces must be booked one week in advance and will be accepted only until 4:00pm on Thursday the previous week.

Requests will be confirmed Friday by 4:00pm.

Requests must be sent by e-mail only to rehearse@yorku.ca

*Include your full name, student ID, program, brief explanation of what the space will be used for and what kind of space you need (studio / classroom / big / small).*

Requests must be submitted each week for a room unless special arrangements have been made.

You cannot “claim” a space by writing in your name or the course name in an empty slot on the weekly schedules posted outside each space (exception – Light Lab CFT 153).

Spaces must be returned to neutral at the end of each booking session. There will be a picture of what “neutral” is in each studio.

The sign-off sheet must be checked and signed at the end of your studio time. If you enter a space and find it not “neutral”, please e-mail rehearse@yorku.ca.
Anything left behind in the spaces after your booking will be thrown out.

**Procedures for use of studios after-hours:** These procedures are designed to enhance the safety of authorized students when working alone in one of our studios after-hours - Monday through Friday from 11:00pm to 6:30am, and Saturday/Sunday from 10:00pm to 8:00am.

An After-Hours Use form will be completed and emailed to University Security at: scc@yorku.ca;

Be advised of the University’s emergency protocols (e.g. contact 911 in the event of a life threatening situation) and University Security’s urgent number (416.736.5333);

Contact University Security non-urgent number - 416.650.8000 - upon arrival and departure.

**SITE-SPECIFIC PROJECTS:** All site-specific theatre projects anywhere on campus must be cleared by the course director, York University’s Security Services, and the department or governing body of the proposed site. This request should be made in writing at least three weeks in advance of the date required.

All public spaces on Campus require contact with the Office of Temporary Use of University Space - http://tuus.info.yorku.ca/space-room-reservations-forms/

The course director will also need to complete a “Temporary Use of University Space Application and Notification Form” and submit it two weeks in advance of the date required.

For ALL site specific work, the course director must send the request to security@yorku.ca outlining where and when the work is to take place.

**Please note:** at no time shall any form of replica, prop, or real weapon (handguns, rifles, shotguns, swords, daggers, knives, etc) be used in any site specific work.

---

Many courses utilize Moodle, York University’s course website system. If your course is using Moodle, click here to access it.

Moodle @ York University