

JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Speech Communication and Theatre
SPEECH 217
Oral Interpretation
Course Credit: 3 Semester Hours
Spring 2012

GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructor: Mark G. Henderson, Ph.D.
Class Hours: TR 2:30-3:50 p.m.
Classroom: Room 102 McCoy Auditorium
Office: Room 100 McCoy Auditorium
Office Hours: MWF 1:00-5:00 p.m.
Telephone: 601-979-2872
Email: mark.g.henderson@jsums.edu

Required Supplies: A black hard-back ½ to 1” folder (8½ X11) and 1 highlighter.

GENERAL APPROACH: Speech 217 is a highly experiential course that introduces the skills of literary analysis for the purpose of oral interpretive performance. Of equal importance, the course will endeavor to balance written analytic skills with vocal development and practical performance techniques.

Students will explore analysis and performance aspects of prose, poetry, and dramatic literature. Following are specific goals for this course.

- To cultivate an appreciation of diverse literary forms and styles.
- To develop an ability to analyze literary selections for the purpose of oral interpretive performance.
- To develop personal vocal and physical techniques to successfully communicate a literary work to an audience.

CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

Attendance.

Regular attendance is required. You need to be present to learn and practice skills introduced in class. A student's final grade will be reduced by **one letter grade** after three absences; the student will receive a grade of **F** after five absences. This means that you have been absent too many times to maintain continuity in improvement. **THERE ARE NO EXCUSED ABSENCES.** When you are absent, please do not bring me a doctor's note, an obituary, or any other information in hopes of excusing an absence. Notice that you are given three free absences for situations for which you really have an emergency or sickness. Don't use those "freebies" for blowing off the class and then come to me later (after you have gone over the limit) when you are really sick or have an emergency and expect an excuse. In short, please don't take advantage of your "freebies". Missed performances cannot be made up.

Please arrive to class on time. Tardiness is unprofessional and is not fair to me or to your classmates. You will have missed class if you are not there for the entire class period. That is, staying for only half the class, coming in 5-10 minutes before the end of class, or consistently coming in 5-10 minutes late does not mean that you attended. 3 Tardies equal one absence. If you come in after roll has been called, it is your responsibility to let the instructor know at the end of that particular class. Moreover, do not expect me to cover any missed material.

Assignments

All written assignments and performance work are due on the dates specified in the syllabus, unless otherwise noted by the instructor. The syllabus and assignment due dates reflect the overall concepts, content and structure of the course. ***However, this syllabus is an instrument of process and must remain flexible; dates and assignments may change to reflect the specific needs and dynamics of this learning community.***

Classroom Civility

There are certain basic standards of classroom civility that should be adhered to, particularly in a communication course. Civility does not eliminate appropriate humor, enjoyment, or other features of a comfortable and pleasant classroom community. Classroom civility does, however, include the following:

1. Displaying respect for all members of the classroom community, both your instructor and fellow students.
2. Attentiveness to and participation in lectures, group activities, workshops, and other classroom exercises.
3. Avoidance of unnecessary disruptions during class such as private conversations, reading campus or any type of newspaper, and doing work for other classes
4. Avoidance of racist, sexist, homophobic, or other negative language that may unnecessarily exclude members of our campus and classroom community.

These features of classroom civility do not comprise an exhaustive list. Rather, they represent the minimal sort of behaviors that help to make the classroom a pleasant place for all concerned.

PLEASE! TURN OFF ALL CELLULAR TELEPHONES DURING CLASS TIME, AS IT CAN BE DISRUPTIVE TO THE DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION!--TEXTING IS TALKING....

Student evaluation:**Criteria for grading oral presentations:**

Preparation: Readers should demonstrate a familiarity and dexterity with, and an understanding of, the material being read.

Energy: Readers should have an appropriately high level of energy in their delivery and demonstrate an enthusiasm for their selection.

Volume: Readers should demonstrate an appropriate loudness that is suitable to their material, their audience, and the space in which they are presenting.

Projection: Similar to volume, but refers, not to loudness, but to power. The power with which your voice is “broadcast” should be suitable for the audience, material, and space.

Clarity/articulation: The reader’s words should be easily understood, things to avoid include muffling, mumbling, garbling, or otherwise obscuring the audience’s easy understanding of what you are saying.

Dialect/accent: There should be no discernible “accent” to your speech when reading aloud, unless it is an intentional vocal choice made based on your text. In general, we will all strive to use the “Standard American” version of the English language.

Appropriate vocal choices: These include the variety of decisions made by the reader with regard to all of the above, plus pacing, quality, and tone.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

It would be impossible to make a strict schedule for a performance oriented class such as this; this is simply a general schedule that may be changed based on the individual make-up of our class this term.

JANUARY

10	Overview of Course
12	The Basics of Oral Interpretation
17	Voice Development for Oral Interpretation
19	Use of Body in Oral Interpretation
24	PERSONAL STORIES
26	PERSONAL STORIES
31	PERSONAL STORIES

FEBRUARY

3	Interpreting Poetry
7/9	Interpreting Poetry
14/16	POETRY PRESENTATIONS
21/23	POETRY PRESENTATIONS
28	POETRY PRESENTATIONS

***ANTIGONE OPENS* (Department's Spring Production) FEB 23-27**
(You are required to attend one performance)

MARCH

1	INTERPRETING PROSE
6/9	INTERPRETING PROSE
13/15	SPRING BREAK
20/22	PROSE PRESENTATION
27/29	PROSE PRESENTATIONS

APRIL

3/5	INTERPETING THEATRE
10/12	THEATER PRESENTATIONS
17/19	THEATER PRESENTATIONS
24/26	FINAL EXAMINATION WEEK

TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE: Cultivate a willingness to risk and stretch beyond your comfort zone. This is a highly participatory, performance course. Small things count. Come to class prepared, demonstrate a willingness to read aloud in class, to offer constructive comments, and to participate fully in discussion and exercises. This work ethic will empower your personal progress and contribute meaningfully to our learning community.