

CMST 4145: Group Performance
(Devising)
Spring 2015

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Office Hours: 11:00-12:00 T/Th and by appointment

Catalogue Description: *Prerequisite: CMST 2040 or equivalent.* Theory and techniques of adapting and staging nondramatic literature and other materials for group performance; directing for Reader's Theatre, Chamber Theatre, Story Theatre, and other forms.

Course Description: Students learn how to devise group performances drawing from diverse materials.

Required Texts:

Devised and Collaborative Theatre: A Practical Guide. Tina Bicat and Chris Baldwin, eds. Ramsbury, Marlborough: Crowood Press, 2002. (B&B)

Govan, Emma, Helen Nicholson and Katie Normington. *Making a Performance: Devising Histories and Contemporary Practices.* London: Routledge, 2007. (GH&H)

Assignments:

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|--|-------------------|
| Attendance/Participation | 200 points |
| Discussion/Reading Quizzes | 200 points |
| Assigned Roles Perf. #2 (and reflection) | 100 points |
| Assigned Roles Perf. #3 (and reflection) | 100 points |
| Performance #1 | 100 points |
| Performance #2 | 100 points |
| Performance #3 | 100 points |
| <u>Exam on Reading</u> | <u>100 points</u> |
| TOTAL | 1000 points |

You will be graded on a 100-point scale:

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| 900-1000 | A |
| 800-899 | B |
| 700-799 | C |
| 600-699 | D |

Description of Assignments:

Attendance/Participation: This is a hands-on, group class. We will be discussing reading at the beginning of most classes and participating in exercises at the end of class. Your attendance and participation are essential. They are worth 20% of the overall class. I take this very seriously. As such, please account for EVERY absence. That is, if you MUST be absent, you should email me PRIOR to class with an excuse.

Discussion/Reading Quizzes: The reading in class is minimal, but I EXPECT everyone to have read before each class. The reading will enable us to jump into the day's work. We will start most classes with lively conversation about the reading. Because the class is small, I EXPECT everyone to participate in the discussion. I MAY begin class with a short reading quiz. Again, this aspect of the class is worth 20% of your overall grade.

Assigned Roles and Reflections: For performances #2 and #3, you will be assigned a specific role in your group. You might be in charge of music or movement or costumes, for example. In addition to contributing to the performance in your role, you will also turn in a reflection after your group performs. This reflection should be a few pages. It should be typed, organized, proofread, and thoughtful. In it, I ask you to reflect on your contribution to the performance through this role. What do you do? What did you learn? I encourage you to keep notes as you work in your role. The point breakdown: for your work in the role itself -- 50 points; for the reflection -- 50 points. So, 100 points each performance = 20% of your overall grade.

Performances: There are three graded group performances in this class. You will build these performances in an assigned group. Hopefully, you will work with most members of the class during the semester. I will grade the performances on originality, coherence of vision, aesthetics, and impact. We can talk about these criteria further in class. While there is ample time to rehearse for these performances in class, I imagine groups will want to work outside of class as well. Please be as accommodating as possible. As mentioned earlier in the syllabus, the reading is minimal; consider rehearsals outside of class enjoyable homework. The performances are worth 100 points each= 30% of your overall grade.

Exam: There will be an exam on all assigned reading prior to Spring Break.

Graduate Student Presentations: Each graduate student will be assigned an additional book for the class. In addition to a meeting with me to discuss the book, they will develop a presentation on the book that includes an exercise or assignment that will contribute to Performance #3. Since "Attendance and Participation" is a GIVEN for grads, this assignment will replace that in terms of points.

Americans With Disabilities Act and The Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office for Disability Affairs do that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations during the first two weeks of class.

Tentative Course Calendar

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|-------------|---|
| January 15 | intro to the class and each other |
| January 20 | discuss GH&H 3-17 -- exercises |
| January 22 | discuss GH&H 18-28 -- exercises |
| January 27 | discuss GH&H 29-40 -- exercises |
| January 29 | discuss GH&H 41-53 -- exercises |
| February 3 | (in group) autobiographical performance assignment GH&H 55-72 |
| February 5 | (in group) community narrative assignment GH&H 73-87 |
| February 10 | (in group) fiction assignment GH&H 88-101 |
| February 12 | build work in groups |
| February 17 | Mardi Gras -- no class |
| February 19 | rehearsal |
| February 24 | rehearsal/Performance #1 |
| February 26 | Performance #1 |
| March 3 | the director B&B 12-29 |
| March 5 | set design B&B 30-45 |
| March 10 | playwriting B&B 63-74 |
| March 12 | music and composition B&B 75-87; GH&H 173-188 |
| March 17 | movement B&B 88-107; GH&H 155-172 |
| March 19 | costumes B&B 108-122 |
| March 24 | rehearsal |
| March 26 | Performance #2 |
| March 31 | Performance #2 |
| April 2 | Exam on Reading |

April 7 Spring Break
April 9 Spring Break

April 14 begin working on Performance #3 (new group/switch roles)
April 16 (grad student presentations begin)

April 21 group work
April 23 group work

April 28 group work
April 30 group work

Performance #3 during the final exam period.