

CMST 3040 – Performance Composition, Section 1, 3 Credit Hours
Class meets Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30am – 11:20am – 137 Coates Hall
Spring 2014 – Final Examination is Tuesday, May 6, 7:30 AM – 9:30 AM
Instructor John LeBret, Ph.D.
Office Hours 1pm – 3pm Thursdays or by appointment
Jlebre1@lsu.edu 225.578.6812

Contact Information – I can most easily be reached through email at the address above. I am generally in my office, 216 Coates Hall, from 11:30am until 3:00pm and am easily available with prior appointment. To schedule an appointment please send me an email at least 24 hours in advance. For your convenience, I will be available for drop-ins from 1:00pm – 3:00pm on Thursdays. My office telephone number is 225-578-6812 and my mailbox is located in the Communication Studies office in Coates Hall, room 136. Please feel free to talk to me about any issue relating to this course.

Course Goals – Welcome! The discipline of Performance Studies offers that, in the study of human communication and in the Humanities more generally, performance can be both an object of study and the method of inquiry. Composition refers to how a thing is formed, shaped, patterned, arranged, put together. Everything we say and do, read or write, see at the movies, or on TV, or on a stage have been composed. Most of us have been taught to understand things in terms of their content or meaning, i.e. what they say. However, because content is always composed in some way and because composition affects content, it is to our benefit to also attend to how things are, or might be, arranged or composed. Students in this course will develop an understanding of basic compositional principles and acquire a familiarity with the forms and conventions that often shape contemporary performance practice. Moreover, students will also develop strategies and techniques to draw on while composing their own creative work with an appreciation of what their effects might be. Finally, students will forge a working connection between compositional forms and performance practice.

Assignments, Journal, Performances, and Reviews – During this semester, students are responsible for completing multiple assignments on their own as well as responding to the work of others. In addition, each student will create a number of performances ranging from 60-second mini-performances to a 15-20 minute final performance. Students will also keep a journal. In general, each assignment or performance builds into the next, with all elements working toward the final composition. Students should keep a folder or notebook for class materials that contains a copy of each assignment in addition to the copy turned in for critique. I will review student notebooks at midterm and during the final evaluation. I ask that all work be submitted to me in hard-copy form, including performance scripts, and should be easily legible if not typewritten.

Class Decorum & Citizenship – Creative work often includes elements of exposure and risk and is best fostered in a safe, supportive environment. Students should make every effort to be considerate of others. When offering critique, honesty should always be tempered with compassion. Disagreement does not warrant uncivil behavior and even in our differences let our humanity prevail. Also, just as students should respect each other, so too should they respect our shared space by cleaning up after themselves and assisting in restoring the room at the end of class. Outside distractions are not welcome, please turn off electronics and put them away before class begins.

Late Work, Attendance, and Participation - The assignments in this class are designed to work toward a cumulative goal. In some cases, one student's assignment is the inspiration for another's performance. Incomplete or late work disrupts multiple schedules and effectively delays the whole class. Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 10% per day (24 hours). In addition, there is no formal textbook for this course. Concepts and ideas will emerge in lecture, class discussion, and (occasionally) formalized handouts and readings. In general, when a student misses class, he or she will fall behind not only by missing the introduced material but also missing the associated activities. Students also play an important role as audience to each other's work and absence from the class deprives others. Participation counts as 10% of the final evaluation. Students may be absent from class, for any reason, up to two times. Absences in excess of three will result in a reduction of the participation grade by 33% for each additional absence. Excessive tardiness to class counts as a 1/2 absence. In addition to being present in class and on time, students should be actively listening to the others and be prepared to offer their thoughtful comments during discussion.

The 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 so 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.

Plagiarism - Plagiarism is a violation of the fundamental principles of intellectual property. If you fail to give proper citation for the direct quote or paraphrase of another's idea, you are engaging in plagiarism. Claiming ideas, sentences, essays, or speeches as your own is plagiarism. Punishment can range from failing the assignment to failing the class, depending on the seriousness of the act. In cases of gross misconduct, I reserve the right to petition for expulsion.

Grading - This class is graded using a standard A - F grading scale:

100%-90%	= A
89.9% - 80%	= B
79.9% - 70%	= C
69.9% - 60%	= D
59.9% - 0%	= F

As will be given for work that indicates achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements. **Bs** will be given for work that indicates achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements. **Cs** will be given for work that meets the course requirements in every way. **Ds** will be given for work that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet the requirements of the course. **Fs** will be given for work that fails to meet the basic parameters of the course.

Participation -	10%
Midterm -	10%
Final -	10%
Creative Writing assignments -	10%
Mini Performances -	30% (10% each)
MyStory Script -	15%
MyStory Performance -	15%

Course Calendar

1/16	-	Welcome, SYLLABUS, INTRODUCTIONS
1/21	-	EMBODIMENT WORKSHOP
1/23	-	NATURAL NARRATIVES
1/28	-	ANECDOTES WORKSHOP, PERSONAL ANECDOTES DUE
1/30	-	NO CLASS - WORK DAY
2/4	-	ADAPTATION MINI PERFORMANCES
2/6	-	REALISTIC CONVENTIONS
2/11	-	CHARACTER CONTEST SCRIPTS DUE
2/13	-	DEFAMILIARIZATION
2/18	-	REALIST MINI PERFORMANCES
2/20	-	TBA - HOW TO END POVERTY IN 60 SECONDS FRIDAY & SATURDAY
2/25	-	CHARACTER MINI PERFORMANCES
2/27	-	MATERIAL PERFORMANCE
3/4	-	PERFORMANCE ART MINI PERFORMANCES
3/6	-	MONTAGE, COLLAGE, AND ASSEMBLAGE
3/11	-	MIDTERM EXAM
3/13	-	PHYSICAL ACTION WORKSHOP
3/18	-	POETIC MODELS I
3/20	-	POETIC STAGING I, METAPHOR POEMS DUE
3/25	-	POETIC MODELS II
3/27	-	POETIC STAGING II, METONYMY POEMS DUE
4/1	-	THE MYSTORY & COMPOSITIONAL STRATEGIES
4/3	-	PERSONAL
4/8	-	POPULAR
4/10	-	PROFESSIONAL
4/15	-	SPRING BREAK!
4/17	-	SPRING BREAK!
4/22	-	WORKSHOPS
4/24	-	WORKSHOPS
4/29	-	FINAL PERFORMANCES
5/1	-	FINAL PERFORMANCES
5/6	-	FINAL EXAM