

Carleton University
Winter 2024 Preliminary Course Outline
Department of English

ENGL 2104 Section B: *Drama Workshop*
The Actor's Craft: From Text to Performance

Prerequisites: Second year standing or permission of the department

Tuesdays / 9:05 – 11:55am

Format: In-person, not suitable for online students

Instructor: Mary Ellis
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*****This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.
A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term.*****

Course description:

What is the actor's craft? Students in this course will be given the opportunity to explore their ability to perform, and to develop a basic overview of the elements and concepts of the craft of acting, and the essential skills needed to portray a role. Skills in voice, movement, creative impulse, imaginative exploration, and text analysis will be explored through basic voice and physical warm up work, exercises in language and character, experiential activities, and the rehearsal and performance of classical and modern text. Students will analyze Shakespearean sonnets and monologues, and scenes from Henrik Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, and put theory into practice through performance.

Course Objectives:

1. To critically examine the elements and concepts of acting through exercises, text analysis, rehearsal and performance, and to develop and understand the terminology of the craft.
2. To appreciate how body language and speech variations (such as pitch, tone, volume and pace) can create a positive and dynamic presence.
3. To build confidence, and to acquire the skills to be a more effective communicator.
4. To develop the ability to apply theory to practice, through the analysis and performance of classical and modern text.
5. To develop the ability to be more observant of ourselves and the world around us, and to discuss and write critically about these observations.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will develop a greater understanding and appreciation of the craft of acting, through the exploration of the creative and collaborative process of rehearsal and performance, the analysis of classical and modern text, and exercises in voice, movement and character development.

Students will also develop skills to enhance confidence, spontaneity and creative decision making, be more open to risk-taking and new ideas, and enhance the clarity and impact of their presentations.

Texts:

Complete Works - William Shakespeare – All of Shakespeare’s works are available online, so there is no need to purchase the Complete Works. However, you may wish to purchase individual plays, in order to study your Shakespearean monologue.

Hedda Gabler by Henrik Ibsen – An electronic version will be made available on Brightspace. Please use this version, and not a different translation.

Evaluation:

Participation (15%) - Ongoing

Shakespeare Sonnet Written Analysis (10%)

Sonnet in Pairs Presentation (15%)

Shakespeare Monologue Written Analysis (10%)

Shakespeare Monologue Presentation (20%)

Character Analysis from *Hedda Gabler* (15%)

***Hedda Gabler* Scene Presentation (15%)**

An Important Note on Participation and Evaluation:

Due to the practical nature of this course, attendance and punctuality are mandatory, and participation is essential. Commitment to the ensemble, and to individual work, is extremely important, and students are strongly encouraged to participate in discussions and exercises. Comfortable, loose clothing is best in order to participate in warm-up activities. Students must email the professor if they are going to be absent or late. Please inform me if you are dealing with any pertinent medical issues so that accommodations can be made. If illness prevents you from attending class, please see the guidelines under Informal Accommodation Due to Short Term Incapacitation in the Academic Accommodation section.

Students will be assessed on their willingness to learn, their progress over the semester, as well as the success of their attempts. Active listening and engagement are crucial, as are curiosity, creativity, cooperation, and a desire to investigate the human condition, which demands energy, drive and commitment.

Students will be graded on participation using the following criteria –

The student displays active listening and responsiveness, and engages in all class activities with energy and enthusiasm.

The student displays curiosity, a willingness to take risks and to thoroughly investigate challenging work.

The student displays focus, as well as energy, drive and a personal commitment to the work.

The student displays a respectful and collaborative attitude at all times.

The student comes to class ready to work, displaying punctuality and preparedness.

Assessment details for each of the assignments will be posted on Brightspace.

Assignments, both written work and presentations, must be received on the specified due dates to receive full marks. Deadlines will be strictly enforced. Extensions will only be granted if discussed prior to the due date with the professor. If presentations or written work are late, barring any unforeseen or extreme circumstances, there will be a deduction of 1 mark per day on the assignment. If illness prevents you from completing an assignment on time, please see the guidelines under Informal Accommodation Due to Short Term Incapacitation in the Academic Accommodation section.

Students must be off-book (have lines thoroughly memorized) for presentations, otherwise their grade will be impacted, and their partner's work will be affected. It is essential that students work from hard copies of scripts for sonnets, monologues, and scenes, so that notes can be made on the text.

Any use of Generative Artificial Intelligence tools (e.g. ChatGPT) to produce assessed content is considered a violation of academic integrity standards, and is strictly prohibited in this course.