

COURSE SYLLABUS

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THR469.01

STAGE DIALECTS

3 CREDIT HOURS

Fall 2007

12:30 pm. – 1:50 p.m. Tu-Th

UTC 151

Professor Maureen V. McIntyre

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Office Hours: 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Please make appointments.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course emphasizes the development of the ability to learn several western stage dialects and to acquire the ability to teach stage dialects to oneself quickly in preparation for professional acting auditions. The student will be taught the International Phonetic Alphabet and will transcribe dialects and test in IPA. All class performances will be presented in the style of reader's theatre without blocking. Full memorization of lines for scenes may not be necessary in order to perform well. The students will transcribe, be tested on and perform in 4 different dialects taught in class during the semester for grades. One outside improvisational dialect performance will be required. The final scene will be performed in a dialect not studied in class; and the student must show the ability to teach him/herself the dialect. All conversation in class will be conducted in the dialect being studied.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course the student should:

- Be able to transcribe most western stage dialects using the International Phonetic Alphabet
- Be conversant in four dialects and familiar with three others through class work
- Have mastered the techniques to teach him/herself most stage dialect in a short time.

TEXTBOOK

Stage Dialects by Jerry Blunt

REQUIRED SUPPLIES

Standard class supplies: paper, pencils

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Students must have a copy of the entire script from which each performance scene is chosen. FAILURE TO READ THE ENTIRE SCRIPT MAY RESULT IN A 25 POINT CUT IN THE PERFORMANCE GRADE.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

After 3 absences in an T-day class, any additional absences will cause a 3-point cut each in the overall SEMESTER grade. Absences for approved school business will not be treated as absences. Validated written excuse signed by medical personnel is mandatory if an absence due to illness is to be excused for a performance assignment. Proof of absence due to family emergency is necessary if the absence is to be excused. The nature of this proof may be negotiated with the professor. PERFORMANCES SHOULD GO UP AT SCHEDULED TIMES. Should a postponement due to validated illness, for example, be allowed, NO assignment may be postponed twice! If a duet assignment is postponed due to the EXCUSED absence of a performer, no grade cut will be issued. If, however, the duet is postponed due to an UNEXCUSED absence of a performer, that performer will receive a 10-point cut on that performance grade. Three tardies will be treated as an absence and cause a 3 point cut in the semester grade if the student has excessive absences. Failure to attend the entire final without permission from the professor will cause a “0” for the final exam grade. Do not make doctor’s appointments during exams unless there is an emergency. Theatre majors must attend all UTC season productions. Others are asked to attend two productions which will be free.

ASSIGNMENT/EXAMS

Graded assignments are as follows:

TESTS: There will be a short written test on the IPA and on each of the dialects fully studied by the class (Usually 2 from the British Isles, 2 from the Romance language countries and 1 from either Germany or Russia.)

PERFORMANCES: After each of the 4 major dialects is studied and the test has been given, the student will perform either a two-minute monologue or a four-minute duet in the dialect. These performances are to be presented like reader’s theatre rather than blocked. The choice for these readings must be based upon the appropriateness for the specific dialect. The performer will read from a script written in standard alphabet. However, copies of the first 10 lines of the reading in IPA, using the appropriate dialect rules as a base, must be distributed to the audience for the purpose of critiques. Both performance and transcription will be graded.

OUTSIDE ASSIGNMENT: Each student with a witness from the class must converse improvisationally in a safe “real world” situation with persons unknown to them in one of the dialects studied in class following testing in the dialect. The student must turn in a one-page report on the experience signed by the student and the class member who serves as witness. A format for the report will be provided by the professor. This assignment must be done and the report turned in prior to November 29, 2007.

FINAL: The final will consist of a reader's theatre duet performance in a dialect approved by the professor but not one studied in class. The student must show an ability to learn the dialect without aid from the professor. No transcription will be passed out to the audience for the final.

(There will be a variety of ungraded exercises in class.)

PLAN AHEAD. BE COMPETITIVE. HAVE FUN LEARNING THESE DIALECTS.
PARTICIPATE IN CLASS DISCUSSIONS. I AM INTERESTED IN YOUR OPINIONS.

GRADING PLAN

Naturally, in a performance oriented course, grading is potentially highly subjective because a value judgment must be made. However, the students will be graded on performances with a grading form which breaks down all areas of performance with a point system. A copy of this will be provided to the students prior to first performance. Failure to read the entire play from which a scene is taken may result in a 25-point cut in the performance grade. Tests will be graded on a 100-point system. All grades whether tests, performances, transcriptions or outside reports count as single grades. The final counts as a double grade. Grades are on the following point scale, i.e. an "A" is 90 to 100, a "B" is 80 to 89, etc. Remember absences may impact negatively on your grades. See Attendance Policy.
COME TO CLASS.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against any student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to cheating on an examination or any other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource material. In particular, falsification of research sources, failure to read entire plays from which scenes are taken for performance or false reporting of the outside assignment will be cause for disciplinary action and/or grade cuts. Penalties for cheating may be severe.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and thus impedes the mission of the university. **CELLULAR PHONES AND PAGERS MUST BE TURNED OFF BEFORE CLASS BEGINS.** Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks (no cursing except in scenes, please), reading newspapers, working on materials from other classes, sleeping, talking at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing or engaging in other forms of distraction. **GENTLEMEN, PLEASE REMOVE YOUR CAPS.** Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave the class. Students who are especially disruptive may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom and must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic or Student Life program or activity. Disabled students may request assistance with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities by contacting the Director of the Counseling Center in the Lee Drain Annex by calling (936)294-1720.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

University policy states that a student who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day must be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. Students must be excused to travel for observance of a religious holy day. A student who wishes to be excused for a religious holy day **MUST** present the instructor with a written statement describing the holy day(s) and the travel involved. The instructor shall provide the student with a written description of the deadline for completion of missed exams or assignments.