

## **B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies**

<b>Course Title</b>	:	English Drama Performance
<b>Course Code</b>	:	ENG277
<b>Recommended Study Year</b>	:	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year
<b>No. of Credits/Term</b>	:	3
<b>Mode of Tuition</b>	:	Lecture and Tutorial
<b>Class Contact Hours</b>	:	2 hours Lecture/week 1 hour Tutorial/week
<b>Category in Major Programme</b>	:	Disciplinary Elective
<b>Prerequisite(s)</b>	:	N/A
<b>Co-requisite(s)</b>	:	N/A
<b>Exclusion(s)</b>	:	N/A
<b>Exemption Requirement(s)</b>	:	N/A

### **Brief Course Description**

This practical course in English language production explores techniques of presentation and vocal delivery in drama, verse speaking, oral storytelling and other kinds of performance. Whilst clearly oriented towards students with an interest in learning performative language, it is equally relevant to those wishing to enhance skills such as diction, articulation and vocal projection for non-specialised language purposes. The course is constructed as a process-product experience for participants. They will devise and adapt, rehearse and refine chosen texts for performance in a collaborative context. Emphasis will be placed on important delivery skills such as vocal inflection, paralanguage and body language as well as appropriate and accurate pronunciation. The use of various media, including video and audio-recording in addition to live performance will be exploited.

The final product will be a live performance on campus as well as an exchange performance in one of the other tertiary institutions.

### **Aims**

The course aims enhance students' confidence in expressing themselves through performance in English. Its general objective is to develop oral fluency and an awareness of the paralinguistic and prosodic features of English speech and the relationship between sound and meaning. It is also intended to enhance text memorisation and delivery skills in English. Overall the course aims to foster collaborative and individual performance-related skills for students' linguistic and aesthetic benefit

## **Learning Outcomes**

The students are expected to: 1) display a basic understanding of genre and discourse features of language arts; 2) demonstrate an appreciation of the subtleties and creative possibilities of written English in spoken performance; 3) display critical awareness of spoken English in aesthetic and performative contexts; 4) interpret character, attitude and intention through intonation, inflection and general vocal technique and accompanying non-verbal signifiers; 5) demonstrate a practical understanding and appreciation of the codes, conventions and signifying systems involved in language in performance.

## **Indicative Content**

1. Appreciation and evaluation of texts, modified or otherwise, with a view to performance
2. Scripted, semi-scripted, improvised and devised performance text
3. Drama, verse-speaking and oral storytelling techniques with appropriate examples
4. Genre and discourse features. Genres: e.g. comedy, romance, etc.
5. Linguistic features (e.g. speech acts/ moves/ exchanges) and vocal delivery
6. Collaborative development, refining and rehearsing
7. Audio/video-recording of rehearsal and of live performance

## **Teaching Method**

The methodology of the course is essentially collaborative and experiential, with the lecturer acting as facilitator for the developmental work of producing a performance based on appropriate texts. Students will be encouraged to integrate performance and linguistic theories into the context of their work. Seminars and discussion tutorials will, therefore, complement the practical group workshops. Introductory lectures will establish the course parameters.

## **Measurement of Learning Outcomes**

Students' progress towards the learning outcomes outlined above will be measured by continuous assessments of their engagement with workshops, individual and group readings devised work and presentations. Speaking/ presenting/ performing tasks will be of a group nature while written tasks will be individual.

## **Assessment**

The product can be a short play, original, abridged or adapted. Assessment will be on a 50/50 basis, evaluating both process and product. There is no exam. The student's role and contribution, either on-stage or back-stage, will be assessed as the product,

and her/his commitment and involvement on a regular basis will be taken into account. The assessment pieces will be audio and/or video-recorded for moderation.

### **Supplementary Readings**

J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*, Oxford, NY: OUP, 1975.

Marvin Carlson, *Performance – a Critical Introduction*, London and NY: Routledge, 1996.

Keir Elam, *The Semiotics and Theatre and Drama*, London and NY: Methuen, 1980.

David Henry Hwang, *M. Butterfly*, Penguin USA, 1989.

W.J.T. Mitchell, “Representation”, *Critical Terms for Literary Studies*, Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago), p.11-22, 1990.

Henry Sayre, “Performance”, *Critical Terms for Literary Studies*, Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago), pp.91-104., 1990.

M. Shackleton (Ed.), *Double Act*. Ten One-Act plays, London: Edward Arnold, 1985.

Huxley, Michael & Noel Witts (Ed.), *The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader*, London: Routledge, 1996.