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Spring 2-1-2017

THTR 211.01: Voice & Speech II

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DeBoer, John Kenneth, "THTR 211.01: Voice & Speech II" (2017). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 8813.

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Voice & Speech II - THTR 211 – 01
3 Credits MW 2:00–3:20 PM McGill 125
Prerequisite: THTR 210

Instructor – John Kenneth DeBoer
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Office Hours – Thursdays 9-11 and Fridays 2-3

Aim

As a continuation of the work in THTR 210: Voice and Speech I, the purpose of this course is to broaden your phonemic awareness of the sounds necessary to perform a dialect or accent in character. Students will develop a methodical approach to the imaginative processes of vocal play, standard speech, character voice, and dialects.

Objectives

- To continue to explore the vocal subtleties—psychological and physical—of creating characters for the stage
- To continue to apply scansion and IPA transcription to the preparation of specific dialects of English and non-English language accents
- To engage in independent collection, transcription, and development of primary source samples
- To introduce the process for the acquisition and performance of non-English languages.

By the end of the semester you must...

- Demonstrate full use of breath to support both voice and movement
- Exhibit consistent and clear phonation, projection, and volume
- Attune to the nuances of a variety of dialects, foreign accents and languages and be able to both hear, notate, and clearly phonate those sounds in the context of performance
- Incorporate all skills learned in the studio into the practice of acting

General Education

Students accepted into the BFA Acting program may use the sequence of THTR 210 and 211 to fulfill the Group III, Symbolic System Exception for General Education in place of the Group III, Modern and Classical Languages option. **BA Theatre students must complete the Group III, Modern and Classical Language option for graduation. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Required Materials

- Meier, Paul. [*Accents & Dialects for Stage and Screen*](#). Revised/Expanded ed. Lawrence, Kan.: Paul Meier Dialect Services. Any Edition. Print or eBook from the iTunes store (with two additional accents!)
- Computer and Internet access to upload assignments to [Moodle](#)
- Recording equipment with the ability to save files in MP3 or other compressed formats. Most phones, tablets, and laptops have such capabilities.

Attendance

Acting is participatory: there is no way to learn without doing, no adequate substitute for a missing partner, and no way to “make up” missed experience. School policies will be enforced strictly. You may present documentation for two excused absences without affecting your final grade. **Further excused absences and any unexcused (undocumented) absences will drop your final grade one-third of a letter.** If an illness should cause you to miss class to the point of failing, it is up to you to pursue a withdrawal. The course can be retaken when you have recovered.

Arriving late for class disrupts the learning process of your fellow students. Tardiness in excess of 10 minutes will be considered a complete absence, and every two instances of tardiness—of whatever duration—will equate to one absence for grading purposes. I reserve the right to declare a “no lateness” policy should the need arise. Briefly put, if the door to the class is shut and you are not inside you are absent: no exceptions. Likewise, be sure to visit the restroom before class. Leaving class during exercises or performances for a non-emergency is very disruptive.

Grading Breakdown

A	100 – 90%
B	89 – 80%
C	79 – 70 %
D	69 – 60%
F	59 and Below

Participation:	25%
Writing/Research:	25%
Performances	50%

Tentative Schedule

Our work with each dialect will run on a three to four-day schedule depending on the rate at which the class as a whole adapts to each dialect. A typical four-day schedule will look like this:

Day One	Signature Sounds and Additional Features
Day Two	Dialect Research and Coordination Exercises
Day Three	Monologue and Transcription Workshops
Day Four	Final Dialect Performances will be submitted to Moodle as video recordings.

Day four of a topic will coincide with day one of the following topic. We may move faster or slower depending on the needs of the group.

Monologues and Performances

Part of this process will involve research of native speakers prior to rehearsing your performances. You will use this research as a primary source to develop a specific character voice. Be diligent that you have thoroughly researched the background of your chosen speaker and be prepared to defend their suitability with evidence.

You will prepare several monologues throughout the semester. Each should be no longer than thirty to forty-five seconds. I expect to see a high degree of specific acting choices for each performance. I should not have to coach your acting more than your dialect. Each monologue is short, so come to class with bold choices already made. Most of all have fun. Costumes, props (even an acting partner, just don't pick a scene), and whatever else you can think of are highly encouraged. Be CREATIVE.

Grades for your performances will be based on the following rubric:

- A** **Superb work.** The student has transcended craft past the point of intellectual preparation and is truly living in the moment.
- B** **Good work.** The student has the acting skills and vocal ability necessary for advanced work, but is not yet truly comfortable
- C** **Fair work.** The student is somewhat prepared, but it is evident that more effort is needed to master the sounds and rhythms.
- D** **Poor work.** The student is not or has prepared fully for the work and it is a painful experience for the actor, scene partners, and the audience.
- F** **Failure.** The student is not or has not prepared at all to work in the dialect.

Hopefully you will develop the skills necessary to begin playing “in the moment.” However, participation is often not enough. You are expected to show some growth in artistry by the semester's conclusion and achieve the outcomes laid out in the syllabus. Students who do not receive the grade they desire on a performance may resubmit the performance as many times as necessary in order to achieve an acceptable assessment.

Writing and Research

As with the work in Voice and Speech I, you must upload all work to Moodle. Rough transcriptions will be due on the third day of our work on a particular dialect, before your workshop performance. Performances will be workshopped in class and final performances will be submitted to Moodle. **Students who do not submit a rough transcription will not be permitted to perform.** You are also expected to submit an annotated bibliography of the primary source research you conducted to prepare for the dialect. All research must be accompanied by the appropriate annotation and citation.

Advanced Training

From the Handbook, Page 24: “all acting and skills courses during the third and fourth years of BFA training are considered “advanced.” This level of training is student-driven and collaborative. The successful completion of advanced courses requires that students synthesize and utilize the fundamental skills acquired during prior training outside of class time. Independent

preparation and rehearsal is expected so that advanced concepts can be pursued in the studio. Students who fail to demonstrate proper preparation for advanced work or monopolize studio time addressing fundamental issues of skill will be graded accordingly and may be asked to withdraw from the course. Instructors will address the skills necessary for completing advanced work in the studio at the beginning of each advanced course.”

Electronic Resources

In this class we will embrace technology. UM Email is the required method of communication for the course. Please check your email and Moodle frequently.

If you have course materials stored on your phone, tablet, laptop or equivalent device, set it to “Airplane Mode” so that the functionality is limited to stored data retrieval. Silence and stow other unneeded electronic devices. I will have my phone on vibrate in case an emergency message is sent by the university. If accessing the web becomes necessary, inform me that you are doing so for the benefit of the entire class.

If your device beeps or rings accidentally during class, please silence it as **quickly as humanly possible**. Don’t be embarrassed, just turn it off and all will be forgiven. That said, anyone caught messaging or frivolously surfing the web will be dismissed immediately, resulting in a complete absence for the day. **I’M NOT KIDDING.**

Movement Clothes

Please wear clothes to class that facilitate movement. It will be come immediately apparent to you that jewelry (small studs are acceptable except in the tongue), jeans, hooded sweatshirts, hats, tight-fitting and restrictive clothing, and hair that covers the face make full participation in class and proper evaluation by the instructor difficult. Please remove or change out of restrictive items before work commences.

Personal Comfort

The study of acting often requires the instructor or peers to touch each other or be in close proximity. We all have bad days when we do not want such contact. Feel free to bow out of a particular exercise if you are having a “Wounded Warrior” day. However, frequent sitting out is a sign that you might not be ready to advance in your training.

Sacred Space

In order to foster an appropriate environment for our work, we will treat the studio as a sacred space. Please remove your shoes upon crossing the threshold into the classroom and store your belongings neatly. If you arrive early, use this time for reflection, stretching, sweeping the floor, and organizing any furniture scattered about. Be mindful of any rehearsal furniture designated for a School production that may be in the space and treat it with respect. When class has ended, restore the room. Return furniture to its designated area and retrieve all belongings that you brought with you to class. There is no overnight storage allowed and the safety of your belongings is not guaranteed.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit available in this course.

Procedure/Policy

You are expected to abide by the following School regulations. There is no eating, drinking, or gum chewing during the class. Please let me know if in writing if you have a medical exception to this policy. Water in a capped container is acceptable. Absolutely no weapons, real or fake, are allowed in the classroom.

There is inherent risk involved in many Theatre classes, as they are very physical in nature. Please proceed through class and rehearsals with caution. Always be mindful of your personal safety and the safety of others. Students participating in classes, rehearsals, and performances do so at their own risk.

Due to safety considerations, at **no** point during a student's time spent in class or serving on a production (in any capacity) should non-enrolled persons be guests of that student **without my consent**. Presence of such unauthorized persons in a class, shop, or any backstage/off-stage area will negatively affect a student's grade.

Student Success and Conduct

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation.

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php.

All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance Student Handbook. The Handbook is available online at <http://www.umt.edu/umarts/theatredance/About/handbook.php>.