

AS.225 (THEATRE ARTS & STUDIES)

Courses

AS.225.100. Theatre Histories. 3 Credits.

Investigations into some of the many histories in the development of the drama, from Greek origins to today's global theatre. An introduction to interpretive concepts, as well as to practical elements of playmaking. This course is a good way to explore and appreciate the art of theatre, and is required for the minor.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.101. Acting Foundations. 3 Credits.

An exploration of foundational exercises and techniques in the art of acting. Practice in voice, movement, listening, and improvisation. Students will read plays and develop interpretive and storytelling skills, building toward scene work. This class is for both new and experienced actors, and offers preparation for advanced acting and performance classes.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.212. Voice and Speech for the Actor. 3 Credits.

It has been said that 90% of what an actor does onstage is dependent on being effortlessly heard and understood by their audiences. This course is designed to establish the tools for the actor to begin to create this foundation. Using a combination of both the benchmark texts by Edith Skinner and Kristin Linklater, along with in-class exercises and monologues, we will begin the process of exploring both vocal power through breathing and breath control, and the fundamental tools of clarity in the speaking of a dramatic text onstage.

Prerequisite(s): AS.225.101

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.215. Performing Musical Theatre. 3 Credits.

Effective performance in musical theatre demands a committed analysis of the musical and dramatic values of the song and the libretto from which it springs, in order to develop a fresh, organic interpretation. This course will provide you with the training to both analyze and interpret musical theatre scenes and songs and to make the most of them in performance. Instructor Permission Only.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.220. Script and Stage. 3 Credits.

An exploration of the complex relationship between the text of a play and its full realization as a production. We will go to see several plays in the Baltimore and DC area. Based on these, we will develop case studies, first examining the play as text and its historical and theoretical contexts, and then experiencing it as performance. Writing Intensive. This course can fulfill the Theatre Minor requirement for an Introductory Theatre Course.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.225.240. Living Playwrights: Contemporary Plays by Contemporary Writers. 3 Credits.

Learn about contemporary theater through contemporary plays; learn about contemporary plays through contemporary theater. We will read amazing, current plays about life today by some of today's most vibrant playwrights. For each play class will start with a table-read, followed by a discussion that simulates how actors and directors work together. The goal is to approximate the first week of a rehearsal process. In this way the class teaches a theater artist's approach to reading, analyzing and understanding dramatic text.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.225.250. Elements of Theatrical Design. 3 Credits.

Students will survey theatrical design through various projects. We will develop moments based on sound, costume, space, and light, focusing on how these elements help to tell a story. Students will develop artistic statements and arguments that justify their creative choices, while practicing constructive criticism in an environment that encourages exploration and play.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.300. Contemporary Theatre & Film. 3 Credits.

An introduction to the performing arts, including an overview of theatre history, acting styles and the interaction of art and society. A personal view from inside.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.305. A History of Black Performance and Drama. 3 Credits.

A survey of the history of the Black Performer and Performance. In exploring the art of storytelling from ancient African civilizations, students will critically engage and discuss the origins, aesthetics, characteristics, and practices of Black performers, and their often-unacknowledged contributions and influence upon mainstream performance throughout the history of the world.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.308. Shakespeare in Performance. 3 Credits.

Students will work with a selection of Shakespeare's plays — TWELFTH NIGHT, RICHARD III, and CYMBELINE— in exploring specific ways in which the power of the lines can be translated dynamically and immediately into vocal and physical performance. This course can be repeated for credit, because it covers different topics. (Some background in the acting sequence is encouraged).

Prerequisite(s): AS.225.101

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.310. Stagecraft. 3 Credits.

A hands-on approach to the technical and theoretical elements of production. Meets in the Merrick Barn Scene Shop. Permission Required.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.311. Scene Study. 3 Credits.

Topics will vary by term. Please see the specific term and section for current topics.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.314. Theatre: Tech Direction. 3 Credits.

An introduction to Technical Direction including pre-production and production with an overview of materials, tools, rigging and safety, together with design and its implementation.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.316. Modern Jewish Plays. 3 Credits.

This course explores the rich and diverse landscape of modern Jewish theater, examining how playwrights have used the stage to navigate questions of identity, history, faith, and cultural memory. From Yiddish theater traditions to contemporary works on Broadway and beyond, students will analyze plays that grapple with themes of exile, assimilation, trauma, resistance, and renewal. The course involves close readings of key texts, performance analysis, and historical context. Students will engage with the plays through discussion, creative projects, and critical writing, considering how theater serves as a space for storytelling, cultural preservation, and social commentary.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.318. 21st Century Female Playwrights. 3 Credits.

This is a writing intensive class exploring the current wealth of women playwrights, including Pulitzer Prize winners: Wendy Wasserstein, Paula Vogel, Lynn Nottage, and Jackie Sibblies Drury (2019 Prize for FAIRVIEW). We will discuss Script Analysis and read (and see) plays by numerous writers including Claire Barron, Kia Corthron, Theresa Rebeck, Sarah Ruhl, Danai Gurira, Caleen Sinnette Jennings, and Hansol Jung. This class will include a mid-term and a Final Paper.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.225.320. Performance. 3 Credits.

Performance class will present Cindy Cooper's RUNNING ON GLASS, which features the stories of a diverse group of women in sports history including Wilma Rudolf, an African-American Olympic runner who overcame childhood polio, Babe Didrikson, one of best all-around athletes of any gender, and Peanut Johnson, a professional pitcher in the all-male Negro Leagues. The play has 8 female characters; all genders are encouraged to audition. Students interested in stage management or technical theatre are encouraged to enroll. Rehearses during regularly scheduled class times, with one or two May presentations. Participation in the class can coincide with participation in other spring productions. Auditions in early November.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.321. The Lab - The Actor/Director/Playwright Lab. 3 Credits.

Student actors, directors, and playwrights will explore their respective crafts with emphasis on process and individual artistic growth. Participants in the class will also collaborate on the creation of new material for the stage. Recommended Course Background: one course in Acting, Directing, or Playwriting.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.323. Design for the Stage. 3 Credits.

The fundamentals of stage design, with an emphasis on process, including script analysis, research, conceptualization, and implementation, from the first reading of the play to opening night, along with an overview of theatre architecture from the Greeks to the current day and into our imagined future.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.324. Adaptation for the Stage. 3 Credits.

For aspiring playwrights, dramaturgs, and literary translators, this course is a workshop opportunity in learning to adapt both dramatic and non-dramatic works into fresh versions for the stage. Students with ability in foreign languages and literatures are encouraged to explore translation of drama as well as adaptation of foreign language fiction in English. Fiction, classical dramas, folk and fairy tales, independent interviews, or versions of plays from foreign languages are covered.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.225.325. Shakespeare: Page, Stage, Screen. 3 Credits.

An introduction to Shakespeare, in which every play we read we will also see performed. Close textual work and a focus on historical context will be accompanied by visits to local theatres, recordings of live performances, and Shakespeare films.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.327. The Art of the Dramaturg. 3 Credits.

This upper-level seminar is designed for students with some background in theatre or in dramatic literature, with aspirations to do further work in the art form. Students will gain an understanding of the theory and practice of working with dramatic texts in preparation for a theatre production. This will involve reading and discussing influential theorists who explore dramatic structures and styles and theatre practices. Additionally, there will be a practical component. Students will select and work on a couple of scripts, once classic and once contemporary, and create a "model book" for whichever becomes the student's primary project, including the script, notes, research, and visual samples for a hypothetical production: or possibly a real one.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.328. The Existential Drama: Philosophy and Theatre of the Absurd. 3 Credits.

Existentialism, a powerful movement in modern drama and theatre, has had a profound influence on contemporary political thought, ethics, and psychology, and has transformed our very notion of how to stage a play. Selected readings and lectures on the philosophy of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Camus, and Sartre -- and discussion of works for the stage by Sartre, Ionesco, Genet, Beckett, Albee, Pinter, and the late plays of Caryl Churchill. Opportunities for projects on central European Absurdism in works by Dürrenmatt, Havel, Witkiewicz, and Mrozek. Students may also choose to examine post-colonialism in the work of Frantz Fanon and second-wave feminism in essays by Simone de Beauvoir, Jean-Paul Sartre's long-time collaborator.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.225.330. Playwriting Strategies. 3 Credits.

A workshop in playwriting, designed for both experienced playwrights and those first exploring the art. Students will investigate the creative process, from the initial imaginative impetus, to drafts and revisions, to presentation of the work. The course will explore fundamental playwriting techniques, such as writing effective dialogue, attending to story, and delineating character.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.225.335. Comedy Tonight. 3 Credits.

Laughter is what brings audiences into the theatre -- and sends them home again having heard whatever else they found when they got there, too. From a lot of Greeks in masks a couple of millennia ago, through Moliere and Shakespearean clowns, to Keaton and Chaplin and Ball and Burnett and right on up to a solid majority of all entertainment staged and filmed today, the folks in the seats come in, for all kinds of reasons, ready for a laugh. Getting up on a stage and going "out there" -- learning how to play fast and sharp with verbal, physical, and satirical comedy -- is the key to telling almost any story in a way that "goes over", "gets across", and brings 'em back for more. Members of this performance class will explore, every week, up on our feet, how to find the funny, and get it from the page to the stage.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.340. Moment Work. 3 Credits.

We will create a short but dense piece of theatre for invited performance using Moment Work, the method of devising used by Tectonic Theater Project. By removing text as the focus of creating theatre, we will utilize the theatrical elements to produce unique theatrical forms while cultivating a sense of play and active engagement. Class will feature a guest appearance by a Tectonic Theater Project Member. Actors, designers, directors and playwrights are welcome, as well as those who are curious with little to no theatre experience.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.345. History of Modern Theatre & Drama. 3 Credits.

An investigation of the major playwrights, historical movements, and theatre practices of the 20th and 21st centuries. Watch high modernism upend everything -- and then watch it all get upended again and again. How does it land today? We will go to the theatre in Baltimore and DC to answer that question.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.225.346. Creative Improvisation: For Theatre and for Life. 3 Credits.

An exploration of the imagination and the senses using basic techniques of improvisation: exercises, conflict resolution, ensemble building, and theatre games. No previous acting experience is required.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.350. Acting for Doctors. 3 Credits.

In this cutting-edge course, an acting class designed for pre-med students who are interested in a career in either clinical work or research, we will explore ways in which collaboration, curiosity, and connection can enhance your understanding and ability to be an effective medical professional. Empathy, perspective-taking, analysis of dramatic literature with medical themes, and devising a piece around medical ethics will be the focus of the activities. No acting experience is required, just a willingness to explore your creativity in an inclusive environment.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.370. Creativity in Arts Management. 3 Credits.

Creativity in Arts Management is designed for those involved or passionate about the arts, offering a comprehensive exploration of arts management and the transferable skills that apply across various career paths. This practitioner-focused course delves into a wide array of arts disciplines, including theater, orchestra, visual arts, literary arts, and more. By examining different artistic genres, the professionals within these fields, and the strategies and systems of arts management, students will gain not only a deeper understanding of these specific areas but also the ability to apply these insights beyond the arts.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.225.501. Independent Study. 1 - 3 Credits.

Permission only.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

AS.225.502. Independent Study. 1 - 3 Credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

AS.225.555. Theatre Practicum. 1 - 3 Credits.

Academic credit for in-depth contributions to a JHU Theatre production. Actors, designers, members of the creative team in a Mainstage or Playshop production may choose to register for Practicum credit. Student will develop an independent syllabus in collaboration with Practicum instructor. Students may register for 1, 2, or 3 credits.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)