

# ORI 2000 - Oral Interpretation of Literature

## Spring 2025

Instructor: Alan Toney Email: [alantoney@ufl.edu](mailto:alantoney@ufl.edu)

Class: -

Room: -

Period: 8 MWF (3:00pm-3:50pm) Office: Yon Hall

Office Hours: Friday (10:30am -12:30pm) or by appointment

### Course Description:

Discover the power of your speaking voice, a vital element of your personal and professional identity. Your vocal demeanor is a key tool for influencing others. While public speaking and communication courses are common, few focus on the technical aspects of voice that enable free, authentic, and powerful self-expression. Skills learned throughout the semester are applied to poetry, speeches, monologues, including selections from the western canon.

### Course Objectives:

- To develop communication & performance skills through oral presentation of literary works
- To provide you with a greater appreciation of quality literature & performance
- To develop awareness of yourself in various aspects, including physically, vocally, mentally, and emotionally
- To develop your critical thinking and analytical skills in identifying what works and doesn't work in performance

### The Fundamentals of Performance include the ability to:

- Stand calmly and confidently
- Speak clearly and effectively enough to be understood
- Maintain eye contact with audience
- Communicate thoughts and ideas with intention and purpose
- Utilize movement when natural and necessary

We will work towards building these fundamentals with a wide variety of tools, designed to develop your expressive potential in the reading of literature before a virtual audience.

### General Education Credit

This course accomplishes [General Education](#) Humanities objectives and select student learning outcomes (SLOs) of the subject area listed above. SLOs are the abilities, skills, and knowledge that students will develop by the conclusion of a given course or program of learning.

### Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

By the conclusion of this course, students will be expected to be able to:

1. Identify, describe, and explain the underlying theory, and methodology used by professionals to develop presence in our physical and vocal choices within human communication. (*Addresses **Content SLOs for Gen Ed Communications***)
2. Analyze and logically evaluating multiple perspectives on the development of professional presence in American culture by formulating and presenting clear and organized responses to theatrical presentations. (*Addresses **Critical Thinking SLOs for Gen Ed Communications***)
3. Formulate and present course material in oral formats relevant to the humanities disciplines employed in the course. (*Addresses **Communication SLOs for Gen Ed Communications***)

Students will accomplish the above SLOs via thorough and thoughtful engagement and participation in this course, which includes all components described in this syllabus.

### **Critique Essay's**

These assignments will help you accomplish **Critical Thinking SLO 2** as listed above.

Students are required to attend specified School of Theatre & Dance productions. Each student must complete and submit a two-page, double-spaced (12-pt font and 1-inch margin) critique for each production via email or Canvas (per the instructor's request.) Students will write about the professional presence and acting choices made by two of the actors in the show, what was effective, what was not, how they employed different techniques, vocal, physical, etc. Please note a critique is different from a plot summary, report, or synopsis:

[https://uswvarious1.blob.core.windows.net/uswvarious-produploads/documents/How\\_to\\_Write\\_a\\_Critique.pdf](https://uswvarious1.blob.core.windows.net/uswvarious-produploads/documents/How_to_Write_a_Critique.pdf)

These paper assignments focus on exploring professional presence through the lens of acting skills. The paper should begin with an introduction to...The conclusion will summarize key points and offer personal insights. The papers should be 2-3 pages, double-spaced, with APA or MLA citations, and due the first class after the show closes.

Proof of attendance is also required. The paper **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** without proof, which may include a ticket stub, screenshot of an electronic ticket, or a selfie taken before/after the show in the theatre. Critiques are due the first class after the show closes.

The Spring 2025 UF shows are:

*Macbeth*: February 7<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Nadine Maguire Black Box Theatre

*The Importance of Being Earnest*: March 7<sup>th</sup> –14<sup>th</sup> Constans Theatre

Ticket vouchers will be provided for the shows, but the student is responsible for paying handling fees. If the voucher is lost or stolen, it **CANNOT** be replaced. Tickets will be available through the O'Connell Center Box Office/University Box Office. Please arrive to the show at least 10 minutes early. **DO NOT BE LATE** – it is highly disrespectful to the actors and the audience. There are no other shows that can be substituted for seeing the required UF productions. Lastly, turn phones off during the show! **NEVER** take a call or text during a show **EVER**.

### **Journal Entries**

These entries will help you accomplish **Content SLO 1** as listed above.

Included should be specific vocabulary, key phrases, concepts, exercise descriptions, personal notes and personal observations that occurred during the duration of learning, rehearsing, and performing their piece

For complete and optimal journal entries, please include Class Activities (WHAT), Lessons of the Day (WHY), and Observations (HOW). Class Activities should be lists of exercises, discussions, viewings, activities, or lectures. Lessons of the Day should state the concepts learned in class in a complete sentence, not just a technique. Observations serve as an opportunity of reflection on how effective one's process and performance were. It should also describe how you synthesized the lesson or activities outside of class and into one's performance quality. including personal reflections or quotes.

Journals will be reviewed by the instructor 1-2 within the semester to make sure they are being upheld to class standards. Notification of when journals will be collected will be given well in advance. Journal entries will serve as a part of your Participation grade for this course. Make these journals unique to you and suitable for you benefit. They will be a great resource for the Comparative Essay.

### **Comparative Essay**

This assignment will help you accomplish **Content** SLO 1 as listed above.

This Final writing assignment aims to define professional presence by examining and analyzing your own experiences and drawing conclusions from the readings about how vocal and physical habits shape who you are. This is a self-assessment, research-based paper. Begin with an introduction defining professional presence and its importance, and introduce the key texts and videos: *Second Circle: How to Use Positive Energy in Every Situation* by Patsy Rodenburg, *Stalking the Calm Buzz: Polyvagal Theory* by Joanna Cazdon, *The Power of Vulnerability* by Brené Brown, and *Your Body Shapes Who You Are* by Amy Cuddy)

Next, reflect on your own experiences (Use your Journals) with the non-verbal body language explorations, relaxation/breathing/voice exercises, presentations, and/or identify specific vocal and physical habits you have changed.

Finally, draw conclusions about how these habits shape professional presence, integrating insights from the readings with your personal and classroom experiences and discoveries. Discuss the implications for your future professional development. Conclude by summarizing key points and reflecting on the significance of understanding and cultivating professional presence.

The paper should be 5-7 pages, double-spaced, with APA or MLA citations, and include a title page and bibliography and a brief report on how you used AI tools in each stage of your writing process.

### **Oral Presentations: Prose, Poetry, Drama, Pecha Kucha**

These assignments will help you accomplish **Communication** SLO 3 as listed above.

Students will present 4 speaking assignments developing their physical, vocal, and presences techniques. Using prose pieces, poetry, and monologues/scenes, you will learn to stand calmly and confidently, speak loudly and clearly, maintain eye contact, communicate with intention and purpose, and utilize purposeful movement. These presentations will unlock your full vocal potential by learning techniques that eliminate unnecessary tension and transform stage fright into creative energy.

The areas of assessment include appropriate tempo, confident and poised body language, prosodic elements (inflection and intonation), vocal quality (including friendly or empathic tones), self-awareness and groundedness, audibility and volume, audience engagement, and both verbal and non-verbal

communication such as phrases, voice tones, facial expressions, gestures, and body language. Additionally, vowel/diphthong and consonant intelligibility will be evaluated.

### **Course Content:**

- Students will participate in exercises during class that are designed to develop the major skills required for oral performances. Students will be expected to prepare outside of class for these exercises and their performances.
- Students will perform a series of speeches for the instructor and the class. It is imperative that you work on these assignments outside of class to prepare them for presentation.
- Students will also prepare written scoring & analyses to strengthen their performances and allow them an opportunity to articulate what it is they are trying to demonstrate in their pieces. There will also be in-class workshops/rehearsals for each of the assignments prior to the performance. A final showing will occur during the last week of classes.
- Students will complete journal entries over the course of the semester. These entries will serve as opportunities for reflection and the demonstration of course vocabulary/concepts. These logs will also assist with the final comparative essay required towards the end of the course.
- In addition, students will be required to complete short writing assignments and complete quizzes on shows viewed and material covered.

### **Required Course Materials:**

This Syllabus, ORI 2000 Spring 2025, Course Outline (Provided on Canvas)

- PowerPoints, supplementary readings, and course viewings will be provided for you by the instructor on all aspects of performance techniques which you will be required to read and discuss in class.
- Poems, narratives, monologues, stories, etc. collected by the student. Copies must be sent to the professor for approval. Library West has an extensive collection of literature including one-act and full length plays which can be searched for by title and/or playwright.
- A physical journal/notebook to use for **Journal Entries**. This journal could also be used for notes, performance feedback, and/or other class related reasons
- Appropriate apparel for class (Casual/comfortable clothes that allow for movement)
- Access to internet, email and Canvas for class meetings, information, updates, grades, performance material.

### **Recommended Course Materials:**

- TEXTBOOK- Oral Interpretation by Timothy Gura and Charlotte Lee (11th Edition) (Available on Amazon and will be posted online in Canvas)
- 3-Ring Binder containing syllabus, course outline, presentation pieces, notes (notebook or loose-leaf paper) and any other material applicable to class.
- Appropriate writing utensils: pencils, pens, highlighters, etc.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Attendance will be taken daily. Due to the nature of this course, attendance is MANDATORY.

You are allowed **two (2)** unexcused absences. If more than two absences occur, **3 points** will be deducted from your participation grade for each additional absence. There are **NO MAKE-UP**

ASSIGNMENTS FOR UNEXCUSED ABSENCES including those that occur on workshop and/performance days. Absences in excess of **(5) absences** will result in a failing grade.

\* **Excused absences** include: religious holidays (student must notify the instructor at least one week prior to the absence); medical emergencies (accompanied by a doctor's note on letterhead); and mandatory school requirements (which must be approved by the instructor and a letter from the appropriate authority must be provided at least one week ahead of time). Failure to provide the appropriate documentation at least one week before an excused absence will result in an unexcused absence. Students with an excused absence must make up workshops or performances and turn in any missed assignments during the following class period.

\***Tardy Policy:** You are allowed to be tardy to **two (2)** class meetings without penalty. Upon your 3rd tardy, **2** points will be deducted from your participation grade... Please note that it is your responsibility to notify the instructor after the class that you arrived late. If you come in late and the instructor is unaware, you will receive an absence for that day. If you arrive late, **DO NOT** come into the room while another student is performing. Wait until the student's performance has concluded – please be respectful!

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

- Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first class meeting.
- In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for
- court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved.
- Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence.
- Students cannot participate in classes unless they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors.
- If a student does not participate in at least one of the first two class meetings of a course or laboratory in which they are registered, and he or she has not contacted the department to indicate his or her intent, the student can be dropped from the course. Students must not assume that they will be dropped, however. The department will notify students if they have been dropped from a course or laboratory.
- The university recognizes the right of the individual instructor to make attendance mandatory. After due warning, instructors can prohibit further attendance and subsequently assign a failing grade for excessive absences.

**No late assignments will be accepted** without an excused absence. In the event of an excused absence, late assignments will be accepted no later than one class period after the date in which it was due. Assignments can be emailed if necessary. There are no make-up days for your workshop or final performances without an excused absence. In the event of an excused absence, workshop and final performances may be made up no later than the following class period. If you miss, you forfeit your points. You may not switch days with someone from another workshop (scene performances are negotiable). Please look at the calendar thoroughly.

**Dress Code:**

Dress appropriately and comfortably, wearing clothes and shoes that allow you to move with ease. On workshop days, dressing in sweats, t-shirts, comfortably fitting jeans, etc. are fine. On presentation days, the appropriate professional attire and/or costume is required.

**Performance Pieces:**

The method of how to select each piece will be discussed in class. The pieces you work on and present **MUST BE APPROVED BY THE INSTRUCTOR.**

**Workshop Days:**

On Workshop Days, you must have the following:

- a. TWO copies of your scored script. One for you – one for the instructor. The copy for yourself may be marked and scored for personal preparation.
- b. Character Analysis, Research, or any other information ready to discuss/workshop
- c. Preparation to rehearse
- d. Dressed in rehearsal clothes appropriate to the scene and the character.
- e. Suggestion of attire or appropriate dress

**Performance Days:**

You will be assigned a day on which to perform your piece for the class. When you arrive, you must have the following prepared items:

- a. Suggested attire or appropriate dress
- b. Copy of your final scored script/piece with any changes made.
- c. Display of thorough preparation and rehearsal. Workshop discussion and other suggestions from the instructor and class should be fully worked into the piece. Although memorization is not required, it is strongly encouraged that the student be highly familiar and comfortable with the material.

**Class Conduct:**

When you are not working in front of the class, you must give your full attention to your fellow classmate who is working. There will be ZERO TOLERANCE of cell phone use (including texting), sleeping, eating, drinking, doing work for other classes, newspaper reading, or disruptive talking in this class. If you engage in any of these behaviors, you will be ejected by the instructor and counted as absent for the day.

## Grading Scale

Assignments	Points	% of Grade
Quizzes (3)	30	10
Participation & Attendance	60	20
Performance Critiques (3)	30	15
Prose Final Performance	20	5
Prose Scoring	3	1
Character Analysis	15	5
Poetry Final Performance	20	5
Poetry Scoring	3	1
Character Analysis	15	5
Drama Final Performance	20	5
Drama Scoring	3	1
Character Analysis	15	5
Pecha Kucha Final	20	10
Pecha Kucha Responses	6	2
Comparative Essay	30	10
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Week	Topic
1	Syllabus, Calendar, Ice Breakers, how to write a critique
2	Basic principles & Analyzing Text (Chapters 1 & 2)
3	Vocal and physical work (Chapters 3 & 4)
4	<b>Introduction to Prose</b> (Chapters 5 & 6)
5	Prose workshop
6	Prose performance
7	<b>Introduction to Poetry</b> (Chapters 9 & 10)
8	Poetry workshop
9	Poetry performance

10	<b>Introduction to Dramatic reading/Readers Theatre</b> (Chapters 7 & 8)
11	Drama/Readers Theatre workshop
12	Drama/Readers Theatre performance
13	<b>Introduction to business related/education-related presentation</b> (Pecha Kucha)
14	Business/Education workshop/Pecha Kucha Finals Presentations



**EXTRA CREDIT MAY BE GRANTED IF THE PROFESSOR DEEMS THE STUDENT HAS REASONS BEYOND HIS/HER CONTROL WHICH AFFECT THEIR FINAL GRADE.**

**Special Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**Online Course Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

**Campus Resources:**

Health and

Wellness U

Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

*Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)*

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

*University Police Department*, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

*E-learning technical support*, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to

[Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu). <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

*Career Resource Center*, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

<http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>

*Library Support*, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

**Academic Honesty:**

As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement:

“I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in

all their academic work. I agree to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.”

The instructors of this course fully support the intent of the above statement and will not tolerate academic dishonesty. We, the members of the University of Florida Community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student guidelines for ethical behavior can be found at:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>

The Student Conduct Code is available at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/>

### **Information on Zoom Class**

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

**I have carefully read over the Spring 2025, ORI 2000 Syllabus. I AGREE to all the rules and regulations of the class as outlined in this syllabus. Please return this form to your instructor via email. This form serves as a contract between student and instructor.**

**PRINT NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**UF ID#** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Note:**

This syllabus is subject to change by the instructor, and *it is your responsibility* to make note of any changes discussed in class. Please feel free to approach me with any concerns you may have about this class.