

Stagecraft: Mental Training for Peak Performance
Course Number: 57457/ 57757
Fall 2017 Syllabus

Time & Location Tuesdays 12:00 – 1:20 Kresge

First day of class: August 29, 2017

Last day of class: December 5

Faculty Monique Mead
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Office Hours: MM 118, Wednesdays 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. or by appointment.

Course Description

This course is designed to help you perform at your peak by offering techniques, discussions, and performance experiences. Guest faculty will coach you, share their own experiences in overcoming anxiety, and offer expertise in audition preparation, effective practicing, and a balanced lifestyle. Coursework outside of the classroom is minimal.

Course objectives

By the end of the semester, you should ...

- Be familiar with multiple calming and focusing techniques and have experienced a daily mindfulness practice;
- Implement ideas drawn from interactions with guest artists on topics related to audition strategies, practice techniques, anxiety-relief, mental training and peak performance.
- Feel more relaxed on stage as a result of multiple performance opportunities.
- Have a greater awareness of performance psychology as a result of book discussions and journaling.
- Feel more comfortable with stage speaking, introducing guest artists, and post-concert chats.
- Be able to give performance feedback in a manner that is beneficial to the performer.
- Have a journal of personal experiences and notes as well as a set of class notes that will benefit you as a performer and educator in years to come.
- Have new friends to support you at the School of Music.

Final Grade

Your final grade will appear as a letter grade according to the following scale:

90-100%	A	60-69%	D
80-89%	B	under 60%	R (failing grade)
70-79%	C		

Assessment

There are no written exams, final projects, or papers due for this class.

Item	Percent	Due
Attendance & Participation	30%	Weekly
Reading and Book Discussions	15%	Weekly
Performances (5)	25%	As listed in course schedule
Written Feedback	5%	weekly from October 31-November 21
Journaling	15%	Weekly
Guest Speaker Introductions & Class Notes	10%	As listed in course schedule

Assessment Details

ATTENDANCE 15%

What we do in class cannot easily be replicated or “caught up” outside of class, so your attendance is essential. We maintain a high level of professionalism, so plan to arrive a few minutes early so that we can begin at 12 p.m.

Absences: If you need to miss a class for any reason, send an e-mail informing me of your absence by the beginning of class and ensure that a classmate or my assistant, Bobby Fisco, is aware and able to fill you in.

PARTICIPATION 15%

This course is experience-based, so active participation is essential.

You will be expected to...

- Participate in mind-focusing techniques
- Give speakers your full attention. (No mobile devices, food, or doing homework.)
- Ask questions and participate in class discussions.

READING AND BOOK DISCUSSIONS 15%

You will choose from a list of performance-related books, based on your particular needs and interests, forming groups of 2-4 students. Each week, one member of the group will act as “discussion leader” and...

1. Give a brief summary of the reading.
- 2a. Offer an example to illustrate one of the points OR
- 2b. Pose a question for discussion.
3. Assign the chapters and appoint a discussion leader for the following week.

PERFORMANCES 20%

Frequent public performance is the only way to improve your comfort on stage. This class offers you at least five opportunities to do so in a supportive environment. You will be your own judge of your performance quality. I will grade you on...

1. Showing up prepared to play/speak
2. Getting your music to the pianist one week ahead of time
3. Appropriate stage attire for the Osher performances
4. Your interaction with the audience before/during/after the performance

P1 (beginnings), P2 (long tones), P3 (etudes), P4 (5-minute piece)

These performances are brief and without piano. You will play for the class and may be coached by a guest faculty. 10 points total. (1, 2, 3, and 4 points, respectively)

P5 Osher

This is a 15-minute performance/presentation with piano for an audience of adults from CMU Osher Lifelong Learning. You will verbally present your piece, citing excerpts, and then perform it. You must submit your music with tempo markings and notes to Bobby Fisco one week ahead or arrange for your own pianist. 10 points.

WRITTEN FEEDBACK 5%

You will be offering written feedback on the performances of your classmates. You will be graded on your ability to formulate your thoughts into clear, helpful directives.

JOURNALING 20%

In order to keep track of your progress, you will keep a written journal for the semester. This will include notes on your mindfulness practice as well as the intentions you set each week. I encourage you to use an app such as Insight Timer to track and support your mindfulness practice. Journals should be brought to class every week for periodic review. Grades are based on frequency, NOT content, so write what serves you best.

INTRODUCE GUEST/TAKE NOTES 10%

Every guest will be introduced by one of the students at the beginning of class and thanked at the end. (You will be instructed how to do this at the beginning of the course.)

For the benefit of all class members, someone will be assigned to take notes in class and post them on the Google Drive.

POLICIES

Cell Phones, Laptops, and Related Technology: As a matter of professional courtesy, no form of technology is permitted during presentations by guest presenters, except by the designated note taker. Turn your cell phone off, leave your laptop in your bag, and resist the urge to text. If you need to check the time, look at your watch discreetly. Bring your journal and a pen to take notes.

GETTING HELP

You can find me 20 minutes before and after class for any questions or concerns. Office hours are by appointment, so please reach out via email to mmead@andrew.cmu.edu.

YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Please take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, avoiding drugs and alcohol, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. There are many helpful resources available on campus and an important part of the college experience is learning how to ask for help. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful.

RECOMMENDED READING

Performance Anxiety

- Timothy Gallwey: *"The Inner Game of Tennis"*
- Timothy Gallwey: *"Inner Tennis. Playing the Game."*
- Barry Green with Timothy Gallwey: *"The Inner Game of Music"*
- William Westney: *"The Perfect Wrong Note"*

Getting out of a rut, Finding motivation to practice, Daily strategies for excellence

- Elizabeth Gilbert: "Big Magic. Creative Living Beyond Fear."
- Steven Pressfield: "The War of Art," "Turning Pro," and "Do The Work."
- Bob Bowman: "The Golden Rules. 10 Steps to World-Class excellence in Your Life and Work." (Coach for Michael Phelps)
- Lance LaDuke: "Music Practice Coach"
- Seth Godin's Daily Blog: www.sethgodin.typepad.com

Performance Psychology

- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi: "Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience"
- Daniel Coyle: *"The Talent Code: Greatness isn't Born. It's Grown. Here's How."*
- The Bulletproof Musician with Noa Kageyama. www.bulletproofmusician.com

Purposeful Communication

- Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzler. *"Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking when Stakes are High."*
- Simon Sinek. *"Start With Why"*

Stagecraft Course Schedule 2017

Subject to variation

Date	Guest	Backstage Technique	Topic
August 29		<u>Release</u> mindful breathing	Course Intro, Mindfulness Apps, Book groups, Journal
September 5		<u>Calm</u> Walking meditation & aromatherapy	Guest Speaker Intro, Sign-Ups P1: First notes (audition rep)
September 12	Craig Knox, Principal Tuba PSO	<u>Balance</u> alternate nostril breathing	Audition Savvy P2: Long tones
September 19	Jennie Dorris, freelance musician/writer	<u>Energize/warm</u> advanced breathing technique	Finding balance in the musician's lifestyle. P3: Etude or Scale
September 26		<u>Anxiety Relief</u> Parasympathetic vibration--voice	Getting the most out of your private lessons.
October 3	Jeffrey Turner, bass	<u>Confidence</u> Power Poses	P4: 5-minute piece
October 10		<u>Focus</u> Vigorous breathing	P4: 5-minute piece
October 17 Mid-Semester	Lorna McGhee, flute	<u>Relax</u> Energization exercise	P4: 5-minute piece
October 24	Jennie Dorris, Freelance musician/writer	<u>Daily practice</u> mindful intention	Performance through the lens of public service
October 31	Alberto Almarza, flute	By choice	OSHER P5: Present & Perform
November 7		By choice	OSHER P5: Present & Perform
November 14	Maria Spacagna, voice	By choice	OSHER P5: Present & Perform
November 21		By choice	OSHER Bits-n-Bites P5: Present & Perform
November 28		<u>Energize</u> Body tapping	Conflict Resolution: Tools for talking when the stakes are high
December 5		<u>Freedom</u> Technology as your servant	