

UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON -- NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

Electronically submit this completed form with attachments in one file to the Chair of the College Curriculum Committee.

COLLEGE (check one):	Arts and Sciences <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Business <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>
Proposal Submitted By: Helen M. Housley		Date Prepared: August 30, 2017	
Course Title:	Stage Dialects		
Department/discipline and course number*:	THEA 318		
Prerequisites:	NONE		

**This course number must be approved by the Office of the Registrar before the proposal is submitted.*

Number of credits: 3	Will this course meet for at least 700 contact minutes for each credit hour proposed? <i>If no, provide a credit hour justification.</i>	YES X	NO
Will this be a <i>new, repeatable</i> "special topics" course? (Do you want students to be able to take this new course more than once if the topic changes?)		NO X	YES

Date of first offering of this new course: FALL SEMESTER, year	Spring Semester, 2020
Proposed frequency of offering of the course:	Every other year
List the faculty who will likely teach the course:	Helen M. Housley
Are ANY new resources required?	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Document in attached impact statement</i>

This new course will be (check all that apply):			
Required in the major	Required in the minor	General Elective	X
Elective in the major <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elective in the minor	General Education**	

***AFTER the new course is approved, a separate proposal must be sent to the General Education Committee.*

Catalog Description (suggested length – less than 50 words):	
A survey of the basic techniques for learning and applying selected stage dialects.	

COURSE HISTORY:	Was this course taught previously as a topics or experimental course?	YES X	NO
Course Number and Title of Previous Course		Semester Offered	Enrollment
THEA 270D: Stage Dialects		Spring 2014	20
THEA 270D: Stage Dialects		Spring 2016	20
X	CHECK HERE if the proposed course is to be equated with the earlier topics or experimental offerings. If equated, students who took the earlier "topics" course will only be able to take the new course as a repeat (C- grade or lower).		
NOTE: If the proposed course has not been previously offered as a topics or experimental course, explain in the attached rationale statement why the course should be adopted even though it has not been tried out.			

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:

1. **Rationale Statement** – Why is this course needed? What purposes will it serve?
2. **Credit Hour Justification** (if required) – explain how this course will comply with the UMW Credit Hours Policy (D.5.3)
3. **Impact Statement** – Provide details about the Library, space, staffing, budget, and technology impacts created by adding this new course. Include supporting statements from the Library, IT Department, etc.
Any change that impacts another Department must have a written statement (such as a copy of an email) from the Chair(s) agreeing to the change.
4. **Sample Syllabus**

Department Chair Approval: _____ Gregg Stull _____

Date: 8/30/17 _____

CCC Chair Approval: Don M. Baker _____

Date: 09/07/2017 _____

UCC Chair Approval: Janice Harting _____

Date: 9/20/17 _____

Rationale

Stage Dialects is a course that fundamentally enhances the beginning actor's training in his/her craft. Numerous plays from the global canon require characters who speak with a variety of dialects and accents, characters who would lose credibility in the context of the play if the dialect was not present. As a result, actors must have a working knowledge of many dialects and the ability to assume an accent as needed.

Basing an accent on simple ear training is not enough for the beginning actor. *Stage Dialects* provides the student actor with a basic proficiency in phoneme production, allowing the student to substitute sounds as required by any particular dialect. As a result, the student leaves the course not only with a good facility for the dialects covered in the class, but also with the ability to master other dialects as needed in his/her acting career.

The theatre and film industry has many examples of native-born American English speakers who have expanded their employment opportunities by being able to speak differing dialects of English. Our students, through this course, will also have this opportunity. In recent years, UMW Theatre has produced at least one dialect-driven production each year, sometimes more. Students who have taken *Stage Dialects* have had stronger chances to be cast and, thus, acquire greater proficiency in the use of that dialect. As with any skill, the more one can practice, especially under rehearsal and performance conditions, the stronger the skill becomes.

An additional benefit of the course is the focus on intelligibility. It is not enough for a student to acquire a competence in any given dialect, they must also be understood by the audience. As a result, good vocal technique is an added benefit for the student, especially when speaking in some of the more challenging English/foreign dialects.

Stage Dialects is a logical and necessary course to be added to the Department of Theatre and Dance's performance curriculum. It has far reaching benefits not only for the student actor and our own productions, but also the student's potential for employment once he/she leaves UMW.

Credit Hour Justification

Stage Dialects is a 3-credit hour course and complies with the UMW Credit Hour Policy.

Impact Statement

There is no anticipated impact on the Library, space, staffing, budget, or IT department due to *Stage Dialects* being added to the theatre curriculum.

Sample Syllabus STAGE DIALECTS THEA 270D

Instructor: Dr. Helen M. Housley
DuPont 330
1983 (office)

Office:
Phone: (540) 654-
E-mail:

hours: M/W: 11am-12pm; T/Th: 10:45-11:45am

About the Course: This course provides a survey of the basic techniques for learning and applying stage dialects. You will receive instruction in selected dialects that are frequently used by the American actor. You will explore a systematic approach to dialect acquisition, which will serve you in further independent dialect/accent study. The following dialects are studied: Standard British (RP), Irish, Cockney, NYC, American Southern, and German. Using Lessac kinesensic training, students will learn research methods so that they may do their own dialect work in the future.

By nature the acquisition of stage dialects requires substantial studio work. Please consider yourself to be part of a learning community where members support one another with suggestions and constructive criticism. Learning, observing, and sharing are central to this course. *Attitudes of awareness and openness are essential to your development and your contribution to the development of the other members of this class.*

Active participation in discussion and presentation of projects within the class is not only welcome; it is an essential requirement. Positive, helpful and constructive attitudes are also required! Presentations must be well prepared and shared with the understanding that questions and discussion will follow. The ongoing critique of performance is crucial to everyone's learning process and will be impossible without *an atmosphere of mutual respect, mutual responsibility, and openness*. You should be aware that the vast majority of class time is composed of exercises in which you are REQUIRED to participate actively. *If you have no plans or interest in sincerely exploring the artistic process of acquiring dialects for the stage and accomplishing significant growth as a performer, this is not the class for you!*

Many of you already have an ability to speak certain dialects. If I coach you in a direction that you don't agree with during this course, please realize that performance is a game of messing up until you get it —right. There is always some sort of motivation for my requests. ALWAYS TRY WHAT I ASK OF YOU! You probably don't hear your vocal quality and/or phoneme adjustments in the same ways that others do. I serve as your outside ears in this course. So if you will just trust me, we can work through our artistic challenges together.

Course Objectives: By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a practical proficiency in presenting selected dialects of English- and foreign-speaking countries through active, embodied interpretations.
2. Determine the appropriate sound substitutions in selected dialects of English- and foreign-speaking countries.
3. Apply a systematic approach to stage dialect acquisition using Lessac Consonant and Vowel substitutions, which will, in turn, allow the student to embark on successful attainment of additional dialects/accents in the future.

Textbook:

Stage Dialect Studies: A Continuation of the Lessac Approach to Actor Voice and Speech Training
– Barry Kur

Bring your textbook to EVERY class.

Method:

Dialect acquisition is a product of a two-fold process: (1) Using the ear as a means of imitating the sounds, verbal patterns, and pace of a dialect, and (2) substituting Standard American phonemes as needed in dialects to produce the inflective and articulated patterns of the dialect/accnt.

Dialects can be loosely defined as regional variations of pronunciation where English is spoken as the primary language. (Accents can be loosely defined as variations in the pronunciation of English by non-native speakers.) The primary method of dialect study in this class will be sound substitution. By pinpointing the most important identifiers in a dialect and finding the correlating sounds in standard American speech, we will be able to search a given text for those sounds and make the appropriate substitutions. Simplicity is the key. You will need a basic knowledge of Lessac Vocal NRG to understand fully the sound substitutions discussed in your text, lectures, and explorations. However, it is important for you to remember that we are not linguists—we are artists. We want to find a way of authentically and consistently evoking a dialect that is understandable for our American audiences. Thus, there will be times when the phonemes of a dialect must be slightly altered for the sound of an understandable stage dialect.

Assignments, Activities, and Assessments:

PARTICIPATION AND GROWTH: *Note that attendance alone does not constitute participation.* As mentioned above, participation is vital in this class. This is an interactive environment and students must not only attend, but must also actively contribute to each class. Furthermore, the completion of any miscellaneous homework assignments will also be considered part of your participation grade. There may be quite a few of these short assignments; they are all important to your success in this course. So please make sure you understand what is expected of you. Positive, respectful and helpful attitudes are mandatory. *I will make every effort to treat you with the respect that I believe you deserve. You are also expected to treat your peers and myself with that same respectful attitude.* If I believe that a student is disrespectful, I will ask that person to leave the classroom. In this event, the student will receive a zero for any activities conducted that day in class and receive a zero for his/her participation grade for the day (no matter how long you have been in class). Disrespect, rudeness, or negative attitudes will *substantially* lower the student's participation grade. The following are other reasons you would be asked to leave the class and receive a zero for the day's activities: sleeping in class, causing disruption or distraction during class (this includes cell phones going off in class—turn them off when you come into the classroom and don't turn them on again until you leave). Finally, it should go without saying that refusal to participate in any activity or part of an activity during class (including offering evidence of assigned reading completion through active and informed contribution to discussion/activities) will result in a substantial and appropriate loss of participation points for the student. Should it appear that members of the class are not completing outside readings, pop quizzes will be instituted in the course, which will count toward your Participation and Growth grade as well.

Previous dialect/acting experience will not guarantee you a good grade in this course. Significant growth and a genuine attempt within the class will. This is a class that regards self-competition as a goal. You and your peers will arrive at various levels of competence, and you will leave at different levels. However, growth from the beginning to the end of the semester can be evaluated. I challenge you to push yourself to grow and succeed. This class is concerned with developing *your* skills to the best of *your* ability. The community in the class is here to help all of us grow and expand our abilities. Participation and Growth grades will be calculated daily and tabulated at the end of the semester. Please make sure you understand what is expected of you.

LATE ARRIVALS: To further foster a high level of commitment—and because the work we will be doing this semester will involve intensive focus—the class will adopt the following late entry policy. Students must be on time for every class. Entering a class late or leaving early is disruptive to the flow

of the class. Please be on time out of consideration to your learning process and the processes of others. If you are late for class, your participation grade will reflect this. The class will begin promptly at 12:30 p.m.! **If you arrive after 9:30a.m., please do not enter the classroom (you will be marked absent regardless).** If you arrive within the five-minute grace period, please do so discretely in order to avoid disrupting the class activities/discussions. Also, you are expected to stay until you are dismissed from class. An early departure will significantly reduce your Participation grade.

MONOLOGUE PERFORMANCES: Each student will prepare, develop, and perform six monologues utilizing seven of the major dialects covered in this course Standard British (RP), Irish, Cockney, New York-Brooklyn, American Southern, and German. Each monologue will be approximately two minutes in length and will be accompanied by a marked script displaying the Lessac vowel and consonant substitutions employed by the student in preparation for rehearsal. It is important to remember that dialects for the stage are worthless unless they are supporting communication and action. The audience is only interested in what is happening or what is about to happen. Conversely, the audience will become bored and stop listening if they cannot understand what you are saying. All of our work on dialects will be for the purpose of clarifying and strengthening your work onstage. Thus, all of your performance work in this course will be graded on your ability to incorporate appropriate dialects into active interpretations. In other words, your acting and communication skills count! Work for an objective in your performances, using the dialect appropriately. Embrace the dialect as an avenue of communication that helps you achieve your objectives onstage rather than seeing the dialect as a burden.

FINAL PROJECT: Each student will select, with the professor's permission, one of the six monologues he/she has already presented. However, the Final Project will require memorization of the monologue and performance of it using the appropriate dialect as though you were the character speaking these lines.

THEATRE ATTENDANCE: You are required to attend two live theatre performances here at UMW: *Frozen*, February 11-21, and *Tartuffe*, April 7-17. You are responsible for purchasing your own tickets to these performances, \$5/10 respectively.

In addition, a theatre trip to a professional performance in Washington, DC, is planned. Information about this trip will be provided during the first week of classes. The approximate cost of this trip will be \$55. These tickets must be paid for at the Klein Theatre Box Office by Friday, January 22. The cost of this ticket includes transportation and is non-refundable.

FILM ASSESSMENT: You will be asked to view one film of your choice that substantially incorporates one of the foreign accents or English dialects studied in the course. You will assess the use of that dialect/accent according to criteria provided on Canvas 'Pages.'

PRODUCTION/FILM RESPONSES: You will write three 2- to 3-page assessments of the dialects used in the three productions and one film you will view for this class. Guidelines for this response will be provided on Canvas 'Pages.'

IMPORTANT – IMPORTANT – IMPORTANT – IMPORTANT – IMPORTANT!

Late Assignment Policy:

All assigned work is due at the beginning of the class period. **No late assignments will be accepted.** If you are ill or an emergency arises, you may e-mail your assignment to me or reschedule a presentation prior to class in order for it to be 'on time.' However, I will not read or grade the assignment. You are

responsible for getting a hard copy of the assignment to me **no later** than the next class period. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY.** Part of being a college student is accepting the responsibility to do work in a timely manner.

The Honor Code is in effect at all times for this class--please adhere to it when preparing both written assignments and performed selections.

Grading:

Participation	20%
Dialect Monologues (6)	30%
Dialect Script Marking (6)	15%
Production/Film Responses (4)	20%
Final Project	15%

Letter grades will reflect the Department of Theatre & Dance grading scale:

A = 94-100	A- = 90-93	
B+ = 87-89	B = 84-86	B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79	C = 74-76	C- = 70-73
D+ = 67-69	D = 60-66	
F = 0-59		

My scoring criteria are as follows:

A/A - Work is exceptional and exceeds expectations: *The student is highly motivated, rehearses and prepares extensively outside of class, actively pursues improvement, demonstrates significant growth in skills and knowledge, contributes positively and regularly to the class, and is punctual and always present.*

B+/B/B - Work is commendable and meets expectations: *The student is always prepared, shows notable outside preparation, pursues improvement, demonstrates growth in skills and knowledge, contributes positively to the class, and is punctual and always present.*

C+/C/C - Work is acceptable and meets expectations: *The student is generally prepared, but evinces the least amount of acceptable outside preparation. The student is interested in improvement and some growth in skills and knowledge occurs during the semester, contributes to class, and is usually punctual and present.*

D+/D - Work is marginal and minimally meets expectations: *The student is often not prepared with little outside preparation, shows little interest in improvement, is rarely self-motivated, demonstrates*

little growth or skill development, contributes seldom to the class, and is often late or absent from class.

F - Work fails to meet expectations: *The student is rarely prepared, lacks adequate outside preparation, shows no interest in improvement, exhibits virtually no growth in skills and knowledge, contributes little or negatively to class, and is usually late and/or absent from class.*

Cell Phone/Computer Policy

The use of cell phones and computers during class is prohibited. Please turn off all cells and electronic devices prior to class time. On occasion, you will be asked to bring a laptop to class for in-class research.

Disability Services: The Office of Disability Services has been designated by the University as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through that office and require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in the strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise.

Course Schedule

DATE	LECTURE/ACTIVITY	ASSIGNMENT
1/12	Introduction to Course	Read Ch. 1 and 2
1/14	Introduction to Lessac Vocal NRGs	
1/18	Martin Luther King Day—No Clas	
1/20	More Lessac Vocal NRGs	Read Ch. 3
1/26	Standard British (RP)	Review sentences and word list
1/28	Standard British (RP)	Prepare 2-minute monologue; script marking due 2/2
2/2	British Monologues	Read Ch. 12
2/4	American South	Review sentences and word list
2/9	American South	Prepare 2-minute monologue; script marking due 2/11
2/11	American South Monologues	Read Ch. 5; See <i>Frozen</i>
2/16	Cockney	Review sentences and word list
2/18	Cockney	<i>Frozen</i> response due 2/23
2/23	Discuss <i>Frozen</i>	Prepare 2-minute monologue; script marking due 3/10
2/25	Individual Cockney Dialect Work – No Class	
	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	
3/8	Cockney	
3/10	Cockney Monologues	Read Ch. 6
3/15	New York City	Review sentences and word list
3/17	New York City	Prepare 2-minute monologue;

		script marking due 3/24
3/22	New York City	
3/24	NYC Monologues	Read Ch. 4
3/29	Irish	Review sentences and word list
3/31	Irish	Prepare 2-minute monologue; script marking due 4/5
4/5	Irish Monologues	Read Ch. 7
4/7	German	Review sentences and word list; attend <i>Tartuffe</i>
4/12	German	Prepare 2-minute monologue; script marking due 4/14
4/14	German Monologues	<i>Tartuffe</i> response due 4/19
4/19	Discuss <i>Tartuffe</i>	<i>Tartuffe</i> response due; Film response due 4/21
4/21	Film Discussion	
4/26	FINAL PRESENTATION—FINAL EXAM PERIOD, 8:30-11AM	