



MUS 5677 Health & Wellness for the Performing Artist

Spring Semester 2018: TR 4:30-5:45 M 0150

Prerequisites: MUT 2127, C.I. or instructor permission

PROFESSOR: Christopher Niess ***OFFICE:*** T234 ***OFFICE PHONE:*** 407 823-0874

OFFICE HOURS: * ***by appointment (24 hours notice) – go to Doodle account***
(<https://doodle.com/poll/54t9u27zcwdcks6p>)

Course Description

This course will focus on performing artists' health and related topics. Topics include: basic musculoskeletal anatomy and physiology, breathing coordination, Body Mapping, The Alexander Technique, care of the voice, injury cause and prevention, and effective practice and performance.

Course Objectives

- Develop an understanding of the body's anatomy and physiology and skills as it relates to effective movement patterns in live performance
- Acquire knowledge and understanding of physical and psychological health issues for performing artists, and develop practices to minimize their occurrence
- Develop strategies for injury prevention in one's own performance, including hearing protection, care of the voice and body maintenance
- Develop and articulate strategies and activities for maximizing performance potential and minimizing performance anxiety

Required Text & Materials

CREATIVITY AND THE PERFORMING ARTIST. Paula Thomson and S. Victoria Jaque. Academic Press/Elsevier. You will also have numerous reading assignments that will be available on webcourses@UCF.

Course Requirements

Class Protocols

- You must have access to the internet and an active **Knightsmail**. **Knightsmail** is the sole email address server used to communicate with students in this class.
- Movement activities will be an important part of this class. On most days we will do such activities as walking, getting in and out of a chair, floor activities, etc. You may wish to bring a yoga or pilates mat or beach towel for the floor work. You should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes that do not restrict your movement.
- The movement activities are an important part of getting the maximum benefit from the class. The movement activities are designed and organized for your benefit, most people enjoy them greatly and feel better for having done them. Therefore if you have a physical condition that prevents some physical activity please consult with the instructor to plan alternative physical activity that will not injure or impede you..
- Reading and listening assignments are posted well in advance. Please do these assignments before that topic is discussed in class so that you may participate knowledgeably.
- Turn off all cell phones and other electronic communication devices during class. You may use your laptop in class only for taking class notes. Using a laptop in class for other purposes (surfing internet,

Facebook, poker, texting, email, etc.) is unauthorized and will result in the loss of laptop privileges in class.

Webcourses@UCF

This syllabus and numerous resources and supplementary materials are housed under the MUS 5674/MUS 4674 number at Webcourses@UCF, accessible to you through your **Online Course Tools** tab on your **MyUCF** page. You will be able to review recent assignments and your current course grade, and I will use Webcourses@UCF to post announcements and supplemental materials. Discussion group assignments will be completed through Webcourses@UCF and your program notes assignments will be submitted this way as well. Webcourses is best accessed by Firefox on Mac or Internet Explorer on PC.

Communication

The most reliable way to contact me is through email (Christopher.Niess@ucf.edu). You can generally expect a brief response within twenty-four hours during the week, a little longer on weekends. Complex or extended topics are best discussed either in a personal meeting or on the telephone. Please review the following email policies:

- Include "Subject" headings: use something that is descriptive and refer to a particular assignment or topic. I do not respond to email that has a blank or misleading subject heading.
- I read all email personally, so in your salutation address me by name. You may address me as Christopher, or Professor Niess. I do not respond to email that fails to address me in the salutation or addresses me as "Yo Teach," "Hey Prof," or whatever other hip greeting that students use among themselves.
- Sign your e-mail messages with your first and last name. I do not respond to "anonymous" e-mail.

Evaluation and Grading

Your course grade will be based on the following assignments:

- **Participation.** This course is experiential and activity-based. Regular attendance, punctuality, and participation in all class activities is a significant part of the grade. You will potentially receive 250 points (approximately 10 points per class period) – calculated using a percentage of your attendance by the Webcourses application. Tardiness and early departure from class may result in a 50% reduction for that day. Participation will be assessed based upon "Two-minute-Topicals. As well as participation in any exercise/discussions for that day."
- **Journal.** You will keep a performer's journal during the semester – chronicling your ideas and development regarding breath support and alignment, body mapping, and other principles related to health in the performance process. You will be given prompts through webcourses@ucf on a variety of topics to help guide your journaling, but it will be your responsibility to maintain an adequate 'conversation' centered on your developing work habits. Journals will be reviewed early in the semester for 100 points.
- **Body Mapping.** You will complete a "Body Map", according to Alexander Theory, which is worth up to 100 points.
- **Reflection/Process Presentation.** You will present a reflection/process presentation based on your journal observations and related to your progress in rehearsal/performance practice.
- **Research Presentation.** You will present research to the class on a movement principle or theory that has as its goal either more healthy practice or increased performance.
- **Final Examination.**

Consult webcourses@ucf for schedule and details on the course assignments.

Assignments Distribution Weight

Graded Assignments	Description	Potential Points Toward Course Grade
Attendance/Participation	Attendance and participation in class discussions and activities	250
Journal Review	Written responses on assigned topics shared on the Webcourses site	100
Body Mapping		100
Reflection/Process Presentation	Reflection project on developing physical practice presented orally to the class (based on observations chronicled in the journal, and demonstrating healthy alignment and ease of presentation)	200
Research Presentation	Research Project on a movement principle or theory, with a goal of more healthy practice or increased performance.	150
Written Examination	Based on terminology used throughout the class.	200

Grade Point Distribution

%	Letter Grade	Points	%	Letter Grade	Points	%	Letter Grade	Points
			94%	A	940	90%	A-	900-939
88%	B+	880-899	84%	B	840-879	80%	B-	800-839
78%	C+	780-799	74%	C	740-779	70%	C-	700-739
68%	D+	680-699	64%	D	640-679	60%	D-	600-639
>60%	F	>600						

Attendance Policy

90% of success in life is just showing up—Woody Allen

On-time attendance at all class meetings is expected. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that students who attend class regularly do better in the course than students who frequently miss class. Class will begin promptly at 4:30 and end promptly at 5:45. Part of your grade will be calculated from class participation.

Please note the following policies related to attendance:

1. I reserve the right to take attendance on any class day and use that as part of your class participation grade. If you are not in class at the beginning of class when attendance is taken then you will be counted as absent that day.
2. If you know that you will need to be absent on a given day or must leave class early please notify me in advance.
3. **Important:** I must receive Program Verification forms for off-campus activities (concerts, school visitations, field trips, etc.) a minimum of two (2) weeks before the activity that will cause you to miss class. It is your responsibility to submit these forms to me and to take the initiative in rescheduling or making up any class work missed due to these activities.

Federal Financial Aid Compliance Information

All faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than January 13. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Academic Activity Assignment: Attend class before January 15, 2016.

Missed Assignments/Make-Ups/Extra Credit

Make-up Exams Policy

- Make-up examinations will be administered strictly according to university policy governing authorized events and activities. All other make-up examinations are at the sole discretion of the instructor and will be given only rarely and only in extraordinary circumstances.
- Consult the course calendar carefully to ensure that you do not have irreconcilable conflicts with course deadlines. For the purpose of this course please note that weddings, vacations, family reunions, etc., do not constitute “extraordinary circumstances.” If you discover that these or similar events will prevent you from completing all the course requirements on time then you should drop the course.

Extra Credit Policy

The extra credit policy is that no extra credit is given. Be diligent with your readings, listening, and other activities. Spend at least some time and effort with the course several times a week. Don't fall behind; set a schedule and stick to it. If you do these things then you should do well in the course and will have no need for extra credit.

Grades of “Incomplete”

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where a student has successfully completed most of the course requirements and unexpected emergencies (illness, accident, family emergency) prevent a student from completing final course requirements by the end of the semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the deadline indicated on the Incomplete Form or the “I” will automatically be recorded as an “F” on your transcript.

End of Term Pleas and Appeals

All students will be awarded the grade you earn. Please do not embarrass me or yourself with end-of-term appeals for a higher grade based upon non-course criteria. Asking for a higher grade because of factors extraneous to your performance in the course is unethical, unfair to other students, and will not receive a sympathetic audience from the instructor.

Syllabus Changes

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus and schedule as appropriate. Students will be given as much notice as possible about any changes and the reason for them.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and Cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the Office of Student Conduct for further action. See the [UCF Golden Rule](#) for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

SDS/ADA Statement

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. No accommodations will be provided until the student has met with the professor to request accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.



MUS 4674

SPRING 2018 SCHEDULE – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

	DATE	TOPIC	READING	ASSIGNMENT/ACTIVITIES
1	T JAN 9	INTRO, REVIEW SYLLABUS, MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS, SCHEDULE, WEBCOURSES		
	R JAN 11	DOWNWARD PULL, FUNCTION OF THE SPINE		CONSTRUCTIVE REST
2	T JAN 16	PRIMARY CONTROL	SIX POINTS OF BALANCE	DISCUSSION OF SIX POINTS (VOCAL PERSPECTIVE)
	R JAN 18	INTRO TO BODY MAPPING		BODY MAPPING 1 DUE
3	T JAN 23	WHOLE BODY BALANCE		JOURNAL REVIEW
	R JAN 25	FUNCTION OF THE BREATH IN ACTIVE ALIGNMENT	Complete Guide to the Alexander Technique (Links to an external site.) (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.	
4	T JAN 30	EXERCISES IN BREATH AND ALIGNMENT		
	R FEB 1	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE and REHEARSAL		
5	T FEB 6	OTHER DISCIPLINES–	date may change	(YOGA GUEST PRESENTATION)
	R FEB 8	EXERCISES IN BREATH AND ALIGNMENT		
6	T FEB 13	OTHER DISCIPLINES	– date may change	(VOCAL HEALTH GUEST PRESENTATION)
	R FEB 15	EXERCISES IN BREATH AND ALIGNMENT	Chesky: "Sound Exposure in University Wind Bands Kris Chesky Hearing Podcast (Links to an external site.)	MID TERM ASSESSMENT
7	T FEB 20	Individual/Small Group Alexander Sessions		
	R FEB 22	BODY MAPPING revisited		BODY MAPPING 2 DUE
8	T FEB 27	EXERCISES IN BREATH AND ALIGNMENT	"Alexander Technique Applications and Personal Accounts" (Links to an external site.)	
	R MAR 1	EXERCISES IN BREATH AND ALIGNMENT		
9	T MAR 6	Careers in the Performing Arts	CHAPTER 18	
	R MAR 8	TEST - ALEXANDER PRINCIPLES		
10	T MAR 13	R MAR 15	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
			Musicians and Beta Blockers (Links to an external site.)	What Every Musician Ought to Know about Stage Fright (Links to an external site.)
11	T MAR 20	Performance Anxiety	Three Reasons why Beta Blockers May be Holding You Back (Links to an external site.)	What to do about Performance Anxiety (Links to an external site.)
	R MAR 22	Individual/Small Group Alexander Sessions		
12	T MAR 27	Injuries and Rehabilitations	CHAPTER 19	
	R MAR 29	Individual/Small Group Alexander Sessions		
13	T APR 3	Health Concerns and Burnout	CHAPTER 20	
	R APR 5	Individual/Small Group Alexander Sessions		
14	T APR 10			Process Presentations
	R APR 12			Process Presentations

