Independent Study: Fight Choreography Fundamentals
THR 4191.003

Fall 2023

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Office Hours: T 10:00AM – 11:00AM, WF 12:00PM – 2:00PM, or by appointment

Class Time and Place: M 11:00 – 12:50 Movement Studio

Objectives: In this class, we will explore the foundations of thinking about fight choreography focusing on weapons disciples central to contemporary stage choreography: knife, unarmed, and short stick. From these we will build an understanding of safe use of these tools, and consider how to begin choreographing with them. Also, we will touch on a range of other weapons disciplines for the purpose of exposure to a range of tools, and to see how similar principles apply across different weapons

Required Text: None

Grading components:
1) Engagement 10%
2) Fight Scene Analyses 30%
3) Performance Projects 60%

Final Grading: (0-59) F (59.5-69) D (69.5-79) C (79.5-89) B (89.5-100) A

Engagement: The expectation in this class is that you are present as an engaged artist for each class session. You must be present and ready to work at the beginning of each class session. You are expected to be mentally, emotionally, and physically ready for each class. You will be asked to engage as a student, artist, and collaborator every day. You should meet or exceed the expectations of the course, the School of Theatre, and the university. Your engagement will be noted and evaluated on a weekly basis. You will also be asked to evaluate your own engagement on a weekly basis when you submit your Class Reflection. Below is a general rubric for engagement.

A – Student shows a heightened level of attention, commitment, and effort.
B – Student shows an acceptable level of attention, commitment, and effort.
C – Student is present and not disruptive or obviously disengaged,
D – Student is present and mildly disruptive or disengaged.
F – Student is present and significantly disruptive or disengaged.
0 – Student is not present or asked to leave class.

Fight Scene Analysis: (15% each) Twice in the semester you will perform an analysis of a piece of filmed fight choreography. You will write a short analysis addressing the following areas: Weapons, Space, Style, Character, Story, Rhythm, & Miscellaneous Elements (costume, set,
lighting, ability of actors, etc…) In addition to the written analysis, you will lead a short discussion about the scene in class.

Performance Projects:
1. **Unarmed and/or Knife Stage Combat Scene (25%)**:
   a. **Choreography (15%)** – You will choreograph a short scene using Unarmed and/or Knife techniques. You will choose a scene, analyze the scene, produce written choreography, and rehearse your cast.
   b. **Performance (10%)** – You will also perform in a scene choreographed by another student. You will be assessed on your skill with the weapon discipline and your ability to act the fight.

2. **Final Stage Combat Scene (35%)**:
   a. **Choreography (20%)** – You will choreograph a scene using a weapon or weapons of your choice. You will choose a scene, analyze the scene, produce written choreography, and rehearse your cast.
   b. **Performance (15%)** – You will also perform in a scene choreographed by another student. You will be assessed on your skill with the weapon discipline and your ability to act the fight.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

- This course applies to the following School of Theatre Program Learning Outcomes at an introductory level.
- **PLO #2**: The student will demonstrate an understanding of theatre history and a variety of theatrical styles
- **PLO #3**: The student will demonstrate collaborative and/or leadership competencies appropriate to participate or take a leadership role in an effective theatrical production.
- **PLO #4**: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the component areas of theatrical creation, process, production, performance, and study, and their interrelationships.
- **PLO #5**: The student will be able to form and articulate a critical analysis and evaluation of a work of theatre.
- **PLO #6**: The student will demonstrate intermediate and advanced competence in one or more theatre specializations.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of THR 127 / Stage Movement, the student will
- Have an awareness of how the body moves (supports PLO #4).
- Have an understanding of the process of relaxation of the body and connection to the body as they relate to readiness for performance. (supports PLOs #4 and #6).
- Have an understanding of various schools of movement and movement theory (supports PLOs #2 and #5).
- Demonstrate an understanding of movement techniques and skills independently and in groups (supports PLOs #2, #3 and #6).
• Communicate understanding of the kinesthetic experiences of the course as they relate to the theories covered and the experiential work with the body (supports PLOs #4 and #5).

POLICIES and EXPECTATIONS

Course Specific General Expectations:

• All Acting, Movement, and Theatre Speech classes at SFA require the wearing of black movement clothing. This is a common practice in many Theatre training programs. It is intended to create a sense of neutrality across the performers, make it easier to step in and out of character, and help the performance classroom feel like a space where art is made. Your clothing should be solid black and not include designs, images or words. Small brand logos are acceptable. Your clothes should effectively cover your body through a range of movement possibilities. Further, no hats may be worn. If you must cover your hair, skullcaps are acceptable. If you are not wearing class appropriate clothing, you will be asked to leave, and receive an absence for the day, as well as, loss of engagement points.

• This class requires significant physical interaction between students. Please come to class clean, and with nails trimmed.

• Jewelry should be removed before class. This includes necklaces, long, dangling earrings, watches, body piercings and large rings. This prevents potentially dangerous snags on your own body or other’s bodies.

• Soft soled movement or athletic type shoes shall be worn for class. On occasion, we will work with bare feet. I would encourage black shoes, but as quality movement shoes are expensive any color is acceptable.

• Bring a no-spill water bottle to class. Only water is allowed. Fill it before class; you can’t leave class to fill it. No food in class (this includes gum and candy).

• Hair should be pulled out of the face.

• Assist in keeping the space clean, organized and ready for the next class.

• As a student in a pre-professional theatre program you should approach class in the same way that you would a rehearsal. You should be on time. You should be prepared. You should leave any outside concerns at the door.

Absences/Lateness: Theatre is an intrinsically collaborative art, and the practical application side of your training occurs largely in the classroom. Therefore your absence from class impacts not only your learning, but also the learning of the other students. You should not miss class. However, I recognize that life happens. Therefore, you have two absences to use at your discretion. After that each two additional unexcused absences will cost you a letter grade. Arriving late to class twice will also count as an absence. Only religious holidays, sponsored school events, and documented medical or personal issues may qualify as excused absences upon my discretion. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain any missed notes from a dependable classmate. It is the responsibility of the student to check in with the instructor after class if s/he is late or arrives after attendance is taken. As stated by School policy: **Seven (7) absences in a T/TH class or ten (10) absences in a MWF class will result in an automatic failure of the course. As this class meets two days a week, the T/TH (7 absences) rule applies.**

Course Work: All course work must be completed and turned in as indicated by the course calendar, as discussed in class or communicated on D2L. This includes quizzes, workshops,
journals and other assignments. Students who arrive in class after quizzes have been completed may not take the quiz. Additionally, once the quizzes are passed out students are not allowed to leave the classroom until they have turned in the quiz. All work is due on the assigned date.

Students with documented disabilities must meet with the instructor in advance of accommodation to arrange accommodations for that disability.

General Expectations:

Please respect others as well as yourself; this includes other students, the instructor, guest speakers, and performers. The majority of the following guidelines for behavior reflect this principle.

1. Recording class in any form is not allowed.
2. With rare exception, I should never see your cell phone or electronic device in this studio. Cell phones should be set to silent or turned off and stowed before you enter the room. Absolutely NO use of cell phones is allowed in class unless there is an emergency, or it is approved/requested by the instructor.
3. Use of a cell phone (or other electronic device) or your friend’s brain during a quiz will result in a grade of zero on that quiz.
4. Disorderly conduct or talking inappropriately in class is not permitted.
5. Failure to follow any of these expectations will result in being dismissed from class and counted absent (unexcused).

Academic Integrity (4.1)

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.
Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.

Students with Disabilities
Please copy and paste the following statement and place it in your course syllabus.
To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Student Wellness and Well-Being
SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
The Dean of Students Office (Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby)
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic Human Services, Room 202
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
The Health and Wellness Hub “The Hub”
Location: corner of E. College and Raguet St.

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include:

- Health Services
- Counseling Services
- Student Outreach and Support
- Food Pantry
- Wellness Coaching
- Alcohol and Other Drug Education

www.sfasu.edu/thehub
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

Crisis Resources:

- Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343
- National Suicide Crisis Prevention: 9-8-8
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
- johCrisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Additional Student Resources

Academic Assistance and Resource Center (AARC)

The webpage for the AARC is located here. The AARC provides free tutoring help for students, including virtually. If you need help with your writing skills, this is the place to go!

The Career Closet

The Career Closet lends professional clothing to current students and alumni for job interviews, conferences, auditions, etc... See info here.

Counseling Services

The people at the counseling center are here to help with a wide range of issues including anxiety, depression, and grief. Their information can be found here. In the event of a crisis outside of business hours, please call the Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1-800-392-8343.

Disability Services

If you have a disability and require special accommodations, either during class or during exams, or both, disability services are here to help. Just remember: while we generally do everything in our power to accommodate requests, we cannot do so unless you go through the Office of Disability Services first.
If you feel like this service may be of use to you, visit them as early as you can, at the start of the semester. Their information can be found here.

**Food Pantry**

If you are struggling with food insecurity (or, alternatively have food to donate), please consider visiting SFA's Pantry. Information about the pantry (and other pantries) is located here.

**Health Clinic**

As a student you can gain access to medical services through the health clinic. Information can be found here.

**Veterans Resource Center**

If you are a military veteran, you may find the veterans resource center helpful. Information can be found here:

This list is a work-in-progress. If you are aware of resources that you believe should be added, please let me know!