New York City College of Technology
Humanities Department
SPRING 2017

ORAL INTERPRETATION OF LITERATURE
Course Code: Com 1340; Section: ___           Class meeting: (time/place)
3 credit hours
PREREQUISITE: CUNY proficiency in reading and writing
Pathways Category: Creative Expression

INSTRUCTOR: _______________________________       E-MAIL: _______________________________
OFFICE HOUR: (time/place)       PHONE: _______________________________

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Analyzing and interpreting literature within the distinct
dimension of oral discourse. Students identify rhetorical and lyrical structures, allusions,
narratives, and potential ambiguities in order to articulate an intention; determine and
produce corresponding delivery styles; and learn how meanings can be enhanced or
altered through delivery techniques. Materials drawn from classical and modern poetry,
prose and dramatic literature.

Required Text: Gura, Timothy and Lee L., Charlotte, ORAL INTERPRETATION,
Allyn & Bacon, 12 ed. 2010
All assigned selections may be found in this text that includes hundreds of
works from Shakespeare to authors up to 2010.

Handouts
• Peer critique forms.
• Personal critique forms.
• Rehearsal schedule templates.
• Examples of “Marked” passages.

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:
• Demonstrate progressive level of interpretation and performance of literature.
• To differentiate and recognize effective and ineffective speech patterns that
effect listener comprehension, comfort, and interest.
• Demonstrate active listening and effective communication.

Assessment—A review of student performance conducted by the professor will show if
students have met all of the competencies identified for this course. These
competencies include quizzes, tests, oral evaluations, feedback, class discussion,
performances, and a final reading, based on semester's worth of participation and class
work.
## General Education Intended Learning Outcomes and Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Creative Expression</th>
<th>Assessment Methods</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.</td>
<td>Students will read and interpret all types of literature are studied – prose, poetry, and, perhaps, drama, ranging from classic to modern.</td>
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<td>Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.</td>
<td>Students analyze in depth excerpts of literature; plan its presentation, and develop the vocal skills to interpret effectively before an audience.</td>
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<td>Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.</td>
<td>Students are assigned both self-evaluations and peer evaluations of presentations. Students are also tested with quizzes and exams.</td>
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<td>Analyze how arts from diverse cultures of the past serve as a foundation for those of the present, and describe the significance of works of art in the societies that created them.</td>
<td>Through the analysis and established techniques of oral reading of poetry, prose, drama, and speeches from world culture, past and present, students learn to express the author’s words to an audience. Through intellectual and performative engagements with literature, students better understand the concerns and communications of past societies while tracing the continuation of traditions into their current world.</td>
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<td>Demonstrate knowledge of the skills involved in the creative process.</td>
<td>Students study the techniques of performance and the different approaches to reading prose and poetry.</td>
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<td>Use appropriate technologies to conduct research and to communicate.</td>
<td>Video recordings of presentations are implemented to reinforce the developing of skills needed to become effective presenters.</td>
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**Course Goals:** Oral Interpretation of Literature is a multifaceted course, requiring concentrated discipline on the part of the student. Students are expected to analyze (written) excerpts from literature; plan a presentation, and develop the vocal skills to interpret effectively before an audience. The demands are great, but so are the rewards. Students derive personal gratification from deeper understanding and appreciation of literature. They learn to bridge the gap between the written and spoken word, thereby acquiring another dimension – the oral recreation of an author’s words.
Oral interpretation is not just reading aloud. It is an art form, requiring total synthesis of mind, body, and voice. The interpreter is an instrument; he/she recreates the words of the author, using all the skill at his/her command. Students must articulate clearly, project their voices effectively, and immerse themselves intellectually and emotionally in their material.

The skills acquired in oral interpretation will also serve those students whose varied career choices will require an ability to communicate sophisticated, text-based, and/or technical material. Students will learn to analyze all written material for intent, i.e. to persuade, to inform, or to motivate. Strong oral interpretation techniques enable speakers to help the audience listen to and retain information. Finally, students who enroll in oral interpretation will receive the tools necessary to become confident, and therefore, credible, speakers.

**Aim:** The aims of the course are to enlarge, broaden and deepen student’s appreciation of literature through analysis and performance. Students are taught vocal and articulatory skills to prepare them for the performance of intellectually and emotionally demanding selections. They are taught that the study of literature is a challenging experience in itself, and the translation of the printed word to the spoken work is doubly challenging. Through long established techniques of oral reading, students learn to express the author’s intention to an audience.

**General Method:** Varied methods will be used as the course develops. Students will analyze selections from several points of view – the author’s intent (message/point of view) and the role of the interpreter in projecting the author’s ideas. Students will also study the techniques of performance and the different approaches to reading prose and poetry. In class, discussion will offer various ways in which a single poem might be interpreted. The materials will come from the text.

**Skills and Knowledge:** There are multiple challenges to mastering the art of oral interpretation and they include: research, understanding of context, (time, place, background of author, etc.) as well as mastering the requirements of voice and body in order to honor the intention of the author.

The skills and knowledge gained by the student in an oral interpretation class are multiplied by the selection, analysis, presentation and critique by the number of students in the class. Each assignment may mean exposure to twenty-five different authors from an impressive number of genres drawn from generations of the literature of the history of man.

Finally, although it is not mentioned frequently in the syllabus, technology is providing all of us with resources and teaching tools undreamed of pre-Internet. At the push of a button, the student is able to view both student and professional Oral Interpretation performances.
On any of a myriad of poetry sites one can access poets reading their own work and the works of other poets. These very well-designed and -executed sites provide the poet's history, literary criticism of the poet by noted critics and the opportunity to compare professionals presenting different interpretations of the same selection. While these sites are not “Cliff Notes,” they will go a long way toward helping students interpret text.

**GRADING FOR ORAL INTERPRETATION**

*3 Prose Selections = 30%
1 = 5%
2 = 10% (Re-do of 1)
3 = 15%

*1 Poetry = 10%
1 = 10%

*1 Paraliterature = 10%
1 = 10%

*All performance must be accompanied by a rehearsal schedule. To be explained by instructor.

**WRITTEN WORK**

- 2 analysis papers @ 5% each = 10% 1 typed page
- 2 critique-21/2% each=5%
- 1 marked and annotated manuscript=10% (Students will be taught how to do this.)

Participation and Attendance=10%

*Rehearsal schedules and 1 poetry analysis will not be graded. However, students who fail to complete the assignments will find 10% deducted from their final grade.

**HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT POLICY ON ABSENCES/LATENESS**

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<th>Class Meets</th>
<th>Allowable Absence</th>
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<td>1 time/week</td>
<td>2 missed classes or the equivalent amount of missed class time</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 times/week</td>
<td>3 missed classes or the equivalent amount of missed class time</td>
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3 late entries to class is equivalent to one absence

A student who is not in a class for any reason is not receiving the benefit of the education being provided. Missed class time includes not just absences but also latenesses and time outside the classroom taken by students during class meeting periods.

Each professor will keep accurate, detailed records of students’ attendance, and will notify students that a WU grade (withdrew unofficially) may be assigned to anyone who exceeds the limit established for a given course or component.
Students are responsible for keeping track of their own attendance. When they exceed the maximum permitted missed class time, they should make an appointment to discuss the problem with the professor.

Students who are absent on the day of their performance will have that performance grade lowered by one full grade, unless the students presents letterhead document signed by a profession. No notes from parents will be accepted. **Students who arrive after roll call are responsible for seeing the teacher after class on that same day.**

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Students and all others who work with information ideas, texts, images, music, invention and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting and citation of sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the college recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension and expulsion.

**PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism is not tolerated and will result in an "F" for the course.

**DISABILITY/MEDICAL ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT:** City Tech is committed to supporting the educational goals of enrolled students with disabilities in the areas of enrollment, academic advisement, tutoring, assistive technologies and testing accommodations. If you have or think you may have a disability, you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments as provided under applicable federal, state and city laws. You may also request services for temporary conditions or medical issues under certain circumstances. If you have questions about your eligibility or would like to seek accommodation services or academic adjustments, please contact the Center for Student Accessibility at 300 Jay Street room L-237, 718 260 5143, or [http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/accessibility/](http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/accessibility/) N.B., Students who miss a scheduled presentation or exam due to illness or medically-related emergencies will be referred to the Center for Student Accessibility. The CSA will review any documentation requested and give the student a letter to share with the relevant instructor if accommodations need to be made.

**HUMANITIES DEPARTMENT COMMITMENT TO STUDENT DIVERSITY:** The Humanities Department complies with the college wide nondiscrimination policy and seeks to foster a safe and inclusive learning environment that celebrates diversity in its many forms and enhances our students’ ability to be informed, global citizens. Through our example, we demonstrate an appreciation of the rich diversity of world cultures and the unique forms of expression that make us human.
## SAMPLE SCHEDULE OF WORK (dates to be specified)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>week</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Part I, Basic Principles,(pp. 3-50) Not including prose and poetry selections. Selections to be taken from list provided by instructor.</th>
<th>Overview of course, course outline, discussion of definition, requirements and the difference between acting and oral interpretation. This includes the mechanics of manuscript preparation, identifying key words, effective phrasing and use of pauses. Students will learn to understand Oral Interpretation as an art form that requires respect for the intention of the author.</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3 of Part I: Voice Development for Oral Interpretation, Chapter 3 (pp.75-112) &amp; read Hints for Rehearsal, (pp.124-126). Assign first prose reading of 5 minutes. Assign and explain the required rehearsal schedule. Due next class meeting.</td>
<td>Exercises in breath control, projection, pitch, quality, rate and use of pauses. <strong>Intelligibility is all in oral interpretation.</strong> Eye contact will be discussed as it applies to this interpretation form. Class will view examples of both professionals and students demonstrating techniques of oral interpretation of prose. Oral Interpretation has unique performance requirements regarding the use of manuscript, introduction, and conclusion.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Read Chapter 4, The Use of the Body in Oral Interpretation, paying particular attention to analyzing the performance. <strong>Test</strong> next class meeting.  <strong>Perform a 5 minute prose selection accompanied by rehearsal schedule. Grade lowered by one letter if not accompanied by schedule.</strong></td>
<td>Each member of the class will <strong>perform a 5 minute prose selection accompanied by a rehearsal schedule.</strong> Instructor will critique and grade each performance with particular emphasis on <strong>effort and preparation.</strong> All critique is based on the importance of understanding the manuscript and the student’s success in presenting character and/or circumstance through character, tone, color and vocal expression.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Test</strong> and preview of Part I, The Interpretation of Prose, (pp.161-180) to be read by next class meeting. Next class, re-reading of prose read on third class meeting. <strong>The assignment to be accompanied by a typed one page analysis (graded)</strong> based on information in Part I, section 4. <strong>Continue prose readings.</strong></td>
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| 5 | **Re-do of first prose reading accompanied by a typed, one-page analysis.** See 4, (graded).  
Read Part II, “The Interpretation of Prose” and 5 “Some Aspects of Prose.” Students should be thinking of a selection from: personal essay, factual prose, journals, letters, testimony and *paraliterature*. No fairy tales.  
**Students will select a type of prose from examples in text and prepare a “marked manuscript” for next class, 3/15/17, (graded). 1 Page.**  
Students will be reminded of the importance of research, rehearsal and commitment to discern the intention of the author. |
| 6 | **Continue prose re-do.** Bring marked manuscript to class and selection from types of prose above. 1 page. Graded.  
Prepare to read on next class meeting date.  
**Review and discuss marked manuscript. 5% of grade.**  
Instructor will present videos and perform Oral Interpretation pieces from “Aspects of Prose.”  
Dr. Martin Luther King’s “I Have A Dream Speech” will be shown and a discussion will follow and the class will review the concepts of imagery, as well of the techniques of repetition, variety of pitch, projection, etc. |
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<th>7</th>
<th>MIDTERM POINT OF SEMESTER. Prose readings for grade. Students who do not seem to be committed to success in the course will be notified. Means of improvement will be suggested.</th>
<th>Each member of the class will be given 2 critiques which they will use to evaluate 2 of the readings. Each critique is 5% of the grade. Prose reading.</th>
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<td>8</td>
<td><strong>Continue Prose readings.</strong> Read 9 of Part IV, The Interpretation of Poetry, pp. 341-362.</td>
<td>Discussion of readings on 3/22/17. Introduction to the content and structure of poetry. Teacher will distribute list of selected poetry.</td>
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| 9  | Read 10 of Part IV. The Structure of Poetry. Select poetry for graded reading, next class meeting.  
Decide on your poetry selection. Prepare a one-paged typed analysis, using the criteria presented on hand-out sheet. | Instructor will perform and show video selections, (professional and student) of forms of poetry. Students will participate in ungraded sight reading. |
| 10 | Present a one-page analysis and be prepared to announce your selection. (Not graded).  
*Students who are not prepared will have 10% deducted from final grade.* | Students will read selections and receive critique. Constructive critique should be reflected when student give the graded reading on 4/26/17. |
<p>| 11 | Graded reading of 5 min. poetry selection. Text assignments and review of class lecture notes will provide preparation for the test and for performing the graded poetry reading. | If time permits, there will be verbal critique. Critique of poetry readings will also prepare students for test on 5/3/17. |</p>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Finish Readings. Test covering Part IV</td>
<td>Assignment of two character, five minute scenes. Work in class with group performance of literature. Class will work on two character scenes. Teacher will discuss Part III, section 8, “Techniques in Drama”</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td><strong>1 five-minute para-literature selection, (graded)</strong></td>
<td>Teacher will discuss and hand out monologues for extra credit graded readings.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Continue paraliterature.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td><strong>Extra credit reading</strong> The size of the class makes it imperative to save the day in the event that we fall behind in this closely timed schedule.</td>
<td>Please note that no extra credit will be given just because “something” is read. The reading must reflect preparation and the results of having one semester of instruction in Oral Interpretation. In other words, it is possible to read and not to receive extra credit.</td>
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Updated 2017 V. Lichterman