**Introduction to Performance Studies**

**Lecture**
A. Vázquez  
Tuesdays, 11:00am to 12:15pm  
4 pts – In-Person  
721 Broadway, 6th Fl., Room 612  
- PERF-UT 101.001 (13081), Majors only  
- PERF-UT 101.005 (20807), Non-majors

**Recitation**
Thursdays, 9:30am-10:45am, 721 Broadway, 6th Fl.  
- C. Yang, PERF-UT 101.002 (13143), Room 612  
- Z. Easterling, PERF-UT 101.003 (13144), Room 613

To enter the field of Performance Studies is to proceed with a willingness to forgo strict definitions of art “objects” and “events.” The field encourages engagement with everyday life, performers from a variety of media, things inside and outside cultural institutions, and an expansive sense of the stage to reflect on how performance impacts our sense of the world. Music, theater, visual art, dance, and film are not divided into separate areas of study, but are necessarily engaged all together. While the question, “what is performance?” has mystified the minds of many, this course moves beyond this question to investigate: what does performance do? And how does performance help us to ask questions about aesthetics, politics, and the social world? The question “what does performance do?” opens the line between theory and practice; a line that falsely separates the performer from the critic. Students will work together across these divides. In addition to deepening an understanding of the field of Performance Studies, students read texts that vitalize critical thinking in the humanities. The course engages theories of the field as they emerge from performances themselves, especially from the robust creative repertoires of New York City.

**Performance Theory**
M. De Berry  
PERF-UT 102.001 (13128) – Wednesdays, 10:00am to 12:45pm  
4 pts – In-Person  
721 Broadway, 6th Fl., Room 612

This course examines the diverse issues and methodological questions raised by different kinds of performance. Where “Introduction to Performance Studies” asks, “What is performance? What counts as performance, and what is its cultural significance?” this course asks, “How can we interpret and analyze performance? What is ‘theory’ in this context, and how do theory and practice inform each other?” Readings introduce students to key concepts in the field such as “ritual,” “performativity,” “liveness,” and “affect.” Material for the course (readings, videos, and other media) exemplify the interdisciplinary nature of performance studies by drawing from work in aesthetics, anthropology, architecture studies, ethnic/area studies, queer studies, religious studies, legal studies, literary studies, etc.
Performative Writing
B. Browning
PERF-UT 204.001 (20809) – Tuesdays, 3:45pm to 6:30pm
4 pts – In-Person
721 Broadway, 6th Fl., Room 613
Students in this workshop will study theories of linguistic performativity -- how words/writing perform functions in shaping the world (i.e., in law, science, fiction, etc.) -- and then explore that functionality in their own writing. How can the performative effects of writing be deployed purposefully, strategically, artistically, etc.? What do particular rhetorical/textual choices do? What is the relationship between the performativity of writing, on the one hand, and performance on the other? Students will be encouraged to experiment with their writing (both in terms of style and subject matter), and then to analyze the results of these experiments in order to hone their abilities to both observe, describe, and enact performance strategies in writing.

Performance Histories
J. Tang
PERF-UT 205.001 (20810) – Wednesdays, 2:00pm-4:45pm
4 pts – In-Person
721 Broadway, 6th Fl., Room 612
Countering the “presentist” critique of performance studies as a field (i.e., that its emphasis on “liveness” limits it to analysis of contemporary practices), this course will examine both the long history of performance (and the specific research methodologies that are required for that examination), and the history of performance studies as a mode of social inquiry. How have performance, and the writing about performance, been deployed historically, and to what ends? How can contemporary researchers access the archives that house answers to these questions, and how do archives in themselves constitute an historiographic “performance”? Students will consider the impact of performance in the contexts of (post-)colonial history, aesthetic genealogies, and other historiographic projects.

Queer Politics and Performance
G. Kan
PERF-UT 302.001 (13502) – Thursdays, 12:30pm - 3:15pm
4 pts – In-Person
721 Broadway, 6th Fl., Room 612
This course takes sexuality as its lens through which to consider performance, and vice versa. In this course we will ask what “queer” means to us, as well as what we mean by “performance,” in order to approach the question: What is queer performance? Or, what can queer performance do? Students will read both new and canonical work in the field, as well as examine performance examples in order to analyze the ways gender, sexuality, and queerness are produced within them. We will further consider how such performances may enact a kind of politics (in the many broad and multiple senses of the term). Towards the end of the semester, we will each gather performances, practices, and unruly objects, into an encyclopedic class project that can combine the ideas, questions, and gestures from throughout the course. As we do this, we will think about the queer performativity of our own practices, and how our research might also enact its own queer performative politics.

Performance and Technology
R. Gentleman
PERF-UT 304.001 (20808) – Tuesdays, 12:45 pm – 3:30 pm
4 pts – In-Person
721 Broadway, 6th Fl., Room 612
In what way do technological innovations make new forms of performance possible? And, how do new forms of performance shape new technologies in turn? This course will approach these questions by focusing specifically on the coevolution of contemporary transgender performance—both in theatrical and extra-theatrical settings—and digital technologies from the 1990s to the present. Students will read foundational texts that examine the interplay between technology and performance as well as the work of scholars writing at the intersection of transgender studies, performance studies, and new media studies such as Mel Chen, Sandy Stone, and micha cárdenas. These texts will be considered alongside the work of artists, performers, and media makers including Zach Blas, Mary Maggic, and Mattie Brice. Ultimately, this course considers the concept of technology as a way of thinking about performance both within the context of trans cultural practice and in general.
Topics in Performance Studies: Introduction to Dance Studies

C. Arroyo Romero
PERF-UT 305.001 (13237) – Thursdays, 3:30 pm – 6:15 pm
4 pts – In-Person
721 Broadway, 6th Fl., Room 612
This course will provide a space for the study of dance studies and choreography. The aim is to share a critical foundation that will allow students to begin advanced exercises of inquiry within the field. The course does not seek to establish a static understanding of dance studies, practices or choreographic models, but to engage students in critical and creative conversations where we study and question what dance and choreography are understood as and what they have the potential to become. We will explore notions of movement, ephemerality, corporeality, performativity, and embodiment as key concepts that position choreography and dance as important theoretical, social, and political sites. The class will mostly focus on 20th and 21st century artistic practices, and critical theory, to explore how dance and choreography affect, shape, and transform theories of the body, of politics, and of performance. On certain occasions, we will engage in creative exercises, from short movement improvisations to playing with writing prompts. The objective is to keep our creative engagement and our embodied thinking active as the course progresses. In doing so we will question, what does dance studies do? What is choreographic thought? How do they enact upon the world? How are these practices present in different fields of study and creative practices of inquiry? How do we engage with the field and why do we do it? How has it transformed? Where can it take us? Besides delving in critical analysis of the texts, we will thoroughly examine various modes of performance, and engage with the challenges and opportunities for critical, creative, and aesthetic study within the field.

Capstone: Final Projects in Performance Studies

B. Browning
PERF-UT 400.001 (13137) – Independent Study
4 pts | Note: OPEN TO PS MAJORS ONLY. Majors should check with Laura Fortes (lf65@nyu.edu) before enrolling in this course.*
Students in this course will build on a research paper/project that they originated in another PS course, with the goal of extending, refining, and further developing it in order to synthesize what they have learned, as well as further hone their research, analysis, and writing skills.