

Performance Studies

UNDERGRADUATE SPRING 2019 COURSES

Performance Studies: An Introduction

E. Mee

PERF-UT 200.001 (16061) – Thursdays, 2:00pm – 3:15pm

4 pts. – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 613

The course is taught using a blended learning approach. Guided online by Richard Schechner, a founder of the field of performance studies, and in person by an instructor, students explore the performances in the Americas, Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Australia, and the Pacific islands.

Students delve back in time to ask what kind of performances took place in the caves of paleolithic Europe? How do these ancient shamanic and initiatory practices relate to Burning Man, YouTube, and today's avant-garde? How do people perform their professions, their genders, their races and nations, their identities, their social lives, and their daily rituals? For this course, Schechner filmed interviews with more than a dozen scholars, scientists, and artists. Embedded in the course are clips and images of many different kinds of performances.

Students engage each other directly in class and blog with each other during the week. Students form groups to devise performance projects. Performance Studies: An Introduction puts students in interactive dialogue with the most important events, people, theories, and questions of the dynamic, emerging field of performance studies.

Performance & Politics

N. Bazzano

PERF-UT 104.001 (22006) – Wednesdays, 3:30pm – 6:15pm

4 pts. – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 613

This course focuses specifically on the political aspects of performance and performance theory — how performance and performing reflect, enact, and shift political discourse and practices. Beginning with a broad construction of “politics” and moving through various historical and contemporary understandings of the political, the course encourages students to study events and practices that produce political effects. How does performance itself and a theoretical attention to performativity reshape our understanding and analyses of how politics are felt, imagined, disseminated, or otherwise come to matter? How are politics expressed? How are aesthetics and politics connected? How can performance and performance theory be applied usefully to understand how, why, and where political expression, creation, and critique takes place, and where it fails to do so?

The Department of

Performance Studies trains students to document, theorize, and analyze embodied practices and events. Areas of concentration include: contemporary performance, dance, movement analysis, folk and popular performance, postcolonial theory, feminist and queer theory and performance theory.

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Interested in a Double Major or Minor in Performance Studies?

Email Laura Fortes at lf65@nyu.edu for more information.

Find us on Social Media!

Facebook: @performance.studies.nyu

Instagram: @nyuperformancestudies

Tumblr: tischperformancestudiesblog

Vimeo: NYU Performance Studies

Twitter: @NYUPerfStudies

Performative Writing Workshop

B. Browning

PERF-UT 204.001 (23143) – Wednesdays, 12:30pm – 3:15pm

4 pts. – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

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 of Everyday Life

S. Afshar

PERF-UT 206.001 (15959) – Tuesdays, 3:30pm – 6:15pm

4 pts. – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 613

In this course, we broaden our definition of performance to apply the quotidian as method and optic of study. We turn to the critical crossings that practices of everyday life form in their encounters with the political, social, economic, and historical to ask: Can the quotidian—“second nature,” seemingly “normal” acts—bring about change or is it a promise of perpetuity? Conversely, to what extent does the performative realm of the sociopolitical inform our everyday practices? Together will pay close attention to and break down the stories being told via everyday practices, focusing on what happens when we read their performative efficacy rather than their presumed “intentions.”

Drawing from affect studies, anthropology, critical cultural theory, feminist and queer theory, psychoanalysis, architectural studies, and sociology, we will survey texts that theorize the quotidian from the perspective of the somatic, the traumatic, the oneiric, the ecological, and the virtual. Objects of analysis will include trending cultural productions that can be read, seen, heard, tasted, and hopefully felt. Finally, we will question what a performance-centered approach to everyday life brings to critical analysis and writing. This course incorporates an intensive writing component; through your written experiments with memoir writing, ethnography, (academic) essay writing, and ficto-criticism, we will partake in thematic explorations of topics on belonging, home, space, time, rhythm, affect, and the senses. This course will help you expand your definition of performance both in thinking and writing about the real and virtual world that surrounds you.

Queer Politics & Performance

J. McMaster

PERF-UT 302.001 (22007) – Tuesdays, 9:30am – 12:15pm

4 pts. – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

This course takes sexuality as its lens through which to consider performance, and vice versa. Much of the current vitality of the concept of “performance” has come through the study of gender and sexuality -- the political impact and social legibility of performances of gender and sexuality in daily life, art practices, and elsewhere -- and this course examines and applies these theories of gender/sexuality performance to a wide range of examples. Students will read both new and canonical work in the field of gender studies with an eye toward the specific impact of performance in this work, as well as examine performance examples in order to analyze the ways gender and sexuality are produced within them.

Topics in Performance Studies: Performance and Law

K. Shimakawa

PERF-UT 305.001 (16058) – Mondays, 12:30pm – 3:15pm

4 pts. – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

This course looks at where and how law is performed -- on stages and screens, in courthouses and on subway platforms, in our homes and in our bodies, “law” plays a foundational role not only in regulating our actions, but also in shaping our senses, our values, and our aesthetics. Course requirements: 25-30 pages of reading per week; weekly blog entries; two group presentations; one final research paper (8-10 pages).

Performance & Technology

T. Black

PERF-UT 304.001 (16057) – Thursdays, 1:30pm – 4:15pm

4 pts. – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 612

This course considers the concept of technology as a way of thinking about performance generally, and then focuses specifically on the role of various technologies in performance – historically as well as in contemporary practices. How do technical innovations, new knowledge, etc. make new forms of performance possible? How do we perform with, for, and against technologies, and how might the notion of performance shift in considering new technological paradigms? The course will consider both technology in (aesthetic) performance and the performance of technology in extra-theatrical settings. The course will examine a wide variety of recent critical and theoretical writings on performance, technology, and new media, as well as a number of contemporary applications. Students will also explore their own relationship to technology and performance, and examine the role of technological performance in society.

Capstone: Final Projects

M. Gaines

PERF-UT 400.001 (15866) – Mondays, 3:30pm – 5:15pm

4 pts – 721 Broadway, 6th Floor, Room 611

Recitation Section

PERF-UT 401.002 – Thursdays, 10:00am – 11:15am, 611, C. Delgado Huitron

***OPEN TO PS MAJORS ONLY* Please contact Laura Fortes at lf65@nyu.edu to register.**

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.