



ARTS1121

The Life of Performance

Term Two // 2021

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

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School Contact Information

School of the Arts and Media

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The School of the Arts and Media would like to Respectfully Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Art & Design Campuses) and the Ngunnawal people (Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra) of the lands where each campus of UNSW is located.

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Subject Area: *Theatre and Performance Studies*

This course can also be studied in the following specialisations: *Creative Writing, Dance Studies, Media, Culture and Technology*

Performance is the practice that brings creativity to life. It is fundamental to theatre-making, dance and live art; to story-telling in film, animation and games; and to communicating ideas in public relations and business. Whether your focus is artistic endeavour in professional production, cultural participation in community settings, or consumer practice in everyday life, you will learn how to analyse the significance of action and how to design experiences that engage audiences today. The Life of Performance gives you the skills to understand performance in the contemporary world. It approaches the study of performance across a broad spectrum from social rituals in local settings to multimedia events on the world stage. Through a combination of case studies and practical fieldwork, you will explore how participating in performance creates values, identities and beliefs that connect people together across global networks.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. demonstrate an understanding of the way performance studies relates to other disciplines – especially theatre studies, anthropology and cultural studies, and distinguish the idea of ‘performance’ from the idea of ‘theatre’
2. analyse a range of everyday life behaviours and events as ‘performance’
3. apply some of the key terminology of performance studies – such as ‘liminality’, ‘hybridity’, ‘quotidian’ and ‘symbolic and restored behaviour’ – to a wide range of everyday and contemporary performance practices, and be able to evaluate the evolving connections between those practices
4. appreciate the role and function of, and demonstrate some skills in self-directed ethnographic analysis of performance
5. identify how cultural performance and contemporary arts practice is informed by and responds to national and international political and aesthetic concerns
6. demonstrate familiarity with scholarly research practice within the discipline of performance studies: a) read academic and performance texts with critical understanding b) access information and resources relevant to performance studies and contemporary performance c) follow the conventions of academic writing ie referencing and quotation systems d) work in an effective, self-motivated way in a university context

Teaching Strategies

The Life of Performance will engage you in dynamic learning experiences: classrooms include workshops in creative problem-solving and critical analysis; lectures are interactive and we work through case studies together. We view ‘performance’ as both a guide to what we learn about as well as how we do our learning. This is important because we study the links between everyday, cultural and artistic performance practices. This means that we understand ‘performance’ as our object of inquiry as well as our method. You will be encouraged to test out your thinking by collaborating in creative and critical

expression. You will create performance concepts that reflect upon and celebrate the ways in which performance features in our daily lives.

Assessment

Please see the course Moodle for detailed information on course assessments.

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Fieldwork Assignment	35%	08/07/2021 11:00 PM	1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Group presentation	15%	Not Applicable	1, 3, 5
Individual report	25%	Not Applicable	1, 2, 6
In-class test	25%	04/08/2021 10:00 AM	1, 2, 3

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Fieldwork Assignment

Details:

1500-2000 words.

Rubric and grade – no comment.

Additional details:

Please see information on Moodle in order to prepare for this task.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Group presentation

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 5 minutes

Details:

Group presentation.

Rubric, comment and grade.

Submission notes: Presentations made in tutorials during weeks 7-9. Schedule to be determined once tutorials begin.

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 3: Individual report

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 1000 words

Details:

Individual report on presentation.

1000 words.

Rubric, comment and grade.

Additional details:

Please see additional information on the course Moodle.

Submission notes: Due on the evening of your Pitch presentation day by 11pm - weeks 7-10.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 4: In-class test

Details:

40 min.

Grade only.

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 31 May - 4 June	Lecture	What is Performance?
	Topic	This week we consider the broad spectrum of performance and its applications: from cultural events to rituals, from global spectacles to online personas. We introduce you to a framework of thinking about performance as actions and their effects: social, political and aesthetic.
Week 2: 7 June - 11 June	Lecture	Performing Events
	Topic	Events create cultural identities, communicate ideas, commemorate victories and celebrate life transitions. They can be ritualised (a mourning rite), spectacular (the Olympic Games' opening ceremony), commercial (a fashion parade) and entertaining (a boxing match). This week we understand how cultural events mark transitions, create communities and stabilise or change the social order.
Week 3: 15 June - 18 June	Lecture	Performing Selves
	Topic	We all perform identities – both offline and online – in manifold ways. A hair flick, a lanky walk or a high-pitched voice: this week we look at how cultures and communities are built through everyday performances. We use the theoretical framework of gender to unpack how social norms and their differences are produced. We look at examples that demonstrate the radical potential of performance to build new forms of expression that challenge the status quo.
Week 4: 21 June - 25 June	Lecture	Dancing Communities
	Topic	What helps groups of individuals bond together? How do communities let off steam and express themselves? Using tango and other social dance forms as case studies, this week we explore the role that popular dance and music forms play in creating communities, building identities and shaping new futures.
Week 5: 28 June - 2 July	Lecture	This week we use both the lecture and tutorial slots to workshop our fieldwork assignments (due in

		week 6) and to prepare for group presentations after the week 6 reading week.
Week 6: 5 July - 9 July	Reading	There are no classes this week - it is a reading week.
Week 7: 12 July - 16 July	Lecture	Performing Memories
	Topic	While performance takes place in the present, performances of memory draw on the past to cater to social, commemorative as well as political needs. From public memorials to museum design – this week we look at a range of memorial practices to understand how performance helps communities respond to trauma, deal with crises and to remember and forget.
Week 8: 19 July - 23 July	Lecture	Performing the Material Body
	Topic	Performance artists don't 'act', they 'perform'. What does this mean? Performance artists use the body, or time or place, as material in order to comment on the world around them. This week we consider a range of live art practices that stretch the limits of the body and radically alter time in order to reflect the complexities of our lived experiences.
Week 9: 26 July - 30 July	Lecture	Performing Digital Culture
	Topic	Artists working at the intersections of performance and digital production develop dynamic responses to the ways in which digital culture shapes contemporary experience. These aesthetic responses are important because they reframe and critique what becomes otherwise normal about culture. From performing robots to social media theatre – this lecture considers the dynamic role of performance in using digital tools to challenge their dominant effects.
Week 10: 2 August - 6 August	Lecture	Performance and cultural production
	Topic	This week applies what we have learnt in this course to three areas of performance in cultural production: theatre-making, dance and live art; story-telling in film, animation and games; and communicating ideas in public relations and business. How does knowledge about performance – performers, spectators, liveness, spectacle, engagement – inform approaches to cultural production? What kind of values, identities and beliefs are created through performance and how does performance connect people across the world?
	Assessment	In-class exam during week 10

Resources

Prescribed Resources

You can find readings for this course on the Online Reading List, linked from Moodle. It is a great idea to print out/download all readings for the course before it begins, so that they are ready and waiting for you to read and mark up.

What We Expect of You

Tutorial conduct

You are expected to actively participate and be prepared for each tutorial from weeks 1-10 in the form of providing a valuable, critical and thoughtful contribution to observations on performance and performance studies.

Tutorials involve a range of tasks, which will require you to:

- have read closely, taken notes on, and thought about the week's readings;
- have attended the lecture and taken notes on the performance works screened;
- have responded to any weekly provocations, as evidence of your commitment to the ongoing life of the course;
- listen to your peers, feedback to your peers and offer points of discussion to class debates.

In tutorials you may be asked to:

- provide a spoken or written response to a reading;
- provide a spoken or written response to a screened performance work;
- work in a collaborative way with peers to generate creative performance solutions to group tasks;
- talk 'to' the response you will have prepared prior to class.

Weekly readings

You are expected to print out or mark up a digital copy of the readings for each week and bring them to class. If links to the readings in Moodle do not work, please attempt to source the reading directly from the library catalogue or database yourself and inform the lecturer immediately that the link is not working. Broken links are not an excuse for not having sourced and read the readings yourselves.

Lecture conduct

We aim to make lectures an informative and critically engaging educational experience. Please respect the work of your lecturer and the needs of your peers by not talking in lectures. The lecturer reserves the right to ask you to leave should your behavior become disruptive or disrespectful to other students.

Email conduct

Please write to your tutor or lecturer clearly identifying yourself, your tutorial and your concern. Please address your tutor with the appropriate formality (ie 'Dear - '). You can contact teaching staff via email, telephone or pre-arranged consultation. Emails will always be answered, but please allow 48 hours for a response. Emails will not be answered after hours or on weekends.

Please see [UNSW Code of Conduct](#) for more information.

Recommended Resources

From the Online Reading List you have access to the complete book *Introduction to Performance Studies* by Richard Schechner. This is a helpful textbook to ground you in the discipline.

Course Evaluation and Development

Students in previous years enjoyed learning about performance from different perspectives.

- "I really enjoyed learning about many kinds of performance and how performances can occur in areas that aren't obvious - specifically in everyday life scenarios."
- "The lectures were interactive and interesting, the teaching felt individual as much as possible. I felt very involved rather than passive throughout both the lectures and the tutorials."
- "The mode of delivery was very engaging. The use of multimedia complemented the content, making it more interesting and accessible for students."

They also suggested some improvements.

- One student suggested "longer tutorials and shorter lectures to allow time to discuss and apply concepts."
- Another student wanted "more lecture time to watch relevant videos and to unpack complicated concepts from the readings."
- Several students suggested that we re-arrange the due dates of assignments in order to sustain learning throughout the course.

In response to student feedback, the lecture time slots were shortened and tutorials were extended to 2 hours in length, allowing for more time to discuss and dig down into case studies and readings.

We welcome your feedback on all aspects of the course.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Image Credit

Diorama of Lunch Counter Sit-Down Protests - National Civil Rights Museum - Downtown Memphis - Tennessee - USA. Photo by Adam Jones. Licensed under Creative Commons. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Diorama_of_Lunch_Counter_Sit-Down_Protests_-_National_Civil_Rights_Museum_-_Downtown_Memphis_-_Tennessee_-_USA_-_01.jpg

CRICOS

CRICOS Provider Code: 00098G

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.