

Topics in Digital Performing Arts: Performing with Technology: THTR 3875:0001

Cross Reference: DANC 3875:0001

Spring, 2021 || T&TH: 3:30p-5:20p

Hybrid: A flexible course where students will have mainly virtual instruction with some face to face later in the semester.

Location: Zoom Room: dansfine || Studio: ABW250 || Computer Lab: ABW360

Course Website: <https://icon.uiowa.edu/>

Instructor

Daniel Fine, Assistant Professor of Digital Media in Performance

Zoom Virtual Office Hours: Mondays 11a-2p or by appointment: calendly.com/dansfine

Office: TB138 ([theatre building](#))

Email: daniel-fine@uiowa.edu *

Phone: 319-353-2703 **

DEOs: Theatre: Mary Beth Easley, [TB105](#) || Dance: Rebekah Kowal, [HH E114C](#)

TA: Kenneth Collins

Virtual Office Hours: M & W: 11a-12:30p or by appointment

*I generally respond to email during business hours within 24-48 hours.

**Preferred method of communication is via email, during office hours or by appointment.

Course Description

Advanced techniques in virtual/online performance with established and new technologies including live cameras, audio, greenscreen, special effects, and controlling digital avatars.

Course Objectives and Goals

1. Understand the basic concepts, theories and practical applications of performing in virtual/online platforms.
2. Develop applied knowledge of creating virtual/online performance.
3. Cite and discuss historical and contemporary artists and companies working in virtual performance.
4. Work collaboratively across disciplines to investigate performance approaches to virtual/online and new modes of storytelling.
5. Develop skills in manipulating digital assets and operating virtual platforms.
6. Operate computer, camera, and sound equipment and virtual platforms.
7. Improve teamwork and communication skills.
8. Critique and evaluate work.

Covid-19 Worldwide Pandemic Guiding Principles

Guiding Principles adapted with permission from: Brandon Bayne, Associate Professor. *Religion in America. Adjusted Syllabus. Spring 2020.* Religious Studies. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

1. Safety first.
 - Everything we do will be with our collective health and the health of our community and world in the forefront.
 - We will be guided by fact-based science.

2. The humane option is the best option.
 - We will prioritize supporting each other as humans.
 - We will prioritize solutions that make sense for each individual with an eye on the group.
 - Everybody needs support and understanding in this unprecedented moment in time.
3. We cannot just do all the same things online.
 - The course content/objectives have been altered to fit a mainly online/hybrid format.
4. We will foster art making, nourishing our soul, minds and curiosity, critical thinking, social connection (as best we can) and personal accommodation.
5. We will remain flexible and adjust to the situation as it changes.
 - Assignments may need to be modified depending on the current/future state of the ongoing Pandemic.

Class Culture

Since I ask my students to think **creatively**, outside the box and to take **risks**, you are bound to **fail** at some point. Our classroom is a **supportive** atmosphere so we can fail along the path to **success**.

While it is extremely important to take our work seriously, it is also vital to have a **sense of wonder and play**; to have **passion** for what you do, but also to have **fun** doing it.

Our class is a **safe place** for ALL students. Please treat it as such.

ASK questions. Please seek me out during office hours. **I am here to help you learn and succeed.**

Readings & Texts

There are no required books to purchase for this course. Readings will be posted on ICON to view/download as PDF files, video and HTML files. You may also need to be able to access online readings through the University of Iowa library. Suggested texts are also posted on ICON.

Technology Requirements

There are a limited number of laptops available for the semester.

Students will have the ability to checkout equipment for class projects. Please see sections on studio and equipment use below and on ICON for more detailed information. You will need to provide headphones or earbuds for working with audio when in any university computer lab or library.

Students who need it will be able to check out the following equipment for the entire semester:

- Laptop (if needed and available)
- Isadora USB key (if needed – designers only)
- Second monitor (if needed and available)
- USB camera (if needed)
- USB extension cable
- USB microphone
- iPhone or iPad (if funding comes through)
- Misc cables/adaptors
-

Grading Policy and the Use of +/-

Grades will be awarded on an A to F scale, including plus and minus. Each project will receive a numeric grade based on the published rubric, in addition to verbal critique in class. This is a points-based class with grading on a 1000-point scale - there is no curve. In this course, letter grades mean the following:

Grade	Points	Description
A+	1001+	You are a ROCK STAR! This is an extraordinary achievement.
A-/A	900-1000	Superior accomplishment.
B-/B/B+	800-899	Above average achievement.
C-/C/C+	700-799	Average work.
D-/D/D+	600-699	Below average performance.
F	0-599	Failure to meet basic course requirements.

Assignments and Percentage of Final Grade

Per the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the outside of class workload you should expect in order to be successful in this course is a minimum of 6-8 hours per week.

Projects and in-class assignments may or may not be collaborative. Each student on a team is expected to complete a similar amount of work and to contribute equally to the project.

All assignment descriptions, due dates, instructions, submissions, and rubrics posted via ICON. Course grades will be based on the criteria below. Please note that this is *tentative and subject to change*. While no new projects will be added, it is possible that an assignment will be dropped or altered.

Announcements will be made in class, via ICON, and/or email.

Assessment	Points	Learning Objectives
Attendance	150	In order to succeed in this course, you need to be present for lectures, in-class discussions & work, and critiques.
Class Participation	155	You must not only be present, but you must participate in class discussions, lectures, group projects and activities.
Reading/Viewing Posts (6 @ 10 points each)	60	For each reading/viewing, you must post 1 thread on the ICON discussion board.
Reading/Viewing Comments (12 @ 5 points each)	60	For each reading/viewing, you must comment on 2 classmate's threads on the ICON discussion board.
Virtual Platform Small Projects (150 total points)		
1: Zoom Interface	25	Controlling and performing within Zoom.
2: Camera	25	Performing with the camera.
3: Sound	25	Performing with sound.
4: Greenscreen	25	Performing in virtual environments.
5: Special Effects	25	Performing with special effects.
6: Avatar Control or ?	25	Control digital puppets/avatars or ?
Final Project: Zoom Project (480 total points)		
1. Pitch	50	Create work for an interactive performance/installation via zoom.
2. Showing #1	50	
3. Showing #2	50	
5. Final Showing	275	
TOTAL	1000	

Course Schedule

The following provides a *tentative* schedule of events, including assignment due dates. I reserve the right to make changes as needed; announcements will be made in class and will be kept up to date on ICON. Anything in **red** is an assignment or reading due on that day.

Week	Class #	Date	Final Project DUE	Reading Post DUE	Reading Comments DUE	Small Project DUE	IN-CLASS
WEEK 1	1	1/26 (T)					Intro/Gear/Check-out/Studio/System/In-Class Assignment
	2	1/28 (TH)					Zoom Interface
	NA	1/29 (F)		Reading 1			-----
WEEK 2	NA	2/1 (M)			Comments 1		-----
	3	2/2 (T)				Zoom Interface	Zoom Interface
	4	2/4 (TH)					Sound
	NA	2/5 (F)		Reading 2			-----
WEEK 3	NA	2/8 (M)			Comments 2		-----
	5	2/9 (T)				Sound	Sound
	6	2/11 (TH)					Camera
	NA	2/12 (F)		Reading 3			-----
WEEK 4	NA	2/15 (M)			Comments 3		
	7	2/16 (T)					Camera
	8	2/18 (TH)				Camera	Camera
	NA	2/19 (F)		Reading 4			-----
WEEK 5	NA	2/22 (M)			Comments 4		-----
	9	2/23 (T)					Greenscreen
	10	2/25 (TH)					Greenscreen
	NA	2/26 (F)					-----
WEEK 6	NA	3/2 (T) NO CLASS					-----
	11	3/4 (TH)				Greenscreen	Greenscreen

Week	Class #	Date	Final Project DUE	Reading Post DUE	Reading Comments DUE	Small Project DUE	IN-CLASS
	NA	3/5 (F)		Reading 5			-----
WEEK 7	NA	3/8 (M)			Comments 5		
	13	3/9 (T)					Special Effects (actors virtual only) No Dan
	14	3/11 (TH)				Special Effects	Special Effects or Avatar (actors virtual only)
	NA	3/12 (F)		Reading 6			-----
	NA	3/15 (M)			Comments 6		-----
WEEK 8	15	3/16 (T)					Avatar or ?
	16	3/18 (TH)				Avatar	Avatar or ?
WEEK 9	17	3/23 (T)					No Actors: tech/design work
	18	3/25 (TH)					No Actors: tech/design work
WEEK 10	19	3/30 (T)	Pitch				Pitches
	20	4/1 (TH)	Pitch				Pitches
WEEK 11	21	4/6 (T)					Work on Final Project
	22	4/8 (TH)					Work on Final Project
WEEK 12	24	4/13 (T)	Showing 1				Work on Final Project
	NA	4/15 (TH)	Showing 1				Work on Final Project
WEEK 13	25	4/20 (T)					Work on Final Project
	26	4/22 (TH)					Virtual Performance Technology
WEEK 14	27	4/27 (T)	Showing 2				Work on Final Project
	28	4/29 (TH)	Showing 2				Work on Final Project
WEEK 15	29	5/4 (T)					Final Project Showing
	30	5/6 (TH)					Final Project Showing
WEEK 16	31	TBA (5/10-5/14)	Final Showing				Final Project Showing Discuss Final Project Semester Wrap Up

A Word about the Date and Time of the Final Exam

There is no final exam. The final exam session will be an extended time block used to present and discuss final projects and wrap up the semester. Do not plan your end of the semester travel until the final exam schedule is announced.

Late Assignments

Late assignments are marked down 5 points a day for the first 3 days and will not be accepted after 3 days unless prior extensions are negotiated. Major project due dates and Crit sessions will not be rescheduled. If you need to turn in an assignment late, due to anything Covid-19 related, we will make accommodations, with no penalties.

Attendance

Punctual and regular attendance is mandatory and highly correlated with your level of success.

Two (2) absences per semester free.* Any absences beyond the second will result in a point reduction of 50 points per undocumented absence. **Five (5) or more undocumented absences will result in automatic failure (F) in the course.**

For more details see CLAS Syllabus Insert: Absences and Attendance below

* If you are absent on a project presentation/crit day when an assignment is due, you will lose points for that assignment unless the absence is excused in advance.

Late Arrival/Early Departure

If you are in class within five minutes of class start time, you will NOT be considered late. Late arrivals or early departures are calculated at maximum of 80% for that day's attendance. Every fifth instance of lateness/early departure will be assessed as one (1) unexcused absence.

Participation

Active participation in discussion and critique sessions is crucial to this course as well as for your personal development. You should reference readings, prior assignments, prior projects, Pop Culture, etc. We learn how to make better work through talking about our own work and also the work of our peers. Our class is a safe space where all students can express their beliefs and opinions. During CRIT sessions we should share our thoughts respectfully and generously, keeping in mind the importance of making space for all voices in the class. If you repeatedly dominate conversations, talk off-topic, and/or provide unconstructive and/or rude criticism you will lose participation points.

Disclaimers, Offensive Content, etc.

Some of the work we will study may not reflect your values or worldview and should not be seen as an endorsement, but rather an academic inquiry into a variety of historically and socially significant artistic movements. This course may present material and/or students may explore difficult subject matters, which may be deemed as offensive. There may be elements of profanity, sexual content, political views, and/or violence, etc. In others words, be prepared to view cute cat videos. Meow.

In discussions I may adopt an intellectual, moral, or theological opinion that differs from your own. This is part of the Socratic Method, and should not necessarily be seen as an endorsement of the opinions I state, but rather as a "devil's advocate" argument intended to prompt the student into a deeper investigation of a topic.

ABW 250 Studio Use

Due to Covid-19, ABW250 studio use is by permission/appointment only. More detailed studio rules, reservation system, and hours of operation are posted on ICON.

Equipment Checkout Policies

Students have access to equipment checkout for the strict purpose of completion of class assignments. You are responsible for equipment in your possession. The replacement cost of any gear not returned or damaged will be charged to your student account. If you do not pay this replacement cost fee, you may not be able to graduate or receive any official transcripts. There is extremely limited tech support for portable hard drives. Make sure that you backup your data. Anything left on the hard drive at the end of the semester will NOT be saved and will be permanently deleted. More detailed check-in/out rules, policies, late fees, reservation system and hours of operation are posted on ICON.

Checkout reservation center: <http://checkout.uiowa.edu>

Resources for Students

- Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/>
- Speaking Center: <http://speakingcenter.uiowa.edu/>
- Tutor Iowa: <http://tutor.uiowa.edu/>

- Campus Coronavirus Updates: <https://coronavirus.uiowa.edu/>
- Campus Coronavirus Updates; Information for Students and Parents: <https://coronavirus.uiowa.edu/information-students-and-parents>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/>
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/>
- City of Iowa City: <https://www.icgov.org/>

- Keep Learning at Iowa: <https://teach.uiowa.edu/keep-learning-iowa>
- **STUDENT EMERGENCY FUND:** The University of Iowa Student Government, Graduate and Professional Student Government, and donors have contributed additional funds for the [Student Emergency Fund](#), which provides microgrants averaging between \$50 and \$350. Students who experience an event or unforeseen circumstance that negatively and severely impacts their academic success, which may include unexpected medical and travel costs, unexpected decrease in work hours and income, and other unforeseen expenses due to COVID-19, should consider applying with the Office of the Dean of Students. Grants will be awarded based on funds available, which are limited.
- **UI Counseling Services:** <https://counseling.uiowa.edu/students/>

CLAS Syllabus Insert

Absences and Attendance

Students are responsible for attending class and for contributing to the learning environment of a course. Students are also responsible for knowing course absence policies, which vary by instructor. All absence policies, however, must uphold the UI policy related to student illness, mandatory religious obligations, including Holy Day obligations, unavoidable circumstances, and University authorized activities (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences>). Students may use the CLAS absence form to aid communication with the instructor who will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused; the form is located on ICON within the top banner under "Student Tools."

Academic Integrity

All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have in essence agreed to the College's [Code of Academic Honesty](#). Academic misconduct affects a student's related grade and is reported to the College which applies an additional sanction including suspension. Outcomes about misconduct are communicated through UI email (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code>).

Accommodations for Disabilities

UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as a mental health, attention, learning, vision, and a physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student is then responsible for discussing specific accommodations with the instructor. More information is at <https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/>.

Administrative Home of the Course

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and related policies. Other UI colleges may have different policies for courses offered by that college. CLAS policies may be found here: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook>.

Classroom Expectations

Students are expected to comply with University policies regarding appropriate classroom behavior as outlined in the Code of Student Life (<https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/code-of-student-life/>). This includes related UI policies and procedures that all students have agreed to regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly, each student must wear a face mask when in a UI building, including a classroom. The density of seats in classrooms has been reduced, and in some instances, this will allow 6 feet or more of distance while other cases, it may be less. Regardless, wearing a face mask and maintaining as much distance as is possible are vital to slowing the spread of COVID-19. In the event that a student disrupts the classroom environment through the failure to comply with a reasonable directive of an instructor or of the University, the instructor has the authority to ask that the student to leave the space immediately for the remainder of the class period. Additionally, the instructor is asked to report the incident to the UI Office of Student Accountability, with the possibility of additional follow-up with the student. Students who need temporary alternative learning arrangements (TALA) for a future semester related to COVID-19 should visit this website for more information: <https://coronavirus.uiowa.edu/temporary-alternative-learning-arrangements-tala>.

Class Recordings: Privacy and Sharing

Some sessions of a course could be recorded or live-streamed. Such a recording or streaming will only be available to students registered for the course. These recordings are the intellectual property of the faculty, and they may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit written consent of the faculty member. Students may not share these sessions with those who are not enrolled in the course; likewise, students may not upload recordings to any other online environment. Doing so is a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and in some cases is a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Communication and the Required Use of UI Email

Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to the UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within or with UI ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](#)).

Complaints

Students with a complaint about an academic issue should first visit with the instructor or course supervisor and then with the Chair of the department or program offering the course; students may next bring the issue to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. See this page for more information: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities>.

Final Examination Policies

The final exam schedule is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals with a few exceptions made for particular types of courses such as labs or off-cycle courses: <https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies>.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom

The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for people of all gender, sexual, racial, religious, and other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited in MyUI to optionally share the names and pronouns they would like their instructors and advisors to use to address them. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University's Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (<https://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod>; +1 319 335-0705 or (diversity.uiowa.edu)

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, please see <https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/>.