



DRAMA

Mr. John Marsh Fall 2026
Senior Lecturer of History
Office: Wagoner 150
Office Hours:
Mon/Wed 11:00-11:30
Tuesday 11:00-1:00 & 2:00-4:00
Friday 10:30-1:30
And by appointment

OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACTING ME

You can stop by my office anytime to see me. You do not need an appointment. My office is in Wagoner in the hall between the nurses' office and the tunnel. I will almost always be there during my office hours listed above, and you may find me there at other times as well. If you can't come during my office hours, we can set an appointment for another time. Outside of my office hours, please feel free to email me (jsmarsh@bsu.edu) at any time. Of course, if it is in the evening, you may not get an answer until the next day.

If at any time you have questions, comments, problems, or suggestions please talk to me. If you are having difficulty in the course, *don't wait*. There are things we can discuss to help you. Most students will find themselves struggling occasionally in some classes, and it's not a weakness to ask for help. On the contrary, it shows wisdom and determination.



You don't need to be having a problem to come see me in my office. I encourage you stop in to simply chat. In fact, if you come, sit and talk with me at my office at least once during August & September, I'll give you 1 extra credit point. That's a onetime offer, not a point for every visit. You can come with another student or two if you want.

Along those lines of getting to know you, and since I'll have over 100 new students cycling through this course, I am requesting that you **please wear your class lanyards with your name tag easily visible whenever you are in this class**. That will also help you get to know each other's names.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS (TAs)

We have two Academy teaching assistants for this course: **Verity Flanders** and **Melinda Palackel**. They will provide their preferred contact information in our first class. They will also be available to help you with the materials and activities in this class. However, any questions on grades and grading should always come to me.

DRAMA SECTION DESCRIPTION

The goal of this section of the Colloq course is to give you first hand experiences with creative collaboration, oral interpretation and performance in live plays. This is not a class about the history, forms, or great works of drama. This class is focused on getting up there and doing. You can enhance a whole host of your essential soft skills with drama experience, including poise & confidence, speaking in front of groups, storytelling, persuasion, empathy, and teamwork.

READINGS & ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

There is no textbook for this section of the course. **All the readings will be handed out in class.** If you miss a class, it is **your responsibility to see that you acquire any assigned readings** which were handed out. You will not need to do anything on Canvas in this section.

I have listed below the reading assignments for the 8 classes you have with me. **You must read the assignments, rehearse, or prepare** as listed in the schedule, **PRIOR to the class on the day on which they are listed.** In the first class, we will provide the dates for your cohort which you can fill in the empty DATE column.

You must bring any assigned readings for that day to class! Otherwise you will be making the trek back to your room.

CLASS #	DATE	TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS
1		Introduction Warmups Handouts	Read Syllabus before class
2		Signups Theatre Terms Cold Reads Improv games	Read "Solo Performance Selections" & choose 2 or 3 you would like to perform Read "Theater Terms" and begin learning them
3		Read Scenes Improv games	Read Act Two of <i>You Can't Take It With You</i> Start learning your Solo Performance piece
4		Terms Quiz Rehearse solo performances Improv games	Study for Theatre Terms Quiz Memorize & Rehearse your Solo Performance piece
5		Solo Performances Debrief Stage/Movement	Memorize & Rehearse your solo performance piece
6		Signup play/roles Read through Blocking	Read <i>It's a Wonderful Life</i> selection Read <i>Arsenic and Old Lace</i> selection
7		Rehearse	Memorize & Rehearse your lines and cues
8		Scene Performances	Rehearse your lines and cues

As the course progresses, it may be necessary to modify some assignments. I will give you notice of several days on major changes. However, circumstances occasionally require minor last minute changes or additions. I will e-mail to you any such changes no later than 6:00pm on the day before class. **So, you are responsible for checking your e-mail after 6:00pm on the night before class.**

LAPTOPS/CELL PHONES: You may NOT use your laptop, phones or other devices in this class. It would be best not to bring them at all. Remember you have to adhere to the overall Academy policy regarding electronic devices. You will need to write some things down at times. Be sure to always have **something to write with and a little notebook or paper.**

CLASS ATMOSPHERE: Feel free to ask questions during the presentations and discussions, but always raise your hand and be recognized. Just as in the professional world, an atmosphere of mutual respect and appropriate behavior will be expected at all times. That includes listening to your fellow students and the TAs as respectfully as you would to me.

One of the things I have always loved about the Indiana Academy is the way the students are usually very supportive of each other. I think that is particularly important in a class like this, where everybody is being challenged with doing things that can be a little bit intimidating. So, be your classmates' best partners, supporters and cheerleaders.

I would also challenge you personally to bring a positive attitude to everything you do in the class. A scary problem can be viewed as an engaging challenge. And just as you would not be hard on, or make fun of your classmates, give yourself grace as well. Why would we expect you all to already be capable and polished at this? Laugh it off, learn from it, and get up and go again. These are absolutely critical skills and experiences for success and enjoyment in life.

COMMUNICATE YOUR CONCERNS WITH ME: I am personally committed to doing everything I can to see that every student has the best possible experience in my course. So if I make a mistake on a name or a pronoun, please correct me. If there is something that is said in class, by me or another student, which bothers you or gives you concern, please talk to me. In our course, as in society at large, we can best address our problems and concerns with open communication.

GRADING

As you know already, this Drama section will be 100 points out of the 500 points total in this Colloq course. Grading in this section is simple. After the first four days you will receive a participation score out of 45 points, and then again another 45 points possible after the second four days. See the explanation of the participation score below. The ten-point Theater Terms Quiz will complete the hundred points possible.

I mentioned the extra credit point you can earn if you visit me in my office during August and September. That point will help you push your score up to 100 points in this section of the Colloq course. Now it's possible you could ace everything and earn all 100 points. First of all, well done!



Second, I'm sorry but the extra credit point cannot be added in that case. I cannot report anything higher than 100 points for your grade in here. Remember there are extra credit points available in the overall course by attending more BSU events.

Grading:

Participation Days 1-4	45 points
Participation Days 5-8	45 points
Theatre Terms Quiz	<u>10 points</u>
TOTAL	100 points



"That's Fernando, my acting coach. If I'm going to act like I'm interested in what you have to say, I'll need some help."

- **Attitude** – Do you maintain a positive attitude during the class? Do you remain open to the potential benefits to you of our class activities?
- **Teamwork** – How well do you collaborate with your fellow students? How supportive are you of your fellow students?

CLASS PARTICIPATION

As I mentioned above, this class is about doing, so naturally 90% of the grade is your participation. Here is what I'm going to be looking at.

- **Preparation** – Have you read the assignments, brought the required scripts and materials to class, rehearsed, and memorized?
- **Effort** – Are you making a genuine effort at what you are asked to do? Are you listening, learning, and trying to improve? Any unexcused absences?

Participation, **Effort**, **Attitude**, and **Teamwork** – together those spell **PEAT**, which is a dark, spongy material formed from partially decayed organic matter, primarily moss and vegetation. That has really nothing to do with the class, unless you count the fact that it accumulates in a waterlogged area like a marsh.

One thing you do not see on the above list is level of performance. This is not an acting class where you would be graded on your acting skill and talents. I will not be grading you on whether or not you gave high-level, error-free performances. I will be looking at that list above to see **what you put into it**.

This is a large class, and sometimes we will be breaking into smaller groups and using another classroom just a door down from our regular classroom. I will be going back and forth between the rooms and there will always be at least one TA in each room. I can't imagine there will be any issues, but just as a matter of good policy, I am giving you notice to not let your participation or behavior slide just because I am not presently in the room. The TAs will report any issues to me. In order to avoid even the appearance of pressure on them, you are not permitted to ask the TAs about what they may or may not be reporting to me. Again, if you have any questions on grading you need to speak to me.

I fully understand that for many of you, speaking in front of people is not your favorite thing, in fact it may be flat out terrifying. That's okay. But just because that makes you really nervous, it doesn't mean it has to stay that way. With practice and some techniques, you can build your skills and your confidence that you can do it when necessary. And this is a good safe place to do just that.

As a professional, you are going to need to speak in meetings, small groups and even large groups. You are going to need to convince people of things, and one of the best ways to do that is by telling a story. You are also going to need to be able to imagine things from other's perspectives. We don't want the first time you have to speak in front of a group of people to be on your first professional job.

OTHER POLICIES

Remember that this syllabus applies only to the drama section. You have received the full course syllabus for Colloquium, and that contains the full list of course policies, including things like attendance, makeup, AI, Academy, and Ball State University policies.

RETURN OF READINGS

In order to save trees and printing costs, I require you to return the scripts handed out to you in this class. Please do not mark on them. If you want to mark notes or your lines or movements please do it on a separate sheet or your own copy.

It is not required, but I request that you return any of the other handouts (except the syllabus) if you have not marked on them.

