

## Preliminary Web Course Description

\*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

### School of English and Theatre Studies

Course Code: IMPR*6010	Course Title: <b>CORE CONCEPTS IN CRITICAL STUDIES IN IMPROVISATION</b>	Date of Offering: F'20 <b>F20</b> <b>W21</b>
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Course Instructor: Daniel Fischlin	Course Format: Online/asynchronous
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#### Brief Course Synopsis:

This required two-term course is based on seminal works that introduce the field of critical studies in improvisation. It is designed to expose students to core concepts in critical studies in improvisation, with especial attention to the historical, theoretical, and critical literature in the field.

#### Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

The course will be evaluated as follows:

1. Ongoing Seminar Presentations (40%); please note that these will be assigned on a bi-weekly basis with careful attention to equal distribution of workload. In grad courses seminar work is a way of getting students to articulate and work through theory, close reading practices, and the sharing of information in a way that activates critical thinking. This class will build collaborative and dialogic structures for responding to key critical issues the course addresses. Most if not all of the seminar work will be done in an intensive collaborative context where building the cohort experience is a key outcome. Seminar Presentations in term two will orient readings toward the extended research paper that is a key course outcome and will also work toward addressing connections between core theoretical readings and practicum/case study examples that are the focus for term two.
2. Outline, topic-specific annotated bibliography, draft work on short and long papers, collaborative responses (see below), critiques and shorter pieces of writing, and/or community-facing project development work that is group- and collaboration-based, and a Commonplace Book (see

outline below) that students will keep to track readings, ideas, potential research initiatives, critiques, media references, case studies, and the like for the length of the course (30%). These writing assignments will in term one be focused on short critical responses to core readings and will shift in term two toward the final paper and integrating core course materials with research for the final paper. This shift in emphasis from term one to term two is meant to support the shift (outlined below) from focus on theory to practice-based case studies that will occur in term two.

3. Final Paper (20 pages) and community-facing project work (30%) based on in-class lectures, materials, workshops, case studies, and so forth—this essay/project may overlap with Sections 1 and 2 above **and will require outline and draft work that will be vetted over the course of term two.** The aim here is to produce publishable or close to publishable work that has been carefully developed, critiqued, and responded to over the course of term two, with the assumption that term one's focus on key concepts, disciplinary genealogies, and core readings is needed to prepare students adequately for term two intensive research and ongoing integration of core field readings and concepts. If a student chooses to do a community-facing public project then similar guidelines apply and the student will be evaluated on the body of work done through the course of the term as well as on specific outputs/outcomes including written work.

The above is subject to modification based on discussion with the class to optimize the learning experience in relation to the realities of dealing with the pandemic.

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)  
Caines, Rebecca and Ajay Heble, *The Improvisation Studies Reader: Spontaneous Acts*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Fischlin, Daniel and Ajay Heble. Eds. *The Other Side of Nowhere. Jazz, Improvisation, and Communities in Dialogue*. Wesleyan UP, 2004.

Fischlin, Daniel, Ajay Heble, and George Lipsitz. *The Fierce Urgency of Now: Improvisation, Rights, and the Ethics of Cocreation*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

Fischlin, Daniel and Eric Porter. Eds. *Playing For Keeps: Improvisation in the Aftermath*. Duke University Press, 2018.

Lewis, George E. and Benjamin Piekut. Eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies*, Volumes 1 and 2. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Selected Readings from: [Improvisation, Community and Social Practice Series](#) (Duke University Press; five volumes) and [Critical Studies in Improvisation / Études critiques en improvisation](#).

This course counts towards the following distribution requirement(s) for students who registered at the University prior to the Fall of 2018:

Information about mode of delivery (synchronous/asynchronous/other details):

Due to the instructor's prior existing conditions the course will be offered online and asynchronously until safe to meet in person.

\*Students who registered at the University of Guelph after Fall 2018 must fulfill the "new" major and minor requirements. Students who registered at the University of Guelph prior to Fall 2018 must fulfill the requirements of the Calendar in effect when they first enrolled unless they have filed a Schedule of Studies Change Request to change to the 2018-2019 calendar. For more information, please consult the major and minor checklists at <https://www.uoguelph.ca/arts/sets/undergraduate/english/current-student-information>.