

**ALMA COLLEGE**  
**THD 227-01 Stage Combat I**  
**WINTER 2017, M/W/F 10:30-11:20am, F 1:30-4:00pm**

Instructor: Prof. Tommy Wedge	Required Class Materials
<b>Office:</b> Design Lab	Clothing Fit for Movement
<b>Office Hours:</b> Fridays 11:30-1:30pm	Athletic Shoes
<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:wedgetj@alma.edu">wedgetj@alma.edu</a>	Leather Gloves
	Water Bottle
<b>Required Text:</b> NONE	Knee Support ( <i>recommended but not required</i> )

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Stage Combat aims to teach the student the fine art of physical combat in a theatrical setting. This course will teach the proper technique and safety of how to perform unarmed, rapier and dagger, and found object stage combat scenes. Students will perform their scenes for peers and be graded on their performances for believability, safety, partnering, class attitude, and attendance.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- 1) Improved physical conditioning (strength, balance, coordination, endurance, and flexibility) through rigorous warmups and practicing of armed and unarmed stage combat.
- 2) Improved partnering skills, including the ability to adapt to a variety of partners engendering trust through observation and listening with an ever present eye toward safety.
- 3) Increased powers of personal control and concentration
- 4) Acquire solid technique of swordplay for the stage with an understanding of the components and use of each aspect of the weapon
- 5) Enhanced confidence and competency as an actor/combatant/choreographer in both improvised situations and scripted environments
- 6) Improved skills for critiquing the performance of stage violence, both for yourself and others

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

If you have a physical condition (e.g., with knee, heart, back, lungs) that might be adversely affected by stretching, falling, tumbling, twisting, or running, please let me know so that together we can make adjustments to the work. Be advised that stage combat is a very strenuous activity and often involves physical risk. You may experience nicks, small bruises, and minor muscle strain at various points in the process. More serious injuries, though possible, are **highly unlikely if the work is executed with proper technique.**

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Najarian, Robert. *The Art of Unarmed Combat*. Focal Press, 2016.

Martinez, J.D. *Combat Mime*. Burnham Inc, 2001.

Lane, Richard. *Swashbuckling: A Step-by-Step Guide to the Art of Stage Combat and Theatrical Swordplay*. 2nd Ed., Limelight Editions, 2003.

### CLASS NOTES

- \*Attend class regularly and arrive promptly. *You are allowed two absence without your grade being affected; your third absence will result in your course grade being lowered by 10%, with each subsequent absence incurring an additional 10% penalty (e.g. 4 absences = -20% to course grade, 5 absences = -30%, etc.). Also, as tardiness disrupts the concentration of the students working, three tardies will equal one absence. If you miss more than 15 minutes of class you will automatically be considered absent whether you remain for class or not.***
- \*Cell phones must be turned OFF during class.** If you have a situation where you must be reached during class time, please communicate this with the instructor who will attempt to accommodate this. Expect to lose points if your device beeps, vibrates, or rings during performances.
- \*Complete all readings, class work, and assignments on time.**
- \*Late assignments are penalized at 25% per week late.** If, for example, you have an assignment due on Monday, the assignment is at a -25% until the following Monday, after which the second week late will begin with a -50% to the assignment. It will remain at -50% until the following Monday, after which the assignment will be a ZERO. This means after 2 weeks, it will not be accepted. Assignments are due at the BEGINNING of class.
- \*Make the required commitment of time and energy, both during and outside of class.**
- \*If you need an extension or cannot complete an assignment, performance, or exam:** (1) contact the instructor right away; (2) provide proof of your emergency and; (3) schedule a new time to complete the work. Please remember that extensions must be approved and are not automatic upon request.
- \*Participate in all graded and nongraded activities.** If your absence or unsatisfactory involvement creates a problem for classmates, your grade will reflect that. It is unlikely that you will be able to complete missed work or to present poorly prepared work.
- \*Take performance commitments seriously.** If you are scheduled to perform and you do not come to class, you may lose your opportunity and may not be able to complete missed work. Please let classmates and/or the instructor know well in advance if you must be absent on a performance day. If you are working with others, they may decide to go on without you. If they wait and you have an opportunity to perform, expect that points will be deducted from your score.

### DISABILITY SERVICES STATEMENT

Students with disabilities that may restrict their full participation in the course activities are encouraged to meet with the instructor or contact Alma College's office of Disability Services.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The Theatre Department adheres to all policies and procedures specified in the [Student Handbook](#) with respect to academic honesty. Your work should be your own. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated and will result in serious penalties.

### **GRADING: Your grade is based upon the following:**

<b>Unarmed Fight</b>	<b>100 pts</b>
<b>Rapier &amp; Dagger Fight</b>	<b>100 pts</b>
<b>Found Object Fight</b>	<b>100 pts</b>
<b>Performance Analyses (5 at 15pts each)</b>	<b>75 pts</b>
<b>Rapier &amp; Dagger Quiz</b>	<b>25 pts</b>
<b>Attendance &amp; Participation</b>	<b>100 pts</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500 points</b>

<b>GRADES &amp; POINTS</b>		
<b>A (100-90.01%) = 500-451 pts</b>	<b>AB (90-85.01%) = 450-426 pts</b>	<b>B (85-80.01%) = 425-401 pts</b>
<b>BC (80-75.01%) = 400-376 pts</b>	<b>C (75-70.01%) = 375-351 pts</b>	<b>CD (70-65.01%) = 350-326 pts</b>
<b>D (65-60.01%) = 325-301 pts</b>	<b>DE (60-55.01%) = 300-276 pts</b>	<b>E (55-0%) = 275-335 pts</b>
<b>You must have at least 276 points in order to pass this course.</b>		

### **GRADING FOR FIGHTS: Unarmed, Rapier & Dagger, and Found Object (100pts each)**

The Unarmed and Rapier & Dagger fights will be choreographed by the instructor while the Found Object fight will be choreographed by the student performers and graded upon the following:

- A = Wowed us! Safe, very credible acting, fresh and/or dynamic use of fight choreography
- B = Quite strong. Safe and credible but not consistently dynamic
- C = Meets minimum requirements of the assignment but inconsistencies in technique and breakdowns in credibility are apparent
- D = Careless, unsafe. Probably too fast, out of control, and under-rehearsed
- E = The assignment's requirements are not being met on any level

### **PERFORMANCE ANALYSES (5 at 15pts each)**

After viewing video of your final dress rehearsal and performance for your Unarmed and Rapier & Dagger fights along with the final dress rehearsal of your Found Object fight, student will answer a brief prompt responding to your work. Grading will reflect the accuracy and depth of the carefully proofread insight provided.

### **RAPIER & DAGGER QUIZ (25pts)**

Students will be required to name the various parts of the Rapier & Dagger, define principles of safe technique, and prove understanding of basic guards, parries, and attacks in this 25pt assessment.

### **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (100pts)**

Participation points are earned for attendance, discussions (online or in class), assignments, and exercises (written, oral, and/or performance). THESE POINTS ARE NOT GUARANTEED! Please see the "Class Notes" section for information regarding this requirement. **Additionally, half of the total (50pts) are rewarded based off ushering for shows in the Heritage center.**

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE\*\* (Click [HERE](#) for Alma's Academic Calendar)**

	MON	WED	FRI	FRI LAB
WK 1: 1/9-1/13	Syllabus, Introductions, Footwork, Backward & Spiral Falls, Slaps		<b>NO CLASS DUE TO KCACTF</b>	
WK 2: 1/16-1/20	Unarmed REVIEW, add Forward Falls, Rolls, Pushes, Punches, Blocks, Avoids			
WK 3: 1/23-1/27	Unarmed REVIEW, add Front & Rear Chokes, Hair & Ear Pulls, Grabs, Kicks			
WK 4: 1/30-2/3	REVIEW UNARMED TECHNIQUES, BEGIN CHOREOGRAPHY			
WK 5: 2/6-2/10	UNARMED CHOREOGRAPHY			
WK 6: 2/13-2/17	UNARMED CHOREOGRAPHY		Unarmed Final Dress	<b>UNARMED FIGHT</b> <b>P. Analysis 1 DUE</b> R&D Intro, Safety Footwork, Guards,
WK 7: 2/20-2/24	<b>P. Analysis 2 DUE (Monday)</b> R&D REVIEW, add Defenses, Attacks, Lunges			
<b>WK 8: 2/27-3/3</b>	<b>WINTER BREAK! Midterm grades due 2/28 at 9am</b>			
WK 9: 3/6-3/10	R&D REVIEW, add Hanging, Reinforced, & Transfer Parries, Pris d'Fers			
WK 10: 3/13-3/17	<b>R&amp;D QUIZ</b>	R&D REVIEW, add Corps-a-Corps, Cross Parries, Disarms, Wounds/Kills		
WK 11: 3/20-3/24	R&D CHOREOGRAPHY			
WK 12: 3/27-3/31	R&D CHOREOGRAPHY			<b>R&amp;D Final Dress</b>
WK 13: 4/3-4/7	<b>R&amp;D FIGHT,</b> <b>P. Analysis 3 DUE</b>	Found Object CH. <b>P. Analysis 4 DUE</b>	Found Object CHOREOGRAPHY	
WK 14: 4/10-4/14	Found Object CHOREOGRAPHY			<b>Found Object Final Dress</b>
<b>MONDAY 4/17</b>	<b><a href="#">FINAL EXAMS</a>, 9-11am. <b>Found object performance, P. Analysis 5 DUE</b></b>			
<b>TUESDAY 4/25</b>	<b>FINAL GRADES DUE: 9am</b>			

*\*\*Class activities may vary from what is listed as the instructor reserves the right to amend the schedule as required.*