**Making It Up As We Go: Improvisation Techniques for Life and Learning**
ARTSCI 1138.xx
Freshmen Seminar 1 Credit Hour

Day/Time: TBA
Place: Reed Hall, 191

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**Required Text:***Yes, And: How Improvisation Reverses “No, But” Thinking and Improves Creativity and Collaboration* by Kelly Leonard and Tom Yorton

**Course Description**: Many people know the art form of improvisation through one source – the popular TV show, *Whose Line is it Anyway?* Young actors often love improvisation because, technically, it requires no rehearsals and no memorization of lines, and gives them the opportunity to connect with each other through popular culture/entertainment. But actors aren’t the only ones who can benefit from learning some basic improvisation skills. Improvisation is built around the central idea of “Yes, and…” – an idea is offered, that idea is enthusiastically accepted, and then another idea is added to it. In this way, scenes and situations are built. In this way also, groups can learn to work more creatively and playfully together on projects, organizations can make sure all members feel heard and valued, and everyone can experience moments of success. In improvisation, there are no “bad” ideas. No winners. No losers. Success happens when the entire group learns to listen and support/build on each other’s ideas.

In this class, we’ll:

* Watch some examples of comedy improvisation and talk a bit about its history
* Read ***Yes, And: How Improvisation Reverses “No, But” Thinking and Improves Creativity and Collaboration*** by Kelly Leonard and Tom Yorton
* Keep a journal of funny moments, bright ideas, and reading reflections
* Learn and play a LOT of classic improvisation games

**Assignments:**Class participation/attendance (15 classes x 5 pts. per class = 75 points): Showing up and saying “Yes!” (and…you’ll learn all about this) to the work we’re doing is incredibly important. If it wasn’t, I’d just tell you to read the book and report back to me. At first, the work might feel silly – YOU might feel silly. But I guarantee you, you won’t be alone in this feeling. Eventually, you’ll feel more comfortable and become braver and bolder than you were when you started the semester. What a great way to begin your college career!

Readings/Journals (15 writing prompts x 5 pts. per submission = 75 points): Readings and reflective writing (your journal prompts) exist to enrich your understanding of the material we’re covering. You will have weekly journal prompts consisting primarily of reading the assigned chapter from your text, then responding to what you’ve read either through writing down “take-aways” (bits and pieces you found interesting, inspiring, odd, etc.), or responding to a writing prompt given to you based on the material covered in the chapter. Some weeks, you will be given an in-class writing prompt – we’ll take 15 minutes or so of class time to write.

**Grading: Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory**Class participation/Attendance: 50%
Readings/Journal: 50%

**Students must receive a minimum of 120 out of 150 points to receive a “S” (Satisfactory grade)**

**Course Objectives:
In this course, you will:**

* Learn to work more effectively and creatively in groups
* Gain confidence in sharing your voice and ideas
* Become a more attentive listener
* Practice being a creative problem solver
* Build trust in yourself and others

**Week by Week (Readings in Red/Journal in Purple/Theme for the week in Blue**)

**1.Quick and Dirty: An Introduction to the class, the syllabus, and Improvisation**

2. Reading: Chapter 1 (Journal Prompt Due)
Getting Started: The Circle Games

3. Reading: Chapter 2 (Journal Prompt Due)
Introducing “Yes, And…”

4. Reading: Chapter 3 (Journal Prompt Due)
Building Ensemble/Building Trust

5. Continuing with Ensemble Building (In-class Journal Prompt)

6. Reading: Chapter 4 (Journal Prompt Due)
Co-Creating

7. Continue with Co-Creating (In-class Journal Prompt)

8. Reading: Chapter 5 (Journal Prompt Due)
Dealing with Change

9. Going with the Flow/Letting Go (In-class Journal Prompt)

10. Reading: Chapter 6 (Journal Prompt Due)
Fail More, Fail Better

11. Reading: Chapter 7 (Journal Prompt Due)
Sometimes You Lead, Sometimes You Follow

12. More Leading and Following (In-class Journal Prompt)

13. Reading: Chapter 8 (Journal Prompt Due)
Listen Up…

14. Reading: Conclusion (Journal Prompt Due)

**15**. **Celebration**! (In-class Prompt)

**Brief Biographical Statement:**I am in my 11th year of teaching at The Ohio State Lima campus as a Lecturer of Theatre, focusing on teaching classes in performance (a more in-depth version of this class is one of them!) and directing productions. I am originally from St. Louis, MO, and have lived and worked all around the Midwest and eastern part of the country as an actor, director, educator, and arts administrator. I am a bit of a generalist as an actor, director and creator, preferring theatre that is small and scrappy (as opposed to large and fancy). My areas of interest are varied and diverse, including contemporary plays, musical theatre, creating original work, Shakespeare, improvisation, and applied theatre/theatre for social justice.

**Statement on Academic Misconduct**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct at: http://studentconduct.osu.edu/

**Statement on Disability Services**

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know privately as soon as possible such that we can discuss accommodation options. To establish reasonable accommodations, you may want to register with Student Life Disability Services. After that registration, please make arrangements with me as soon as possible to review the recommended accommodations for you so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. The contact information for Ohio State Lima Disability Services follows: Karen Meyer, 154 Student Services Building, 567-242-7510, meyer.193@osu.edu.

**Diversity Statement**

The Ohio State University at Lima is committed to creating a safe and inclusive campus where all people, their contributions, and their perspectives are equally valued and respected regardless of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, military status, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, protected veteran status, or any other basis. As a campus community we value and respect the dignity and worth of every person and celebrate differences. To report issues of discrimination, contact the Office of Diversity and Inclusion on Lima campus, patton.112@osu.edu, https://lima.osu.edu/current-students/office-of-diversity-and-inclusion/, https://equity.osu.edu/.