THED 560: Innovative Strategies in Drama Education (3 credits)
Summer 2015
Gillian McNally, gillian.mcnally@unco.edu, (970) 351-2579
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Frasier 249

Prerequisites: THED 600, THED 670

Course Description: In this course, students will research theatre education strategies practiced in the U.S. and internationally. Particular focus will be paid to theatre for social change and devising, or creating original work. Students will study innovative pedagogical methods and performance methods employed with youth in school and alternative settings. Participants will study methods such as Theatre in Education, Devising Original Plays, Improvised Performance, Theatre for Social Change, and Applied Theatre Practice.

Course Objectives:
1. To research national and international innovative programs with youth.
2. To discuss and evaluate current strategies in theatre classrooms and examine the possible effect with innovative strategies.
3. To generate a new curriculum unit inspired by research of innovative drama strategies.
4. To devise and perform an original theatre piece with classmates.

Outline of Course Content:
1. Research of innovative youth theatre program.
3. Development of curricular unit plan.
4. Read various articles and books that examine alternative theatre education strategies.
5. Reflection paper on strategies and ideas presented in course.

Course Requirements:
1. Research of innovative youth theatre program: Students will create a PowerPoint/Prezi presentation on a youth theatre company from the U.S. or an international location. Students will collect materials, conduct online research, and speak with a representative of youth theatre program. Students will share research with classmates on Blackboard.
2. Participation and reflection of sample curriculum: Students will participate in sample lesson plans of innovative theatre curriculum. Class discussions, journals, and final reflection paper will be used to assess thoughts on using these methods in the classroom.
3. Development of curricular unit plan: Participants will develop a curricular unit to be implemented in their teaching. Lesson plans, assessment and evaluation
methods must be included in the project. Curriculum must have evidence of use of innovative strategies studied in the course.

4. **Read various articles and books that examine alternative theatre education strategies:** Teachers will discuss and write in journals as they track their thoughts of how innovative strategies can be implemented in the classroom.

5. **Create original devised piece:** As a cohort, students will investigate a theme and create an original theatre piece based on that theme.

**Method of Evaluation:** letter grade
- Research and PowerPoint presentation of innovative youth theatre program: 10%
- Book Report: 15%
- Development of curricular unit plan: 20%
- Read various articles and books that examine alternative theatre education strategies: 5%
- Participation in Class: 10%
- Creation and implementation of final project: 40%

**Required Texts:**
- Games for Actors and Non-Actors, Augusto Boal (ISBN-10: 0415267080)
- Making the Leap: Theatre and Empowerment by Sara Clifford and Anna Herrmann (ISBN-10: 1853026328)

**Readings on library electronic reserves**

*Instructions for finding articles on library website:
- To access these articles, go to [http://library.unco.edu/](http://library.unco.edu/). In the upper middle portion of the page, click on the tab that says “Reserves”. Enter my name or course number. It will prompt you to enter your name and bear number. Readings are listed by author. Click on the reading to view!*

**Additional Resources for further research:**
- Building Moral Communities Through Educational Drama (Contemporary Studies in Social and Policy Issues in Education) by Betty Jane Wagner
- Structuring Drama Work by Jonothan Neelands
- Drama Classroom: Action, Reflection, Transformation by Philip Taylor
- Education Is Politics: Critical Teaching Across Differences, K-12, A Tribute to the Life and Work of Paulo Freire, Edited by Ira Shor, College of Staten Island, CUNY, Caroline Pari
- Applied Theatre: Creating Transformative Encounters in the Community by Philip Taylor
Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Access Center (970) 351-2289 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**Course Policies**

**Late Paper Policy:** No late papers will be accepted without previous consent of instructor due to personal circumstances. If you would like an extension, arrangements must be made **AHEAD** of deadline or the paper will not be accepted.

**Communication:** If you have a question or are unclear about anything **please ask!** I can’t help you if I don’t know that you need help! Email. Ask to speak to me after class. I’m more than happy to work one-on-one with all of you if you need it! If you don’t understand an assignment, I ask that you do two things: 1. Re-read instructions and email classmates to see if you are on the right track. 2. If you have made several attempts, but still cannot find an answer, then please contact me via email.

If there are any changes in the syllabus, I will email you as soon as possible. Please be respectful of the instructor and of classmates: please respond to emails promptly. For me, I understand if you are busy. If I email you at a busy time, please respond with a nice, “got your message, will get back to you soon” response. This helps me know that you have received the email. It is expected that you are responsible for all information emailed to you. Please be courteous and professional to classmates and instructor at all times. I encourage you to avoid complaining and work to find solutions and positive educational growth instead. Graduate school is a challenging, glorious experience. It is firmly in your hands to make this a positive experience.

**Academic misconduct,** including plagiarism and other forms of cheating, will not be tolerated. If you choose to plagiarize, I will report your actions to UNC authorities and you will receive a failing grade. Plagiarism may be grounds for being dismissed in the program. Always cite the work of others out of respect and professional behavior. You may use quotes from early postings in the course, but you may not do a copy/cut/paste into a new paper.
**Expectations of Writing:** This MA in Theatre Ed encourages students to be both practitioners and scholars. Therefore, I have very high expectations for your writing. You should think about a place to publish the papers you write in this class! Writing is often a difficult skill for many people. I encourage you to find a writing tutor to help you with your papers. It can be very useful to have someone proofread your material. I encourage you to always ask WHY. Higher grades will be given to students who show an ability to demonstrate higher-level thinking and analysis in their writing. Please contact the Writing Center for more assistance: 970-351-2056. This semester is academically rigorous. This is good. It makes you a smarter, better teacher.

Everything you turn in must be in MLA format. If you do not have the book, please buy the most recent edition. (7th) It is good practice to be in the habit of using MLA format. Our plan is to help you with professional writing style as much as possible so that it is second nature by the time you write your thesis. Points will be deducted if you do not use proper MLA format for work.

The material taught in this course meets the following K-12 Colorado Model Content Standards in Drama and Theatre:

**Standard 1**
Create: The creation of drama and theatre is a demonstration of learned skills in forming new theatrical works, interpreting theatrical works for performance and design, and developing characters and analyzing roles.

**Standard 2**
Perform: The theatre process is a product of the knowledge and essential skills gained in the study of theatre toward the expression of the human experience in story, movement, speech, and staging for an intended audience.

**Standard 3**
Critically Respond: An informed literacy, ethical judgment, and cultural research are key aspects of theatre arts study. Responding focuses on the artistic and scientific knowledge of conventions, cultures, styles, genres, theories, and technologies needed to know better choices and best practices.

**The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Standards**

**Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions**
Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

**Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation**
The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the performance of candidates, the unit, and its programs.

**Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice**
The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and
demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

**Standard 4: Diversity**
The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations, including higher education and P–12 school faculty, candidates, and students in P–12 schools.

**Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development**
Faculty are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance. They also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.

**Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources**
The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

**National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) Teaching Competency Standards for Theatre Education**
The theatre teacher is expected to understand the total contemporary educational program—including relationships among the arts—in order to apply theatre competencies in teaching situations and to integrate theatre instruction into the total process of education. Essential competencies are:

1. An understanding of child development and the identification and understanding of psychological principles of learning as these relate to theatre education;
2. An understanding of the philosophical and social foundation underlying theatre in education and the ability to express a rationale for personal attitudes and beliefs;
3. An ability to assess aptitudes, experiential backgrounds, skills, and interests of individuals and groups of pupils, to devise learning experiences to meet assessed needs, and to manage classrooms and rehearsals effectively;
4. A knowledge of current methods and materials available in all fields and levels of theatre education;
5. An understanding of the principles and methods of developing curricula and the short- and long-term units that comprise them;
6. An understanding of evaluative techniques and the ability to apply them in assessing both the progress of students and in the objectives and procedures of the curriculum; and
7. An awareness of the need for continuing study, self-evaluation, and professional growth.