

# Syllabus for *Theatre for Youth: Secondary Theatre Techniques* (TA 452)

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Instructor: Deb Greer

Office Hours: MW 10:00-11:00am and by appt.

Recommended Texts: *Theatre Games for Young Performers* by Maria C. Novelly; assigned articles

### Course Objectives

At the completion of TA 452, students should be able to:

- Discuss the plots of plays available for junior high and high school age performers
- Develop a play production plan which would include play selection criteria, play analysis, audition options, set and costume research/ideas, and a rehearsal schedule
- Effectively design, lead and produce devised, student-written performance pieces
- Locate various resources and materials for selecting and producing plays for young audiences
- Better understand how to direct a scripted play for junior high and high school age

### Course Requirements and Expectations

- Regular attendance (more than 3 absences will lower your final grade)
- Full commitment and attendance at all scheduled rehearsals with your students
- Turning in all written portions of assignments typed and on time- NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED. No exceptions!
- All reading assignments are to be completed by class time on the date assigned in the syllabus

### Evaluation

*Please take the initiative to keep the instructor aware of your efforts and progress!*

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

#### **Written Review of a Live Performance: point value = 20**

You may elect to attend a play at an elementary or secondary school, at a community college, or a community or professional theatre (WWU performances are not an option for this assignment). In a typed paper, no longer than two pages, describe your reaction to the performance. Address the acting, set, lighting, costumes and/or other areas of the production that captured your attention, either positively or negatively. Briefly summarize the plot of the play and address the following questions: What was the theme of the play? What was your favorite moment? Would you consider viewing this production worthwhile? Submit your review along with a ticket stub and program from the performance. The production must be attended within the time-frame of this course.

#### **Book Survey: point value = 20**

You are to locate a text specifically addressing theatre for youth ages 12-18. It can be a college textbook, a collection of essays or a "popular" (meaning non-academic) text. In a typed report no longer than three pages, double-spaced, include the following:

- Provide complete bibliographic information: author, text, publisher, date of publication (MLA style citation).

- Examine the table of contents. What major topics does the author cover? Do not merely reproduce the table of contents, but analyze and then summarize what you believe to be the major focus of the text.
- Examine the preface and/or introduction. For whom did the author write the text- drama specialists? Teachers? College students? Parents?
- Select one chapter that interests you, read it, then briefly summarize the contents. What major concepts or idea are included in the chapter? Also include an explanation of why you chose this chapter.
- What is your reaction to the text? Describe how the text added to your understanding of using drama with youth or list questions the text raised for you.

#### **Article Review: point value = 10**

Select an article from an academic journal, magazine or website focused on theatre for youth. If possible, submit a photocopy of the article or a printout of the title page of the website. In a type report no longer than three pages, double-spaced, include the following:

- Provide complete bibliographic information: author, text, publisher, date of publication (MLA style citation).
- In one paragraph, summarize the contents of the article.
- What topic, activity, or idea addressed interests you and why?
- Describe how the article added to your understanding of theatre in secondary education.

#### **4 Play Reports: point value = 10 each (40 total)**

Select a play written for junior high/high school performers/audiences from the selection in library. In a typed report, provide the following information:

- Title of play and name of playwright.
- Number of characters (indicate number of male and female roles also).
- Description of sets and costume needs.
- Brief discussion of what you perceive to be the theme of the play and/or the message intended by the playwright.
- Your personal responses to the play- would you direct it? Why or why not?
- What problems does it present to you as a director/producer?

#### **Service-Learning Community Project: point value = 100**

You will be assigned in groups of three or four to one of the community centers arranged by Amy through the Center for Service-Learning. As a group, you will be in charge of directing a 45 minute "showcase" with your community group of junior high and/or high school age performers. The final product will include, but not be limited to, at least 10 minutes of scripted material (a 10-minute play, 10 minutes from a scripted age appropriate work, one act of a play, etc.) and 3 complete devised pieces developed/ coached to performance level. You will need to create a production calendar, work with your community contact for students' needs and limitations, cast and produce the showcase. Specifics will be discussed in class.

#### **Production Journal: point value = 50**

Individually, you will keep all the materials needed for your showcase including:

- Production calendar (rehearsal schedule, expected deadlines, dress-rehearsals, performance date and time)
  - Script (this includes both the 10 minutes of material and the final product of the devised pieces)
  - Research
  - Set and costume design
  - Journal of your thoughts and experiences
  - Photos of the production
- Keep your work current and be diligent about this process. You will use this material as an interview tool, so make it neat and clear.

#### **Showcase Summary: point value = 25**

You are required to attend the showcases of your fellow classmates (there will be a total of 4- so 3 in addition to your own). In a typed, double-spaced paper, please detail your response to the showcases produced by the rest of the class. These are open-ended observations, but be sure to address issues and ideas from class and your own research over the quarter.

#### **Attendance/Participation: point value = 35**

Later in the quarter we will only meet as a class on Mondays, with teams meeting on

either Wednesday or Friday for individual trouble-shooting/check-in with me as needed. I am also available at any time by appointment to help with your work. Attendance at each scheduled class meeting, your team times, and especially your scheduled rehearsals with your community group is mandatory. You are allowed three "free" absences from class meetings before it will seriously affect your grade, but you will lose points for any missed/cancelled rehearsal time with your students.

Participation/Attendance.....	30 pts
Interactive Story.....	20 pts
Reader's Theatre Script.....	25 pts
Adapted Script.....	25 pts
Midterm Project (performance and checklist).....	40 pts
Final Project (Devised Activity.).....	60 pts
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>200 pts</b>

### Grades

Grades will be based on points earned for assignments, attendance and participation. Letter equivalents are determined by dividing the top half of the total points for any assignment into 4 equal lettered "zones." The same is true for the final total, which is how I will ultimately arrive at a letter grade to report to the university. So...

263-300 = A  
 225-262 = B  
 187-224 = C  
 149-186 = D  
 148 and below = F

### Tentative Course Schedule: TA 452

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
1/9	Introductions	
1/11	Community Guests: sign-up for projects and team meeting times	
1/14	<b>Reading:</b> Heathcote article: "From the Particular to the Universal"	
1/16	Discuss Team rehearsal schedules; contact sheet for team	
1/18		<b>Play Report #1 due Reading:</b> Bolton: "Theatre Form in Drama Teaching"
1/21	<i>No Class- MLK Observance</i>	
1/23	<b>Reading:</b> Gaskill "Working With Actors"	
1/25	<b>Reading:</b> Robinson "Drama, Theatre and Social Reality"	
1/28		<b>Play Report #2 due</b>

1/30	Teams _____ and _____	
2/1	Teams _____ and _____	
2/4		<b>Play Report #3 due; final 10 min. script choices for showcase</b>
2/6	Teams _____ and _____	
2/8	Teams _____ and _____	
2/11		<b>Article Due</b>
<b>NO class: ACTF Week</b>		
2/25		<b>Play Report #4 due</b>
3/4		<b>Book Survey Due</b>
<b>Final Showcase Week</b>		

**Final Projects Due: BY 10:00am Tuesday, December 10th**