

Course Syllabus

THTR 452: Secondary Theatre Techniques

Instructor: Deb Currier

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Texts: Signs of Change: New Directions in Theatre Education by Joan Lazarus (revised edition)

Theatre Games for Young Performers by Maria C. Novelly

Departmental Goals and Assessment Outcomes

This course meets the following skills acquisition outcomes in the departmental assessment plan:

- *Analyzes and interprets dramatic literature and performance from the standpoint of designer, performer, director, playwright or critic*
- *Functions effectively as a member of a collaborative team in the preparation and realization of a public performance*

Course Goals

Students who have successfully completed this course will be able to demonstrate their understanding of:

- The essential elements of directing a play for youth ages 12-18 years, including script selection, design elements, audition procedure, rehearsal and performance.
- Approaches to designing, leading and producing student-written, devised scripts.
- Age-appropriate material for production at the junior high and high school level.
- Current theory and trends in the area of theatre for youth.
- Collaboration with peer artists, youth and schools to produce a workshop showcase.
- Service-learning as a connection whereby the needs of students and community are fulfilled through active participation in a thoughtfully organized service experience.

Course Objectives

Students who have successfully completed this course will be able to:

- Select and analyze appropriate plays available for junior high and high school age performers.
- Work effectively as a collaborator and team-teacher with peers.
- Apply directing techniques and knowledge to a workshop showcase for junior high and high school age.
- Articulate personal Theatre for Youth directing philosophy within the guidelines of creation, performance and response.
- Articulate and discuss current TFY theory

Course Expectations

- Regular class attendance (1 “free” absence, but otherwise a doctor’s note/official paperwork is required)
- Full commitment and attendance at **all** scheduled workshops/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

Criminal History and Background Check – this is performed through WWU University police and must be completed before April 12, 2018. \$20 fee.

Evaluation

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

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Assignments:

Teaching and Learning Academy (TLA) – 25 points: Participation in a minimum of 3 out of the 4 spring quarter TLA bi-monthly dialogue sessions in the Library Commons, 2nd floor across from Zoe's Bagels. TLA meets every other week, Weds and Thurs at 12-1:20 or 2-3:20 on both days. *That means there are 4 duplicate sessions to choose from every other week.* You may not attend more than 2 sessions in the same week for credit. Dialogue sessions start Weds, April 11 and Thurs, April 12 then every other week until May 24.

For more info go to: <https://library.wvu.edu/use/fla>

- Week 1 (Apr 11/12): What does it mean to be educated?
- Week 2 (Apr 25/26): Do we live in a hypersensitive society, and if so, how does it play into our context here at Western? What's the difference between highly sensitive and hypersensitive?
- Week 3 (May 9/10): How does diversity bring us together or push us apart?
- Week 4 (May 23/24): What is a safe space? Do they really exist?

2 In-Service secondary theatre educator observations: point value = 30 (15 points each)

You are required to observe two different junior high/high school theatre educators during the quarter. The guidelines for your observations (the prompts to answer) are located in the assignments on Canvas. You may either download the Word document or type your answers in directly.

Service-Learning Community Project: point value = 100 points total

As a group, you will be leading a workshop/rehearsal series at a site assigned to you. You and your group will be in charge of designing lesson plans, collaborating successfully as a group (meaning, no one person does more work than their peers), keeping individual journals and planning/leading a “showcase” with your community group.

You will need to create a workshop/rehearsal calendar, work with your community contact for students' needs and limitations, and produce the showcase. Specifics will be discussed in class, but here is what you need to turn in on Canvas:

Project Binder (part of the overall SL project – 70 pts):

AS A GROUP, you will create a well-organized, easily navigable binder containing the following:

- Workshop/rehearsal calendar (workshop schedule, materials needed, final showcase “dress” rehearsals, performance date and time)
- A separate tab for each person in your group with copies of your script(s) and all blocking/tech/prop notes, as applicable
- Materials generated by your students during workshops (ex: any writing produced from an exercise, etc)- scan documents in original writing
- Workshop lesson plans – all lesson/activity plans, completed and typed -with learning objective(s) and a list of ALL materials needed. This includes warm-up games or rehearsal games you taught during the residency.
- Research and documents – any and all research done to generate workshop or rehearsal material; all documents including permission slips, photo releases, etc.
- **Photos/Videos of the process and production** (N/A for Visions)

Keep your work current and be diligent about this process.

Peer and self-evaluation (part of the overall SL project ~ 30 points) – This will be completed and turned in on Canvas to maintain confidentiality.

Reflection Journal (on Canvas, ongoing) 8 entries, 10 points each; points = 80

There are separate reflection journals for each of you on Canvas under “assignments.” *It is expected that you apply knowledge from the readings* as well as the experiential learning happening in the practicum project in your reflections.

Class Contribution (attendance/participation): point value = 25

This includes the class discussions on the readings assigned as well as showing up – including the *required attendance* at the Outreach Tour on-campus show. After your service-learning projects start on-site, we will be

meeting from 3:00-3:40pm in our classroom before you all head out to your sites.. Attendance at each scheduled class meeting, your team times, and especially your scheduled workshops with your community group is mandatory. You are allowed a “free” absence from a *class* meeting before it will seriously affect your grade, *but* you will **lose 15 points for any unscheduled missed/cancelled rehearsal time** with your group.

Grading

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...

200-176 = A range: 200-84 = A; 283-176 = A-
175-151 = B range: 175-167 = B+; 166-151 = B-
150-126 = C range: 150-142 = C+; 141-133 = C-
125-101 = D range: 125-117 = D+; 117-109 = D; 108-101 = D-
100 and below = F

Academic Dishonesty Policy: Western Washington University students are responsible for reading, understanding, and following the policy and procedures regarding academic dishonesty as set forth in the *WWU Academic Dishonesty Policy and Procedure* (see Appendix D of the University Bulletin).

Reasonable Accommodation Policy: It is the policy of Western Washington University to provide reasonable accommodation to the known physical, sensory, or mental limitations of qualified individuals except where such accommodation would impose undue hardship on the institution. To request accommodation, students must contact WWU Disability Resources for Students at 360-650-3844 or www.drs.wwu.edu.

Equality and Disability Statements: We in the Theatre Dept. are dedicated to establishing a learning environment that promotes diversity including race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, and physical disability. It is important that this is a safe classroom environment. We will practice being generous and respectful members of our classroom community.

Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information of which the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should notify the instructor as early in the term as possible. Reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities may be arranged through the Office of Student Life, x3844.

Want/need extra credit? Attend at ONE of the following productions* and write a short production review: (15 points) Instructions on Canvas under Assignments.

Sehome High School’s production of *Annie: The Musical*

Performances:

May 2, 3, 5, 10, 11 at 7:00 p.m.; May 12 - 2:00 p.m., student tix \$8.

Nooksack Valley High School’s production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*

Performances

April 20, 21, 27, 28 at 7:00pm; April 22 & 29 at 2:00pm; Tix \$8 sold at the door

Bellingham High School “What-A-Sho” Review, supposedly Monday, May 25th.

Roosevelt High School (Seattle) production of *Fiddler on the Roof*

Performances:

May 24, 25, 31 and June 1, 2 at 7:00pm and June 3 at 2:00pm

Tix \$12 and available online at FB site

*A high school production of your choice which is *not* your alma mater, subject to approval

WORKING Course Schedule

Subject to change, as can happen when working with community partners! ☺

We will always meet as a class at 3:00pm in BH 104. Once your SL projects begin, however, we will only be meeting for 30-40 minutes before you leave for your sites.

Tues	4/3	Introductions: Syllabus, etc.; <i>Lesson Plans: How to write’m and how to use’m</i>
Thurs	4/5	Reading: <u>Signs...</u> Chapter 1; Groups: contracts, roles, possible activities

(brainstorm)

****Friday 4/6: Reflection 1 due by midnight – just this first week one!****

T 4/10 **Reading: Signs...** Chapters 2 and 3- discussion and planning; **Visit Fairhaven/Visions;**
Share group contracts and first day plans

R 4/12 FMS: Auditions

T 4/17 **Reading: Signs...** Chapter 4

R 4/19

Required attendance: Sunday April 22, 7:00pm Old Main Theater: Multicultural Outreach Tour performance-FREE!

T 4/24 **Reading: Signs...** Chapter 5

R 4/26

T 5/1 **Reading: Signs...** Chapter 6

R 5/3 **Teacher observation 1 due**

T 5/8 **Reading: Signs...** Chapter 7

R 5/10 SL sites

T 5/15 SL sites

R 5/17 SL sites

T 5/22 SL sites

R 5/24 SL sites

T 5/29 **Visions Showcase!**

R 5/31 **FMS showcase!**

T 6/5 **Teacher observation 2 due**

R 6/7 **HS Production Review due (if you are doing one)**

5/29 (Visions) and 5/31 (FMS): Final Showcases– During class time! You are required to attend the showcase of the other group in the class. FMS may have an evening performance that night or Friday evening – that is still TBD.

Final: Weds 6/13, 1:00-3:00pm~ Production Journals and evals due!

Reflection Journal Prompts

Your reflections are due on Canvas. Be prepared to discuss your reflections in team meetings during the week they are due. The completed reflection journal is then included (graded) in your final project. Please do not do the reflections ahead of time, as they are meant to be explored as the project unfolds.

4/3-5: What is your teaching philosophy? What do you anticipate to be the biggest hurdles and/or challenges for you in directing jr high/ high school age actors?

4/10-12: What are the greatest gifts and assets you bring to your project team? In what one area do you feel you have the most room to grow?

During Residencies:

Week 1 (4/17-19): What did you do this week with your group that was fun or satisfying?

Week 2 (4/24-26): Imagine/picture one or two of the students involved in your project. If you could ask them *any* questions, what would they be? What do you think they would answer? Try to become one of the students and write down a conversation between you two. Now, see if you can actually ask your students one of your questions... were their answers at similar to what you thought they would be?

Week 3 (5/1-5/3): Look back on your first rehearsal or meeting with the students. How did you feel that day, and how different is that from the way you feel now? What has changed? Why has it changed?

Week 4 (5/8-10) What do you think is the most frustrating thing is in the lives of your student actors? What would it take to ease that frustration?

Week 5 (5/15-17): What critique have you received (from peers, adults at your site and/or student participants) and how have you responded to that critique? What compliments have you received and how have you responded to them?

Week 6 (5/22-24): What have *you* learned from the *students* involved in the project? What have they learned from you? What is your teaching philosophy *now*? Has it changed from the first entry? If so, in what ways? If not – what have you reaffirmed for yourself as an educator?:

**Theater Arts 452, TFY: Secondary Techniques
Service Learning Project Descriptions
Spring Quarter
Faculty: Deb Currier**

Project Description: You have been assigned to one of the two community partners. As a group, you will be in charge of directing a “showcase” with your community group of junior high and/or high school age performers. Depending on your community partner, the showcase will entail different things. You will need to create a workshop/rehearsal calendar, work with your community contact for students’ needs and limitations, cast and produce the showcase.

Students will contribute a minimum of 20 hours for the quarter. **Please identify a student contact from each group who will be the main student contact for your site.** The designated student contact person should arrange to communicate with the agency site supervisor on a regular basis.

Fairhaven MS:

Visions Center: