

SYLLABUS
THR 551 Advanced Theater Pedagogy
Spring 2012
3 credits

Monday 4:30 p.m. – 7:10 p.m.

Art and Design Building, Room 1007

Professor Mary Lechter

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Office Hours By appointment

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Dept. Website theater.gmu.edu

A copy of this syllabus can be found online: theater.gmu.edu/academics

Prerequisites: Successful completion of THR 310 (Acting II) or the equivalent, or permission of instructor; possible enrollment in Theater Ed program.

Course Description: Advanced teaching methods for K-12 enrichment programming focusing on theories of multiple intelligences. Classroom focus on pedagogy; field study for practical application of curriculum and development of managerial skills.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:

Nature of Course Delivery:

Course delivery will be accomplished in a variety of ways in order to meet the needs and styles of all learners. Methods of instruction will include:

- Lecture
- Textbook and supplementary documentation
- Whole group and small group discussions
- Student presentations
- Field projects

COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS

REQUIRED READING:

Multiple Intelligences, New Horizons by Howard Gardner

Theater Games for the Classroom: A Teacher's Handbook by Viola Spolin

Additional books/resources TBD

Materials: Three-ring binder notebook with tab dividers for in-class note taking, written assignments, handouts, chronological class plans.

CLASS OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Understand how children learn and develop through the arts

- Understand the concepts, techniques, and vocabulary for theater education and their applications
- Develop an eight-week class plan using these fundamentals as a springboard for more advanced performance concepts and the incorporation of text and simple production elements
- Understand how students differ in their approaches to learning, supported by textbook (**Multiple Intelligences, New Horizons** by Howard Gardner)
- Plan instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, approaches to learning, and curriculum goals
- Customize lessons for specific age groups that incorporate Standards of Learning (SOLs) for the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- During field study, perform the role of lead teaching artist, realizing their more developed curricula in the after school classroom, with carefully constructed lesson plans that start at a very basic level and build cumulatively each week, culminating in an informal final sharing of class work for families, friends and school personnel.
- Fulfill mentorship role for undergraduate students, providing feedback for students enrolled in THR 451.
- Assess the effectiveness of curricula and classroom experiences, self-evaluating throughout the process and reviewing experiences as a group at the end of the semester.
- Explore advanced programming structure and administrative requirements for enrichment programming and professional interactions with school personnel
- Develop a resource notebook of teaching activities, songs, games, dances, and materials (see syllabus for supply requirements)

All academic programs at Mason (including the General Education Program) have student learning outcomes that are assessed periodically. Your work from this course may be selected for use in such an assessment. Your anonymity is assured and your grade will not be affected. At any time, you may contact the Office of Institutional Assessment (assessment@gmu.edu) with questions, concerns and comments about the use of your work.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

-Class attendance is essential for success in this course. Students are expected to attend **EVERY class ON TIME, READY TO WORK, PREPARED** with the current assignment. Except in the case of an extreme emergency, you must communicate your intended absence to instructor **PRIOR** to the day of class.

-Moreover, four absences may result in a failing grade. It is not possible to make up any missed classes. (see website for department guidelines)

- You are considered *late* if you arrive to class after attendance has been taken.
Latecomers must take the responsibility to receive credit for attendance.
Chronic lateness will count toward absences and affect final grades.
- If it is necessary to leave class early, inform the instructor ahead of time. The class will count as ½ attendance.
- Coursework Assignments as listed in “Class Schedule” section
- Final Class/Exam** date and time determined by GMU requirements.
- No absences or lateness tolerated for field study portion of semester.**

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

This class is for students who seriously plan to pursue Theater Education and work as professional teaching artists. Attendance is mandatory. This class is the equivalent of a professionally contracted job. Teaching artists are expected to be on time, well prepared, dressed appropriately, and exhibiting a positive, confident, professional demeanor. They must have a reliable mode of transportation and methods of communication.

Teaching Demo: Students will create and present a 45-minute interactive demo class session for their classmates, based on the curriculum they have created. Following input on presentation, students will write an evaluation of their presentation skills with constructive comments regarding successes and areas of improvement. Paper exploring observations of the application of the theories of multiple intelligences as possibly identified for each classmate due May 14.

Final Exam Date and Time – The final exam will consist of written self-evaluation and instructor-student conferences. **Our final is Monday, May 14 from 4:30 p.m. – 7:10 p.m.**

COURSE SCHEDULE (you may receive updates throughout the semester):

1/23: Introductory discussion about teachers, teaching, and areas of interest.

Focus: Content

Assignment:

Read Spolin intro through p. 24 top paragraph

Homework –you will be assigned one exercise from Spolin to teach to the group
Research and bring in a minimum of two book titles for your area of teaching interest

January 28 – Field Experience #1: Hunters Woods Saturday School program visit to Mason (if available, more details TBD)

AFYP Field Experience may begin at this point and will be in full swing by mid-semester.

1/30: Spolin exercises; discuss findings of research material

Focus: How children develop

Written assignment – based on your philosophy and the grade level(s) you want

to teach, create a core theme on which to base your own curriculum – what are your core values? Be prepared to present in class next week.

Multiple Intelligences: Visual-spatial, Bodily-kinesthetic, Musical

2/6: Focus: Student diversity & how they learn

Present core curriculum ideas – discuss how to plan, time management, curriculum prep and development

Discuss observations on after school program field study as applicable

Written assignment: based on the grade level you want to teach, create a draft curriculum (8 week enrichment program? Semester of middle school?) due on 2/20.

Multiple Intelligences: Interpersonal, Intrapersonal

2/13: Focus: Instructional Variety

Methods/approaches to pedagogy; discuss individual research/readings, compare and contrast

Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable

Assignment: Continued work on curriculum outlines

Multiple Intelligences: Logical-mathematical, Naturalistic

2/20: Focus: Learning Environment

Classroom management techniques; levels of learning; Standards of Learning for Commonwealth of Virginia

Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable

Present curricula

2/27: Focus: Effective Communication

Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable

Curricula presentations continued

Assignment:

Prep one 45-minute class demo to teach to classmates (one student each week)

3/5: Focus: Assessment

Rubrics for students and goals, outcomes, etc. for instructors

Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable

Due today: TEACHING DEMO FOR THR 451 STUDENTS

3/12: No class – have a great Spring Break!

3/19: Focus: Teacher/ Artist/Practitioner

Ability to assess own work and develop flexibility as instructor

Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable

Teaching Demo(s)

3/26: Focus: Synthesis

Developing teaching methods and style
Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable
Teaching Demo(s)

4/2: Focus: Synthesis
Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable
Teaching Demo(s)

4/9: Focus: Synthesis
Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable
Teaching Demo(s)

4/16: Focus: Synthesis
Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable
Teaching Demo(s)

4/23: Focus: Synthesis
Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable
Teaching Demo(s)

4/30: Focus: Synthesis
Discuss observations on after school field study as applicable
Teaching Demo(s)

**5/14: FINAL CLASS (Details for assignment will be given in class)
SYLLABUS/SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**

GRADING:

The grade for this course is determined by:

In-class participation	30%
Written lesson plans and exams	20%
In-class teaching demo	25%
Field Study	25%

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

As a courtesy to others in the class, and in accordance with George Mason University policy, please turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. Also, please refrain from using Instant Messenger or email during class.

GMU Add/Drop Policy: The last day to drop this class with no tuition liability is 1/31/2012. The selective withdrawal period for this class is from 2/27/2012 to 3/30/2012. It is the student's responsibility to check to verify that they are properly enrolled as no credit will be awarded to students who are not.

Copyright Law

Each student is individually responsible for his or her own work on assignments and creative projects. A willingness to learn from and share ideas with other students is important and equally important is that students do their own work. The use of other artists' images, videos, sounds, music is allowed as long as your inclusion of these creative works falls within the realm of "fair use" as described by copyright law. Students should always cite their sources. Try to use original source material as often as possible.

Honor Code

The Honor Code, as stated in the George Mason University Undergraduate Catalog, applies to all students in this class. The Honor Code requires that the work you do be your own. As a university faculty member, I have an obligation to refer the names of students who may have violated the Honor Code to the Student Honor Council, which treats such cases very seriously. Using someone else's words, ideas, music or art without giving them credit is plagiarism, a very serious Honor Code offense. It is crucial to understand how to avoid plagiarism when using material from other sources. No grade is important enough to justify cheating, for which there are serious consequences. If you feel unusual pressure about your grade in this or any other course, please talk to me or a member of the Counseling Center staff. You are expected to adhere to all University policies and guidelines during your participation in this course. All work must be your own. Inappropriate use of the work of others is a George Mason University Honor Code violation. Please review the University's website for information on the following: Honor Code and Judicial Procedures; Copyright/Fair Use; and Responsible Use of Computing.

Disruptive Behavior

Faculty, staff, and students have the right to be treated with respect and professionalism by students and peers in all classes and activities sponsored by the Theater department. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If, in the opinion of the responsible faculty member, a student becomes disruptive in class or rehearsal, faculty may exercise their judgment on how best to address the situation, be it by requiring the student to leave, calling Campus Police, or taking other steps deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of the class, rehearsal or group. Such action may affect the student's final grade and standing in the University.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Students must inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester, and the specific accommodation will be arranged through the Disability Resource Center.

GMU Email Accounts

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. The GMU email accounts are the official accounts for this class. All communications regarding this course must occur via Mason email accounts.

Writing Center: Students in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of the Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). These services are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis.

Other Mason resources: <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/freshman/resources.html>

University Policies: University Catalog can be accessed catalog.gmu.edu

University Libraries " Ask a Librarian" <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) caps.gmu.edu or (703) 993-2380

University Policies

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

You are encouraged to sign up for the Mason Alert System by visiting the website <https://alert.gmu.edu>. Emergency information is posted in each classroom explaining what to do in the event of crises. Further information about emergency procedures can be found at <http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert>.

NOTE: Cell phones, pagers and alarms must be turned off in class. Exceptions will only be made in advance or in case of emergency.

Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations: In conjunction with the Theater Department's mission statement, this class provides a rigorous, creative, and nurturing environment, in which students will establish a professional work ethic, collaborate with others, and take responsibility for individual as well as group efforts. We challenge our students to think critically, write clearly and persuasively, and express themselves through a course of study combining a liberal arts education with practical training and production experience. Further development of these skills serves the student as they enter upper level courses in the Department and explore a professional track in the arts or apply these skills to their chosen field, and are based on standards of work as experienced and expected in professional actors' unions (Actors Equity Association, Screen Actors Guild, American Federation of Television & Radio Artists).

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