Theatre 310: Creative Drama Syllabus  
San Diego State University - Fall 2016

Lecturer: Rachel Hoey  
Email: rachelnico.hoey@gmail.com  
Classroom Meetings: Mondays 4-6PM  
Office Hours: Mondays 3:30-4PM

Course Description
Current philosophies, principles, and techniques of creative drama. Development of the individual or group collaborative creativity through use of dramatic play, imagination, improvisation, theatre exercises, and curriculum building. Applicable to classroom teaching and arts integration, leadership, counseling, recreation, group team-building, and creative writing.

Course Objectives
1. Understand: the concept of creative drama as a teaching tool, goals and purpose behind activities, and the role of the teacher in this setting.
2. Understanding basic skills through practice of acting, movement, pantomime, improvisation, story dramatization, scaffolding, positive feedback sessions, processing exercises, etc.
3. Develop language and communication abilities, problem solving skills, storytelling skills, creativity, arts integration, social awareness, and interpersonal skills.
4. Promote an understanding of the art of theatre and empathy in relating to other collaborators.
5. Acquire skills for planning, leading, and evaluating creative drama sessions.

Course Outcomes and Assessment Measures
Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:
1. Utilize a variety of drama strategies throughout the curriculum through the analysis and discussion of assigned reading, in-class activities, and collaborative theatre practices.
2. Structure and teach a creative drama activity and complete a lesson plan.
3. Practice collaboration in creating a dramatic unit based on a novel or topic of study.
4. Demonstrate and effectively communicate the theories and importance behind Creative Drama in Education (K-12).
5. Respond in a scholarly way to college level and professional theatre performances, through theatrical lenses.

Course Readings
Required Texts
- Theater Games for the Classroom, by Viola Spolin
- The Secret Life of Bees, by Sue Monk Kidd
- The Performer’s Guide to the Collaborative Process, by Sheila Kerrigan (Blackboard)
- selected readings from Love and Information, by Caryl Churchill (Blackboard)
- selected readings from The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Blackboard)

Suggested Text/Library Resources
- Theatre for Community Conflict and Dialogue, by Michael Rohd
- Games for Actors and Non-Actors, by Augusto Boal
- Structuring Drama Work by Jonathan Neelands
- Drama Improvised by Kenneth Pickering
Students with Disabilities
If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

In-class Involvement
This course is a practical introduction to Creative Drama. Strive to be fair, considerate and aware of your fellow classmates. The bulk of our work will be in-class, participatory and experiential. Participation is graded apart from attendance, and participation credit is based on in-class involvement; this includes, making an effort to engage and work harmoniously with classmates. Attendance is crucial! None of the in-class activities can be replicated outside the class session; therefore, NO MAKE-UP assignments are possible if you are absent. Each absence results in a deduction of 4 points, equivalent to 4% of your grade. Please be prepared to present on due dates assigned to you and/or your group. One late arrival is a deduction in 2 points. Two late arrivals are equivalent to one absence. Although one absence may not directly impact your grade, but two absences and/or excessive late arrivals will result in the lowering of your grade.

Assignments
Performance Attendance and Response Papers
The School of Theatre, Television, and Film requires that all students attend all performances taking place during the semester students are enrolled in a course within the school. This semester you will be required to purchase tickets and attend the SDSU season shows. There is a direct link to purchase tickets on the website: [http://theatre.sdsu.edu](http://theatre.sdsu.edu)

Goal: This task will develop competency in assessing the quality of theatrical process and production based on elements, principles and concepts of the theatre, as a spectator.

Assignment: Attend the shows and respond to the theatrical work through writing two productions papers. Guidelines and prompting questions will be provided on blackboard. Ticket stubs and responses should be submitted on the due dates provided on the “course calendar” on blackboard. Please staple your ticket stub to your paper.

Beginning Creative Drama Lesson Plan
Goal: This introductory project provides an opportunity to become familiar with drama activities and expanding the ensemble’s repertoire. In addition, this project provides students with practice co-leading the class in creative drama activities. This project is intended to hone your skills in teaching, lesson planning, co-teaching, and finding greater understanding in theatrically active “project-based” learning style.

Part 1 - Collaboration and Team Taught Activity
In a small group, you will be assigned to create a lesson plan centered around one of the basic skills areas of creative drama. These assigned areas of focus serve as the theme for your co-teaching concentration:
As a group you will select ONE activity that you can all confidently co-lead.

**Part 2 - Individual Teaching Assignment**
Individually, each group member will come up with ONE activity that helps compliment, introduce, reinforce, or pair with the given theme. You will teach this activity entirely by yourself. The objective is to gain competency in facilitating, side-coaching, and teaching skills through the medium of theatre arts.

In creating the lesson plan, have a strong thread from one exercise to another. For example, if you are co-teaching a unit on Imagination, each person will select an activity pairs well with Imagination.

**Lesson Plan:**
Once you've selected your co-teaching activity and the activity that you will facilitate solo, create a teaching order. The consideration of sequencing the structure of your lesson plan is crucial to create a cohesive easy to follow lesson plan.

- **Structure of a Lesson Plan**
  - Introductory Activity
  - Bridge Activity
  - Main Activity
  - Closing Activity

**How to Proceed:**
- You will be given limited class time to collaborate with your group on designing a lesson plan and to practice teaching the activity to one-another. Some outside meeting time will be required.
- Research your drama skill area in books or on the web, through your Spolin text, etc.
- Collaborate to finalize how you will fairly, evenly, and inclusively execute teaching the lesson plan in class, as you create your themed lesson plan.
- Use the guidelines the formatting guidelines on blackboard when creating your lesson plan document. This document should be sent to the instructor at least four business days in advance, for approval and feedback. If plans arrive late or are unacceptable documents, you will be asked to resubmit for a lower grade.

**On your date:** Arrive a few minutes early to set up and submit a hard copy of your lesson plan. r lesson plan via email in advance to the instructor as well as submitting a hard copy in class on the date of your group's presentation. Depending on whether you have two or three people in your group, you are allotted 25 to 35 minutes (this lesson plan should not go over 40 minutes).

**Post Assignment:** Once the lesson has been successfully taught, be sure to email the entire class with a copy of your lesson plan. Complete this transaction via blackboard within 48 hours.

**Performer’s Guide to the Collaborative Process & other reading/media responses**
**Goal:** To deepen understanding of the content and activities found in The Performer’s Guide to the Collaborative Process by Sheila Kerrigan. To examine different perspectives on theatre, leadership, teaching techniques, etc.

**Assignment:** Respond to the reading provide on blackboard, then complete the discussion board prompt.

**How to proceed:** As you read you should be looking for three key points (things that seem important, areas that interest you). See blackboard “discussion board” threads for further details.
**Creative Drama Workshop**

**Due:** In-class studies, see course calendar. Must be present on those days to receive points.

**Goals:** These three assignment will develop performance and imaginative skills. Each small group/pairing will present each assignment after experimentation and in-class rehearsal time. The class will answer process questions to provide positive feedback, after all groups have shared their created works.

**Workshop 1: Poetry Dramatization**

In groups, collaborators will work to develop a staged poetry presentation using the “Composition Box” technique. The composition box technique will be learned in class prior to your individual project. You will create a 3-4 minute Poetry Dramatization using short literary selections provided by the instructor. You will stage and memorize this performance piece using the “Rehearsal Checklist.”

It is encouraged to include elements from: “Viewpoints” by Anne Bogart/Tina Landau, the “Rasaboxes Exercise” by Michele Minnick/Paula Murray Cole, “The Seven Levels of Tension” by Jacques Pierre Lecoq, and “Laban Movement Analysis (LMA)” by Rudolf Laban.

**Experimental Acting Exercise**

Examine selected scenes from *Love and Information*, by Caryl Churchill. In pairs, use the C.R.O.W. Improvisational acting acronym to play with the text, then rehearse it a few times before presenting it to the class. It is encouraged to be near memorization, however you are permitted to use your scripts in performance.

**Playwriting Partner Exercise**

Using hand-outs, prompts, and in-class demonstrations, each pair will create written/themed short scenes. This exercise asks the collaborators to practice their dialogue generating skills, as well as concentrating on conflict, given circumstances, and relationships between characters.

**Final Project: Arts Integrated Storytelling through History, Literature, and Theatre**

**Final Project Part 1 - Historical Research Component & Outline**

**Goal:** This task is designed to encourage students to think creatively about teaching a historically themed unit based on *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd, using theatrical activities to bring it to light.

**Assignment:**
- Read *The Secret Life of Bees*. Be prepared to participate in an in-class discussion.
- Be prepared to take a Quiz on it.
- Participate in instructor lead arts integrated activities.
- Small groups collaborate to theme and brainstorm a performance piece. Parts of the book that can be used to fuel the performance content (performed text).
- Each member contributes research.

**Historical Research Component:**

**Research Submission (Individual Homework Assignment)**

Collect three pieces of research. Choose articles, or passages from textbooks that are at least two full pages. Turn an organized printed packet with you name on it. No electronic proof with be accepted. Select three-four articles or book excerpts that focus on a particular aspect of the theme your group chooses. Take into consideration the books historical relevance, contemporary relevance, and the issues it touches on.
Performance Outline:
As a group create a one-page, simple yet clear, performance outline.

Final Project Part 2 - Creation, Rehearsal, and Performative Piece

Goal:
1. Create a performance piece that captures the essence of The Secret Life of Bees, in correlation with your chosen theme. As a group, you will have a limited amount of rehearsal time in class and this final project will require some outside rehearsal time.
2. Create an advanced Creative Drama Lesson Plan with two to three activities that complement your performance piece. Use the same structure and guidelines as the “Beginning Children’s Drama Lesson Plan” Assignment.

Presentation and Performance
You will have a total time of 15 minutes to perform and present. The order is up to you. Do not exceed 20 minutes.

Performance:
- Create a 5-7 minute performance piece using research and guidelines provided.
- A composition box and rehearsal checklist will be provided.
- Creatively introduce your aspect of the topic using photos or images, music, movement, etc.
- The piece must be memorized.
- Use quotes from the book, quotes from your research, and various acting and movement techniques that you’ve learned from the instructor.

Presentation:
- Create a google powerpoint presentation that touches on your theme, research (scholarly/media), and your lesson plan.
- Ideally present for 8-10 minutes.
- Be overly prepared. Evenly share brief talking points and transition leadership swiftly.

Final Portfolio

Goal: To compile most important class notes, information, processing assessment and preferred activities gained from the course. The aim is to use this portfolio packet beyond this course in work as a teacher, leader, actor, etc.

Assignment: To complete this assignment include:
- Beginning Children’s Drama Lesson Plan (that your group created)
- Final Project Documents: Arts Integrated Storytelling through History, Literature, and Theatre (the lesson plan and performance script)
- three creative journal entries - in the form of a summary, dear diary, poem, haiku, etc.
- three activities that acquired from THEA 310 (with included arts integration standards). You may pull from lesson plans of your classmates - activities that resonate with you or your future work.
- To conclude, attach a two-page reflection paper assessing what you have learned in class about drama (processes, experiences, insights, etc.), and describe how you think you will use these techniques, perspectives, and experiences in the future. Be creative! Remember this is not a course evaluation.

See Blackboard for detailed prompts on journal entries and reflection paper.
Assessment

Your course grade is based on your performance in the following activities:

Project Grading

Attendance 12 points
Participation/Efforts 6 points

Beginning Drama Lesson Plan
- Co-teaching activity: 5 points
- Individual teaching/activity: 10 points

“Performer's Guide” Kerrigan Reading/ Blackboard Response #1 3 points
“Performer's Guide” Kerrigan Reading/ Blackboard Response #2 3 points

Creative Drama Workshop
In-Class Poetry Dramatization (using composition boxes) 5 points
In-Class Experiential Acting Exercise (using required text, after being read): 5 points
In-Class Playwriting Partner Exercise: 5 points
Performance Paper 1: 5 points
Performance Paper 2: 5 points

Final Project: Arts Integrated Storytelling through History, Literature, and Theatre
Part 1 - Examination, Analyzation, and Collective Mapping
- Reading Quiz (individual): 3
- Part 1: Historical Research Component (individual): 3 points
- Part 1: Outline (group): 3 points

Part 2 - Creative collaboration in the rehearsal process
- Part 2: Scene Creation and Rehearsal: 8 points
- Part - Performative Piece: 10 points

Final Portfolio: 10 points

Grading
94-100 = A
90-93 = A-
87-89 = B+
83-86 = B
80-82 = B-
77-79 = C+
73-76 = C
70-72 = C-
67-69 = D+
63-66 = D
60-62 = D-

Please Note: You cannot receive an A in this class without all written work turned in on time, and all performance work satisfactorily completed.