

Playwriting I: Devised Theatre

THEA-3415

Spring 2021 Section 01 3 Credits 01/09/2021 to 05/11/2021 Modified 01/06/2021

Description

Devised Theatre is an alternative approach to playwriting that emphasizes collaborative ensemble-based writing, community research and outreach, and social and political awareness. Utilizing improvisational techniques, community-oriented research skills and non-textual performance practices, students will explore and write plays based on their communities, interests and concerns. Prerequisites may be waived with the permission of the instructor.

Requisites

Prerequisites:

THEA 1100 and THEA 2100

Corequisites:

Contact Information

Instructor: Christine Fuchs (she/her/Ms.)

Email: cfuchs@westga.edu

Office: Martha Munro Room 204A

Website: https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/profile.php?emp_id=91666

(https://www.westga.edu/academics/coah/profile.php?emp_id=91666)

Please email me through gmail only. Do not email me through Course Den.

Meeting Times

Class meets in Old Auditorium Monday/Wednesday at 11am-12:15pm.

Materials

Your Handy Companion to Devising and Physical Theatre

Author: Pilar Orti

Outcomes

Degree Learning Outcomes addressed in this Course

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of selected plays, theatrical conventions, and theatrical movements important in the formation of the modern theatre.
- Students will demonstrate skills in analyzing plays, using theatre technology, and conducting research.
- Students will express through performance, writing, speaking and other modes of communication the results of research and critical judgment, indicated by a demonstrable ability to reach an audience effectively through at least one of the components of theatrical art.
- Students will illustrate awareness of the complex human condition acquired through aesthetic and intellectual perceptions as

evidenced in various modes of theatrical production.

- Students will apply skills learned in course to a variety of work and social environments.
- Students will function safely and effectively while using theatre technology.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the various means (acting, directing, designing, constructing, playwriting, etc.) through which a theatrical concept is realized.

Course Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate proficiency applying the techniques of devised theatre, including improvisational performance, collaborative writing, and non-textual play development.
- Students will develop basic playwriting skills integral to both devised and traditional performances.
- Students will express the results of their research and writing through showcase performance of their devised plays.

✓ Evaluation

Criteria

Breakdown

GRADING	
Assignment	Points
Participation & Professionalism	30
Five Interviews/Five Questions Questionnaire	20
Coding of Interviews	20
Solo Project	20
Journal Entries	30
Performance Response ***	20
Research Project Performance & Portfolio	40
Final Research Project & Portfolio	50
TOTAL POINTS	200

A	180-200
B	160-179
C	140-159
D	120-139
F	Below 119

☰ Assignments

Five Interviews/5 Questions Questionnaire

20 points

Create a five (5) question questionnaire to give to five random people (students, faculty or staff members) that have targeted questions about a current event/issue facing our community, county, state, or country. Each student will administer the questions to five individual strangers. One on One only. No Group interviews. Also, you CANNOT know the people whom you interview. These interviews MUST happen in person as people communicate verbally and non-verbally. Due Jan 27th. Upload to Course Den or hand in a physical copy at the top of class. The questionnaire must be typed.

Coding of Interviews

Students will code their interviews and transcribe them, breaking the coding into subjects: topic, opinion, emotion or any other pattern you may notice since other subjects may arise once you have transcribed all the interviews. Students will create a "Key" (i.e. color coding) for each subject as well as a "Key" for language patterns (i.e. how the interviewees speak/speech patterns). Students will also note the interviewees body language and write a side note about your perception of said body language.

Coding of the five interviews is due on 2/15. Coding must be handed in (physical copy) at the top of class.

Failure to complete the Coding portion of the Solo Project will result in a zero for the five interviews, coding and solo project

Solo Project

20 points

Each student will create a 4 minute solo piece based on the interviews. There are no parameters to creating this piece other than the 4 minute time limitation and that it be about your findings from the interviews. Each project must have dialogue, movement, props, lights, sound (music), costumes and use of architecture (set) – all the elements of Moment work. No phones are to be a part of the piece. Create a theatrical space as if you were actually performing in a theatre.

Any piece that is shorter than 3 minutes in length - half credit (10 points)

Any piece that is shorter than 2 minutes in length - quarter credit (5 points)

Any piece that is shorter than 1:59 minutes in length (zero)

Videos & Reading Responses

30 points – 2 @ 15 points each

You will also be required to submit journal entries based on the videos & readings. These journal entries are to be typed, a Word document and a minimum of 500 words each. Upload to Course Den BEFORE the start of class time. PDF's or pages not accepted.

****Do not summarize the videos or the chapters. Write about the purposes of the exercises, how they translate from reading to doing, identify exercises that speak directly to you, and those that you don't comprehend.**

Performance Response

20 points

TBD

Research Project

20 points performance/20 points portfolio

In groups of 3-4 people (dependent on class size), each group will select a current event topic, one that is in the news today and that is a national or international issue.

Examples: Covid, Karen's, anti-maskers, Proud Boys, the US presidential election, gender identity, etc. In other words, your project must be researched based!!

Upon selecting a topic, each group will create a 10-minute play about said topic.

• The play must have a point of view

- Each group member will read and write a response to four (4) different articles about the topic and include them in the group's portfolio that will be uploaded to your Google team drive BEFORE the start of class/performance day. No articles may be duplicated.

The portfolio will be composed of three sections:

- Traditional Research: this will include each group members' articles along with a written paragraph (minimum 50 words) on each article describing how the information was used in devising the play.
- Performance Research: Discuss how scenes were created and how they evolved. I don't want to know what you talked about; I want to know what you did.
- The Play: Please include a cover page for the portfolio that has the tentative name of the play, the names of the members of the group, and a short summary of the play (minimum 50 words).
- On the day of the presentation, upload all documents to your group Google drive (please add me to it) BEFORE class begins (10:59pm).

Final Research Project

50 points – performance 25 points, portfolio 25 points

This project is a continuation of what was presented for the 1st Research Project. All groups will converge and find common ground creating a new piece with elements of each (prior) piece. The entire play should last a **minimum of 30 minutes**.

On the performance date the ENTIRE group will submit one portfolio that includes:

- A (minimum 750 words) paper from each deviser that describes in detail the individual's experience in the group: were you the leader, or did you add ideas but let others take over the organization? Did you feel that your voice was heard? How did the groups combine? Did the small group dynamic or vibe continue, or was it lost? After working in a small group and then graduating to a bigger one, what are your insights on collaboration? Please feel free to add more insights as they come up.
- A cover sheet with the title of the play and each deviser's name listed.
- The play.
- Visual Aids must be added to this process.

Schedule

TBD

Course Policies and Resources

Face to Face classes have Face to Face expectations.

1. Attendance is mandatory. You are required to attend all class sessions and to actively participate. Students are allowed ONE unexcused/excused absence (not on presentation days). Absences beyond the one, whether excused or unexcused, will result in a 5 point deduction (from the total points) for any absence thereafter.
2. BE ON TIME. Class begins promptly at 11am. Two (2) lates will count as one (1) absence.
3. All assigned work must be on time or it will not be accepted.
4. Be prepared for physical warm-ups and to sit on the floor during every class; wear comfortable, loose fitting clothes. Tie your hair back and do not wear excessive jewelry, skirts, heels, sandals, boots or tight fitting jeans. Hats are not permitted during class. Also, NO FLIP FLOPS!! This applies to everyone.
5. There is no eating or gum chewing in class. A bottle of water is permitted.
6. Please use the restroom before entering class.
7. Cell phones are not permitted during class.
8. All assignments must be typed.
9. 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.

This class requires out of classroom work, specifically rehearsals and attending the departments productions. If you are unable to make the time commitment to class meetings, additional outside rehearsals, attending performances and the thorough exploration of the material, you should consider taking another course.

A few thoughts on Participation & Professionalism

- This class requires collaboration, communication and a trusting ensemble. You are expected to conduct yourself in a mature and professional manner; focus, consideration and support of others in the group are paramount. Participation also includes attendance. Not showing up for class and lateness will affect your grade.
- Since expanding your sense of self is part of the devising process, a positive attitude and a willingness to expand one's comfort zone are expected and are part of the participation grade.
- An element of risk taking, initiative and willingness to fail are also expected.
- Some of the work in class will necessitate human contact. You will be allowed to step out of any exercise that raises significant discomfort. If you have problems with touch or with individuals in the class, please communicate this to me as soon as possible.

Institutional Policies

Academic Support

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact [Accessibility Services \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php).

Center for Academic Success: The [Center for Academic Success \(http://www.westga.edu/cas/\)](http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu.

University Writing Center: The [University Writing Center \(https://www.westga.edu/writing/\)](https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu.

Online Courses

UWG takes students' privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the [UWG Online \(https://uwgonline.westga.edu/\)](https://uwgonline.westga.edu/) site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the [Online/Off-Campus Student Guide \(http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php\)](http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the [UWG Cares \(http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/\)](http://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/) site. [Online counseling \(https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.

Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student's conduct record at UWG.

Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student's account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the [Student Handbook \(https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php\)](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php).

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email.

Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information# (http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information)

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: <https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php> (<https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php>)

Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the [Counseling Center](#). Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in [Health Services](#). To report a concern anonymously, please go to [UWGcares](#).

ELL Resources

If you are a student having difficulty with English language skills, and / or U.S. culture is not your home culture, specialized resources are available to help you succeed. Please visit the [E.L.L. resource page](#) for more information.

COVID-19

Proctored Exams/Online Instruction: Students should be aware and plan ahead for the possibility of having to complete all

courses and/or exams online or in a proctored environment. This means talking with your instructors about what minimum technical requirements (software and hardware) will be required should your class move online or a student's personal needs dictate. This also includes making plans for internet access at whatever location participation may occur.

Virtual or in-person proctored exams, if your instructor should require them, may result in an additional cost to the student. Please discuss these details with your instructor or see the information provided here.

Face Coverings: Effective July 15, 2020, University System of Georgia institutions, including the University of West Georgia, will require all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use will be in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing.

Face coverings are not required in campus outdoor settings where social distancing requirements are met. Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area.

Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons.

Student FAQs: For more information about UWG COVID-19 guidance for students visit the [Student FAQ webpage](https://www.westga.edu/student-services/health/coronavirus-info/return-to-campus/students-faq-return-to-campus.php) (<https://www.westga.edu/student-services/health/coronavirus-info/return-to-campus/students-faq-return-to-campus.php>).

Additional Items

Syllabus/Course Schedule Subject to Change at any point during the Semester.