

Connectivity & Performance (PCA/ENG 313 A)

M/W 1:40-3:10pm @ NC 109

Spring 2013

Instructor: Charlie Pepiton

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Office: Griffiths 112

Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 10:00-12:00p, and by appointment. Not available on Fridays.

Course Description:

YOUARENOWHERE. You are nowhere. You are now here. This course investigates the boundaries and possibilities of live performance in a hyper-connected world and features a combination of performance, theory, and experimentation. The course explores digital technologies, site specific performance, ritual/participatory performance, and devised performance methodology. The semester culminates in ensemble created new performances.

Teaching/Learning Philosophy:

Myth, ritual, performance, story, comedy, tragedy, romance, word, movement, idea, transformance. All of these are vital to us as humans and to the development of strong communities, and all of these are wrapped up in the function and purpose of theatre. I presume you are here to learn about storytelling, place, performance, new media, and how all of those fit together. I also assume that you care about those things underlined above. Our work in this class will be collaborative and dialogic. There will be a necessary, and thrilling I think, give and take throughout the course. It will require that you take risks, think deeply, have and express informed opinions, reveal yourself, and listen and respond as others do the same.

Required Texts:

- *Hush: An Interview with America* by James Still
- *The Sun is in the West* by Damon Falke

Student Learning Objectives:

- to gain an awareness of the power of place and its influence on us as human beings
- to understand the particularities of spaces and their way of initiating and affecting performances
- to demonstrate an ability to create performance pieces using the self as source
- to explore the potentials and implications of new media for live theatre performance
- to demonstrate a facility with the physical skills of acting:
 - physical control (movement, blocking, relaxed readiness, and focus)
 - vocal control (quality, clarity, variety, projection, and articulation)
- to reflect with knowledge and understanding upon performance as an art form and as a means of communication
- to express oneself clearly and effectively in oral, written, and embodied forms

Guidelines for Class Dynamics:

- Treat your classmates with respect at all times. Feel free to respectfully challenge your classmates, but refrain from personal attacks.
- When your peers are speaking, listen actively.
- Participate each day to the fullest extent of your ability
- Please get into the habit of removing your shoes *before* entering NC 109. No shoes are allowed in the space.
- Because cell phones, laptops, and all manner of devices are an integral part of this course, they are allowed in class. However, please stay on task and focused on the work at hand. The instructor reserves the right to ban electronic devices or limit their use during class at his discretion.
- Chewing gum and eating are prohibited in the classroom.
- All personal items need to be left on one wall of the studio space. The performance space is our collective creative space and it must be kept clean and free of clutter.
- Please understand that while we may sometimes work closely together in seemingly informal ways, it is important that we take our work seriously and maintain an appropriate level of professionalism.

Course Requirements:

There will be (10+) weekly 1 page response papers, (1) Media Fast Response paper, (1) Site Specific Image Cluster, (3) three group devised performance events, (3) three process papers related to those performances, (3) three peer critiques, (1) one play production critique, and reading quizzes as needed.

Late Assignments & Performances:

Late work is never accepted. All written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. All performances are scheduled well in advance and may not be rescheduled without documented evidence of dire need. I know that sometimes there are emergencies. If you find yourself in a moment of *real* panic, come talk to me about your situation as early as possible.

Assignments may not be turned in via email without prior permission for a specific instance.

There is no way to make up quizzes/notes (on reading assignments), peer critiques, or other in-class assignments. Such assignments are part of your participation grade, and a failure to complete them will result in a deduction of points from your participation grade.

Missed Performances: Performances are scheduled well in advance. If you know that you will be absent on a particular day. Don't schedule yourself to perform on that day. Be proactive. Advocate for yourself. No one may miss a performance. There is no way to make up a group performance. Do not put your group in a bind by missing class.

Being unable to find time to rehearse with your partners, having a computer, technological, or printing problem at the last minute, having an assignment or exam in another course, participating in the faculty directed theatre production, or leaving early for breaks

(whatever the reason) are not legitimate reasons for missing performances or assignments.

Attendance / Tardiness:

Attendance and participation are crucial in this course. Theatre and performance are by necessity collaborative arts that require the presence and focused dedication of the entire ensemble. The entire ensemble suffers if you are not present and engaged. Your group partners will count on you to be present to rehearse with them, and your peers will count on you to support their efforts and offer them feedback. I expect you to be here, be prepared, and to take advantage of every opportunity to learn and grow as a performer, a communicator, and a creator.

Students are each allowed **TWO absences**, **excused and/or unexcused*, during the course of the semester. Each additional absence will result in a reduction of your final semester point total by **50 points per absence**. **Excused absences* occur due to an emergency situation, an illness serious enough to require a visit to a physician, or an approved university field trip or game (written documentation is required).

Three tardies and/or early departures equal one absence. Tardies and/or early departures of more than 30 minutes are considered full absences.

This is an active, physical class, but should you find a way to sleep in class, your slumber equals one full absence and will count toward your total semester absences.

Please, aim for perfect attendance. If, however, an absence is unavoidable, please notify your collaborators and me as soon as possible and well in advance of your missed class/rehearsal.

Please note: In the rare event that a class is canceled, you must be prepared for the class following the canceled class, unless otherwise noted.

Reading:

This is a reading intensive course. You must stay up to date on the readings. The reading assignments are what fuel everything else we will do in this course. Mere skimming will not suffice. For every assignment, there will be real practical applications, but you must do the time with the material. I will assume in class that you have already spent the time it takes to process and interrogate the text. We will have discussions about the readings, but we will also activate the theory through experimentation and practice. Please be prepared for class at the beginning of class. Come with questions. Come with thoughts. Pop quizzes are always a possibility, so it's best to be prepared.

Writing/Study Skills Assistance & Accommodations:

If you'd like assistance with your written assignments I recommend visiting The WORD Studio, located in the library. You should also consider the Office of Academic Support in Whitman Hall for assistance with note-taking, exam prep, time management, organization etc. If you have a disability and need accommodations, please see me as early in the semester as possible.

****Please refer to the Student Handbook for the university's policies on academic dishonesty.****

Grading Criteria

Grades in this class are based on skill, creativity, dedication, discipline, integration of theory, depth, and ingenuity. Virtually everything you do in this course is evaluated, and much of this evaluation is by nature subjective. In an attempt to minimize subjectivity, each

assignment will be evaluated for quality, effort, and thoroughness. I will use a standardized rubric to evaluate each of the performance assignments.

You will be graded on the following:

Performances
Written Work
Quizzes/Notes
Participation

Grade Assessment and Conversions to 4.0 Scale:

Total +/- 600 Points for the semester

97-100% = 4.0	81-83% = 2.75	69-71% = 1.75
93-96% = 3.75	78-80% = 2.5	66-68% = 1.5
90-92% = 3.5	75-77% = 2.25	63-65% = 1.25
87-89% = 3.25	72-74% = 2.0	60-62% = 1.0
84-86% = 3.0		59% and below = 0

*Final percentages are rounded up to the nearest whole percentage from 0.5-0.9 and rounded down to the nearest whole percentage from 0.1-0.4.

Handouts with specific assignment guidelines will follow.

Students are encouraged to record their grades and attendance on the attached page.

PERFORMANCE ASSIGNMENTS (300pts)

- ___ of 100pts You Are Now Here
- ___ of 100pts You Are Nowhere
- ___ of 100pts YOUARENOWHERE

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (300pts)

- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 10pts 1 Page Reaction Paper
- ___ of 25pts Media Fast Response Paper
- ___ of 25pts Site Specific Image Cluster
- ___ of 50pts You Are Now Here - Paper
- ___ of 50pts You Are Nowhere - Paper
- ___ of 50pts YOUARENOWHERE - Paper

OTHER

- ___ of ___ pts Quizzes/Notes
- ___ of ___ pts Quizzes/Notes
- ___ of ___ pts Quizzes/Notes

Number of Absences: _____ Number of Tardies: _____

GRADE: _____ /Total Possible Points = ___% = ___ on the 4.0 scale

See 4.0 conversion chart on the course syllabus