

Performing Arts and Community Exchange

Performing Arts 0141-321-01

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Course Description

A. Content:

This course is designed for students who are interested in merging social activism, art and teaching. Students will develop an understanding of the history and theory of community based arts and the ability to think critically about issues of race, class, and aesthetics inherent in community based arts practice. Students will use movement and theater in settings such as senior centers, schools, prisons, and youth centers. On Mondays and Fridays in studio sessions, students will learn how to identify, approach and construct classes for community sites. Selected videos and readings will provide a context for discussion and assist in the development of individual student's research and teaching methods. The course's Service Learning component includes one off campus class every Wednesday held at a designated community site, where students will lead and co-teach classes applying the information from the studio classes to a practicum experience. Students will be required to produce evaluation papers and journal entries on these classes, discussing such topics as; cultural bias, cultural diversity, the linking of theory and experience in terms of historical analysis and actual community service and art, as well as discussing personal experiences within the context of community participation. This course is open to up to 12 students.

Course Goals:

1. To develop an understanding of the history, theories, principles, and key practitioners of North American community based arts from the 1970's to present.
2. To explore the interrelationship of community based arts to critical and theoretical issues of race, culture, economics and politics.
3. To develop a critical and working vocabulary regarding the aesthetics inherent in the practice of community based art.
4. To understand community based arts a tool for social change.
5. To engage with local community cultural resources.

Outcomes: At the completion of this course you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate verbally and in writing an understanding of the nature and role of community based arts in North American culture.
2. Demonstrate through written reflections and discussions an awareness of the intersection of diversity and community based art making.
3. Discern the relationship between content and form, process and product and how they inform each other in community based arts.
4. Demonstrate the ability to facilitate the creative process.
5. Articulate through a studied, engaged and informed process of reflection an understanding of Service Learning experiences.
6. Demonstrate through writing, class discussions and teaching, an enhanced knowledge of off-campus communities.

B. Teaching Approach

The teaching approach will facilitate interaction between the teacher, the material, and fellow students. This will be accomplished through class discussion, group and individual projects, and feedback on assignments. The course is divided into three intertwining sections. The first two, theory and methodology, will take place during the studio sessions on Mondays and Fridays. In these classes students will be presented with, and discuss the how and why of teaching in community settings. The third section, on Wednesdays, is applying the information acquired in the studio to a Service Learning experience. Initially students will observe pre-existing classes working towards taking on a leadership role and facilitating/teaching their own classes.

Each studio session will include the presentation and discussion of a topic or concept that is used while teaching in a community site. This will be followed by an assignment, which may involve the student developing part of a class plan or to read and respond to an article or a chapter in an assigned book.

C. Service-Learning

"Service-Learning is a pedagogical method that engages students in organized service activities and guided reflection; the service activities benefit the client or community and, in combination with reflection, enhance the academic curriculum of participating students."

Your service learning work will be done as a class in connection with two community sites:

- 1) Edna Villa: Senior Center
- 2) Sisters Program in San Francisco Jail #8

Each student will partner with a fellow student to teach at a third community site. Together you and your partner will be responsible to identify and arrange to teach at this site. Professor Dowling will be in on-going communication with you and your chosen community site.

The structure of Performing Arts and Community Exchange is as follows:

Monday: Prepare to teach in community site.

Wednesday: Teach in community site.

Friday: Reflect on the community class.

"In accordance with its Mission, service-learning at the University of San Francisco promotes interaction with diverse communities and organizations, in order to help students and faculty develop the knowledge, skills, and sensitivities to be effective agents of social change. Service Learning is distinct from acts of charity because it is reciprocal; students, faculty, and community organizations teach and learn through their interactions. Teaching and learning are informed by the realities of the world, and service is informed by theoretical and conceptual understanding."

Service Learning Guidelines:

The integration of service learning into the course has five key components:

1. Mandatory Participation:

- a. The service learning experience is mandatory: all students enrolled in the course must complete all service learning activities.
- b. The number of required hours for service learning will be between 15-20.

2. Academic Connections:

- a. The service learning connection to artistic expression of the specific communities is clear. By virtue of teaching at the community sites, you will learn from within the methodology, issues related to the practice, organization and presentation of community based art. Most importantly, Service Learning will provide you with a hands-on experience in the practical aspects of creating community based theater and dance, and you will better understand the readings and presentations in the studio.
- b. Integration of Service Learning activity is outcome driven, it is the means and method to achieving the outcomes outlined in this syllabus.

- c. The connection to the University and the Performing Arts and Social Justice Mission is clear and specific: *"The core mission of the University is to promote learning in the Jesuit Catholic tradition. The University offers undergraduate, graduate and professional students the knowledge and skills needed to succeed as persons and professionals, and the values and sensitivity necessary to be men and women for others. The University will distinguish itself as a **diverse, socially responsible learning community** of high quality scholarship and academic rigor sustained by a faith that does justice. The University will draw from the **cultural, intellectual and economic resources of the San Francisco Bay Area** and its location on the Pacific Rim to enrich and strengthen its educational programs."*

3. Benefits to the community:

Your Service Learning work will provide these organizations with much needed support during difficult times of budget cuts, reduced state and federal financial support and diminishing volunteer resources. All of the sites are experienced in university level service learning.

4. Reflection:

A systematic (e.g. ongoing and regular) process for reflection through presentation and discussions is clearly outlined in the course syllabus. Reflection on Service Learning experiences provides students with an opportunity to:

- a. Link theory and experience (i.e. learn more about the course content as a result of the service activity);
- b. Evaluate the impact of service on the community; and
- c. Experience personal growth through creative community participation.

5. Assessment:

A systematic (e.g. ongoing and regular) process for assessment will take place throughout your service learning residencies. Assessment of your experience will provide information on the following:

- a. The degree to which your learning outcomes were met; and,
- b. The degree to which your service is valuable to the community.

In order to make this assessment possible, you will both write about and discuss your Service learning experiences on a regular basis, as outlined in the syllabus.

The community participants will also evaluate your work through meeting with the instructor and in writing at the end of the semester.

Safety:

Your service learning experience will take place outside of USF. Clear professional behavior is expected of you and the community participants. Any violations or concerns must be reported to the instructor immediately.

Grading:

- 30% Participation in discussion and studio experiences.
- 30% Written Assignments: 'Community of Origin' paper, personal journals and class plans.
- 20% Instructors evaluation of successful facilitation and teaching in community settings.
- 20% Final paper and grant: Independent research project on a community artist or organization and a grant for a chosen community art project.

93-100	A	73-76	C
90-92	A-	70-72	C-
87-89	B+	67-69	D+
83-86	B	63-68	D
80-82	B-	60-62	D-

Students are expected to devote up to four hours a week outside of class for study, including reading assigned texts, writing assignments, journals and preparing for class presentations.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in class and will result in an F from the course. Turnitin.com will be used on all written assignments.

***Absences:**

A total of 3 unexcused absences over the course of the semester will result in a grade of F.

Arriving 10 minutes late will result in 1/2 an absence.

Arriving 20 minutes late equals one absence.

Please talk to the instructor regarding extraordinary circumstances resulting in your inability to come to class (illness, family emergencies, etc.).

Required Texts:

Most texts for the course can be found on the Community Arts Network (CAN) Reading Room, <http://www.communityarts.net>; and online, specific URLs are noted below. The following books are on reserve at Gleeson Library:

Cohen-Cruz, Jan. Local Acts- Community Based Performance in the United States, Rutgers University, 2005

Lerman, Liz. Dance For Older Adults

Adams, Don & Goldbard Arlene. Creative Community, The Art of Cultural Development.

Burnham, Linda. The Citizen Artist: 20 Years of Art in the Public Arena

Course Packet Contents. (These can be found on the course Blackboard site on the Gleeson Library link)

We Are All Connected: Elders Share the Arts (pgs.1-6) by Linda Frye Burnham and Susan Pearlstein, High Performance Magazine #69/70, 1995.

Teaching Dance To Senior Adults (pgs.3-19) by Liz Lerman, Charles Thomas Publisher, Springfield Illinois.

Verbal Reminiscence, by Jeff Bliss and Amie Dowling

Teaching Dance To Senior Adults (pgs.139-154) by Liz Lerman, Charles Thomas Publisher, Springfield Illinois.

"Rhythm of the Machine" by Martin Mitchell. Reflections, A Journal of Writing, Service Learning and Community Literacy.Vol IV, Number 1, Winter 2004.

"Masked Racism: Reflections on the Prison Industrial Complex" by Angela Davis, ColorLines, Fall 1998.

"White Privilege" by Peggy McIntosh, Peace and Freedom, July/August 1989

Class Exercises

Grant Funding and San Francisco Arts Commission Grant

COURSE OUTLINE
Social Activism, Art and Community Exchange
Underlined dates are Service Learning experiences

WEEK ONE: January 23rd, 25th

Introduction of syllabus and course responsibilities.

Guests: Gina Morabe: Edna Villa and Brent Nettle: ElderServe.

Buy: Local Acts- Community Based Performance in the United States, Cohen-Cruz, Jan. Rutgers University, 2005

Readings: A synopsis of each reading is handed on the Friday of the week the reading is due. Each student will be assigned to present the salient points in the weekly readings and be prepared to pose questions to the rest of the class regarding content.

1. Local Acts, pgs.17-34
2. Go to Community Arts Network

On Line Discussion: WHY? Please write at least two paragraphs on blackboard addressing why you are interested in taking this course, what you think 'community exchange' refers to in the course title and what your background is in teaching/facilitating.

WEEK TWO: January 28th, 30th, Feb. 1st

Discuss community class, and readings. Introduce creating a safe environment, and class structure when teaching in community settings. Introduce feedback technique. Develop appropriate warm-up for next site visit. **1st class at Senior Center**

Readings:

1. Course Packet: "We Are All Connected"
2. Course Packet: Liz Lerman, Teaching Dance To Senior Adults

WEEK THREE: February 4th, 6th, 8th

Discuss community classes taught last week. **2nd class at Senior Center.** Develop warm-up for this weeks sites. Discuss warm-ups and closure of a class. Why do we do this work and what are our goals?

Readings:

1. Local Acts, pgs.35-59

WEEK FOUR: February 11th, 13th, 15th

Discussion about community classes and student leadership skills.

3rd class at Senior Center. How do we use improvisation in a classroom? Develop improvisations to be used in next site visit.

Independent Research Project: Community Arts Profile
Due April 23th

Focus on philosophy, creative process, goals. Also the describe the community, it's history, the relationship between the community and artist,

how the partnership came about, the history of organization, and the aftermath of the project, its effects on both the community and artist.

Readings:

1. Local Acts, pgs. 81-125

WEEK FIVE: 20th, 22nd (No class Monday, Feb. 18th-Holiday)

4th class at Senior Center. Discussion regarding the questions.... Is this therapy? Is it art? Discuss working backwards. Continue improvisation development. Discuss grants and independent research projects.

Readings:

1. Course packet: Verbal Reminiscence
2. Liz Lerman Toolbox <http://www.danceexchange.org/toolbox/>

WEEK SIX: February 25th, 27th, 29th

Final class at Senior Center. Feed back about improvisations. Discuss the differences between various populations, final structures, and writing a class plan.

Readings:

1. Present toolbox exercises

WEEK SEVEN: March 3rd, 5th, 7th

1st Sisters class. Feed back about site visits. Discuss developing themes for a final structure and small group planning of next site visit.

Readings:

1. Viewing of Videos: Dance Generators, Victoria Marks
2. Read the Real Cost of Prisons comic books

WEEK EIGHT: March 10th, 12th, 14th

2nd Sisters class. Feedback about student led final structures. Discussion about problem solving. Start researching your own site. Discuss how to contact community sites. Discussion and example of community based art grants. Discuss funding and locating sites. Feedback regarding last site visit. Site assignments set.

Written assignments:

Write a grant for a community based project. Due April 21st.

Develop your own class plan for your site. Due March 24th

Readings:

1. Martin Mitchell, Rhythm of the Machine: Theater, Prison Community, and Social Change
2. Viewing of Videos: Performance Project, Voices From Inside
3. Course packet and www.sff.org for grant examples. Grant handouts
4. Research grant applications. Course Packet: Funding Basics: Who, What, Where, When

WEEK NINE: Spring Break

WEEK TEN: March 24th, 26th, 28th

3rd Sisters class. Small group planning of community classes. Discussion of last weeks visits. With partner identify and set up class at community site of your choice

Readings:

1. Course Packet: Angela Davis, Masked Racism: Reflections on the Prison Industrial Complex <http://www.colorlines.com/article.php?ID=114>

Writing Assignments:

Class plan due

First draft of grant due

WEEK ELEVEN: March 31st, April 2nd, 4th

4th Sisters class. Discuss and plan classes for the week. Taking care of ourselves. Plan class for your site.

Readings:

1. Go to: The Sentencing Project, Real Cost of Prisons: Bring statistics to class

WEEK TWELVE: April 7th, 9th, 11th

5th Sisters class. Finding financial resources, and how to incorporate community participants into dance/theater projects.

WEEK THIRTEEN: 14th, 16th, 18th

6th Sisters class.

Readings:

1. " White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" by Peggy McIntosh

WEEK FOURTEEN: April 21st, 23rd, 25th

Last Sisters class.

Written Assignment:

Grants due

Presentation of Final Projects

WEEK FIFTEEN: April 28th, 30th, May 2nd

Teach at your own site

Written Assignment:

Presentation of Final Projects

WEEK SIXTEEN: May 5th, 7th

Written Assignment:

Teach at your own site

Last class