

Quest 1 IDS 2935 Special Topics: Acting for Change

Theme: Identities

Fall 2021

Tuesday 10:40-11:30/Thursday 10:40-12:35

Tuesday MAT0003/Thursday AND0019

General Education Designations: Humanities, Diversity, WR 2000

* A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit *

Dr. Colleen Rua

Phone: 352-273-0590

Office Hours: T/TH 1:00-2:00 and by appointment

Email: crua@arts.ufl.edu

Office: McGuire 205

Course Description:

The prohibition of discriminatory room-pricing for same-sex couples at motels. The banning of electro-shock therapy. The installation of telephone booths on raised platforms to make them accessible to wheelchair users. Each of these laws was enacted in Brazil as a result of the power of theatre. Augusto Boal, who developed a series of techniques under the umbrella of Theatre of the Oppressed used theatre as a means to inspire those disenfranchised by systems of oppression in South America. Playwright Griselda Gámbaro fled Argentina in exile with a secret script that would put spectators in the role of bystander. In California, Luis Valdez gave migrant workers a voice with short plays performed on flatbed trucks. Each of these artists of Latin American decent created theatre by and for non-performers as a way to seek equity, inclusion, and social justice. This course addresses the Quest essential questions associated with the theme of Identity: How are personal and social identities constructed? How and why do they change? In what ways are such identities personally, socially, or politically significant?

This course asks you to rehearse your role as a changemaker. Throughout the semester, you will apply theatre of activism techniques developed by Latin American and Latinx artists to contemporary problems in your own life and/or discipline. You will be encouraged to use your voice to address issues that are important to you, but you are in no way obligated to speak from personal experience (although you may, if you choose to do so). In doing so, you will engage in an investigation of systems of oppression (personal, cultural and structural) that influenced the development of these modes of theatre and their far-reaching influence. The course will ask you to analyze Latinx representation in popular entertainment and to consider the changing narrative of what defines Latinidad and Latinx theatre. Course materials will focus on practices developed at times of upheaval and resistance in South America (the Dirty Wars, the Pinochet Regime) and in Latinx communities in the US (the Delano Grape Strike, Mexico US border detainment). You will learn about theatre aimed at social change through a variety of activities, including readings, viewings, attending live performances, and participating in on-our-feet workshops (no previous theatre experience is required). Assessments include class participation, written essays, creative work and qualitative exams.

Please Note: You do not need to self-identify as a person of Latinx ethnicity in order to participate in this course, nor do you need Spanish language experience. The techniques we study have been developed by Latinx artists and theatre collectives, and their work has been used around the globe to address issues of oppression in many contexts.

Course Objectives (Humanities & Diversity):

This course will:

- explore key terminologies, theories, and methodologies of Theatre Studies and Latinx Studies to ask how students can become changemakers using theatre techniques developed by Latinx artists.
- explore live theatre performance and engage in embodied learning.
- enable students to analyze and evaluate Latinx artists' roles in developing theatre as activism in verbal, written, and kinesthetic communication.
- invite students to analyze the role that theatre plays in their lives; to analyze modes of Latinx theatre as activism; and to apply these modes to their own lives and disciplines.
- engage with the ways that theatre artists, audiences, and scholars negotiate diversity as a dynamic concept related to human differences and their intersections.
- critically analyze and evaluate how ideologies about ethnicity affect social inequities across the US population, and how theatre as activism has been used as a tool to respond to these inequities.
- analyze and reflect on the ways in which theatre is a means by which Latin American and Latinx culture mediates their own and other people's understandings of themselves and an increasingly diverse U.S. society.

Student Learning Outcomes (Humanities & Diversity):

Students will be able to:

- identify, describe, and explain the key terminologies, theories, and methodologies of Theatre Studies and Latinx Studies to ask how students can become changemakers using theatre techniques developed by Latinx artists.
- develop and present clear, effective, and thoughtful responses to questions about Latinx theatre's role in activism and students' roles as changemakers in their own disciplines.
- connect course content by analyzing the role that theatre plays in their lives; by analyzing modes of Latinx theatre as activism; and by applying these modes to their own lives and disciplines.
- Examine, identify, describe, and explain the historical processes and contemporary experiences characterizing the role of theatre as a means of activism within the United States and select international contexts.
- analyze and evaluate the ways in which social inequities have affected the opportunities and constraints of Latinx people in the US. Analyze and reflect on the ways in which Latin American culture has contributed to the development of theatre as activism that mediates understandings of an increasingly diverse US society.

Required Course Materials:

- Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed* (London: Routledge) 2006.
- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 2013.

Additional readings/viewings will be posted to Canvas.

Course Requirements and Expectations:

Participation & Attendance (10%) are required. Discussion and on-our-feet activities will be an integral part of our class meetings, and the extent to which you participate will impact your grade. We're here to learn from each other and your meaningful contributions to discussion and active engagement makes for a fun class! Please come to class prepared, having read/completed the daily assignments.

- **Discussion Guidelines (to be developed in collaboration with class)**

- Compassion
- “Oops/Ouch”
- Speak from the “I”
- Acknowledge that we speak in draft
- Offer constructive criticism

In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place:

The faculty, staff, and Director of the School of Theatre and Dance urge our students to become vaccinated if they have not already done so. The vaccine is free, readily available, safe, and effective. As a point of comparison, Actors Equity Association and the Broadway League are requiring vaccination for all cast, crew, and audience members.

Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.

UF has made clear its expectation that all students be masked inside our buildings, even if you are vaccinated. While being masked may change the look and feel of classwork, rehearsals, production activities, and performances, I believe it is most important to prioritize the health and safety of our community. Sanitizing supplies are available in classrooms and hand sanitizing stations are situated throughout our building.

UF has eliminated social distancing protocols. This means that as we return to regular operations, classes, rehearsals, and performances will require students to work in close proximity to others. Note that special care will be taken regarding moments of theatrical intimacy (including notices of anticipated intimacy in audition notices). For non-intimate moments of physical proximity (dancing close to each other, a handshake in a scene, working in a tech booth, a costume fitting, etc.), students are expected to perform stage blocking, choreographic requirements, and/or production activities in classes, rehearsals, and performances.

Any students who are absent from class for reasons related to illness, inclusive of COVID, should not attend rehearsals or performances. If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website](#) for more information.

- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.
- If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.

Barring the above circumstances, students are expected to be in attendance (either remotely or in-person, as assigned) daily and to be on time. Students are allowed 3 “unexcused” absences that do not require documentation and do not conform to the UF “acceptable reasons for absence.” Any other “unexcused” absence will result in a penalty of a full letter grade (10%) from the final grade per “unexcused” absence. To

be considered “excused” an absence must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation. Religious observances do not require documentation.

Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty:

- Illness—doctor's note must be on official letterhead with address and phone number, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted, doctor name and signature
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

To help organize accommodations, students should inform the instructor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

Creative Collaborations (20%) In a group, you will create four short pieces of theatre over the course of the semester. You will apply and demonstrate your understanding of the concepts and techniques associated with various theatre techniques that we will explore in class. Specific guidelines will be posted on Canvas.

Read (or View or Listen) and Respond (20%): Over the course of the semester, you will read/watch/listen to various materials. The listed readings/viewings/listening are **required** and you should be prepared to engage in discussion about each of them. However, **you will have a choice** in which works you respond to via Canvas assignment. Here is the breakdown of R&R Assignments:

- **One required** response: The first response is required and I ask that you submit via flipgrid video.
- Choose **ONE** R&R to count toward 500 words. This submission must be in essay form that follows the Writing Requirement Grading Rubric. You will submit a **draft first**, then a **final submission** after receiving feedback from me. You may choose any of the readings/viewings/listenings to write about.
- Theatre of the Oppressed Readings: 4 possible, choose 3
- All other readings, viewings, listenings: 11 possible, choose 7

Apart from the one R&R that counts towards 500 words, **you will also have a choice in the method by which you respond.** You may submit an essay, discussion board, flipgrid video, design sketches/renderings/plots/plans, a recorded performance, _____ (class collaborates to fill in additional options). You will be graded on the efficacy of your argument. Do you demonstrate an understanding of the concepts we are studying? Are you analyzing and synthesizing ideas? Are you covering the important points? Making a thoughtful and meaningful contribution that can inform our group discussion?

I ask that the first, two-part Read & Respond assignment be completed through flipgrid (part 1) and Perusall (part 2), so that I can have the opportunity to see you, hear your voice, and read a snippet of your writing. Specific guidelines for each Read & Respond will be posted to Canvas.

Essay (drafts and final submission 20%):

For this assignment, you will attend an SoTD fall production (either *Dog Act* **OR** *A Little Night Music*) and complete a draft of an essay (500 words) in which you analyze the production's potential as a tool for change. Use quotations from two sources we have read in class. You will turn in this draft for feedback before completing the final paper. Specific guidelines will be posted on Canvas. **The final submission counts toward 2000 words.**

Final Project (30%) The final project is comprised of two parts:

Final Paper (proposal, draft, and final submission. 15%):

Proposal: Write a one-paragraph **draft** abstract of your final paper (see details below). In your 250-word abstract, you will state your chosen problem and present your argument, the theoretical framework you will use to develop this argument, and the mode of Latinx Theatre activism you will apply to the problem. Specific guidelines will be posted on Canvas. **This paragraph does NOT count toward words.**

Draft: In this 1000-word reflective paper, you will discuss a problem in your own discipline or one you witness in the world where you see the need and potential for change. You will present research on this issue (citing 2 sources) and select one mode of Latinx Theatre & Activism to apply to this issue at hand (citing 2 sources). What techniques have you embodied this semester that you might apply here? How do you see yourself as an agent of change in our world? Specific guidelines will be posted on Canvas. **This draft does NOT count toward 2000 words.**

Final Submission: For this assignment, you will complete your 1000-word paper, incorporating peer feedback and feedback from me. Specific guidelines will be posted on Canvas. **You final submission DOES count toward 2000 words.**

Presentation Component (15%): As part of a group, you will present a short piece of art as activism in the form of one of the formats we have covered in the course. Your 3 to 4-minute piece will demonstrate your understanding of the concepts and techniques associated with the format you choose and will demonstrate your application of this format to an issue that is important to the group. **(Groups will be formed based on compatible paper proposals).** Specific guidelines will be posted on Canvas.

Grading Scale:

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A	94-100	B	84-86
A-	90-93	B-	80-83
B+	87-89	C+	77-79

C 74-76
 C- 70-73
 D+ 67-69
 D 64-66
 D- 60-63

F <60

Writing Requirement Grading Rubric:

	High Quality	Average	Needs Improvement
Content	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.
Organization	Order reveals a sense of necessity and emphasis; paragraphs focused and coherent; logical transitions signal changes in direction; introduction engages initial interest; conclusion supports without merely repeating.	Order apparent but not consistently maintained; paragraphs focused and for the most part coherent; transitions functional but often obvious or monotonous. Introduction or conclusions may be mechanical rather than purposeful or insightful.	Order unclear or inappropriate, failing to emphasize central idea; paragraphs jumbled or underdeveloped; transitions unclear, inaccurate, or missing. Introduction merely describes what is to follow; conclusion merely repeats what has been said.
Sources/Evidence	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Style	Sentences varied, purposeful, and emphatic; diction	Sentences competent but lacking emphasis and variety; diction	Sentences lack necessary emphasis, subordination, and

	precise and idiomatic; tone fits the subject, persona, and audience.	generally correct and idiomatic; tone acceptable for the subject.	purpose; diction vague or unidiomatic; tone inconsistent with or inappropriate to the subject.
Grammar/Punctuation	Grammar, punctuation, syntax, and spelling contain no serious deviations from the conventions of “edited American English.”	Content undercut by some deviations from the conventions of “edited American English.”	Frequent mistakes in grammar, syntax, punctuation, and spelling obscure content.

- The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.
- The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback, on all of the student's written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.
- WR Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course."

Course Schedule (all assignments are listed on date **DUE**. This schedule is subject to change).

Introductions

Tuesday, August 24 Introduction to Course

Thursday, August 26 What is Theatre? What is Applied Theatre?
Read & Respond: Carlson, “What is Performance?”

Unit 1: Terminology & Definitions

Tuesday, August 31 Latinx Identity; What is Latinx Theatre?
Read & Respond: Gutierrez, What’s in a Name?

Thursday, September 2 Systems of Oppression in Latin America and in US Latinx Communities/
Latinx Representation in Popular Entertainment
Listen & Respond: *In the Heights*

Unit II: Theatre of the Oppressed/Newspaper Theatre

Tuesday, September 7 What is Pedagogy of the Oppressed/Theatre of the Oppressed?
Read & Respond: Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed **AND**
Read & Respond: Boal, Theatre of the Oppressed Reading #1

Thursday, September 9 Embodying Change/ What is Newspaper Theatre?

Read & Respond: Boal, Theatre of the Oppressed Reading #2
Read and bring/have access to a newspaper article that covers the details of an event or issue that is important to you

Tuesday, September 14 Embodying Newspaper Theatre
Read & Respond: Barak, Critical Consciousness in Critical Social Work

Thursday, September 16 **Creative Collaboration #1** – Newspaper Theatre Presentations

Unit III: Theatre of the Oppressed/Image Theatre

Tuesday, September 21 What is Image Theatre?
Take a photo of something that represents an issue that you would like to see changed in your daily life
Read & Respond: Theatre of the Oppressed

Thursday, September 23 Embodying Image Theatre
Read & Respond: Theatre of the Oppressed

Tuesday, September 28 **Creative Collaboration #2** – Image Theatre Presentations

Thursday, September 30 What is El Teatro Campesino?/Aesthetics of Actos
Read & Respond: Valdez Early Works and Actos

Unit IV: El Teatro Campesino

Tuesday, October 5 Embodying El Teatro Campesino
Read & Respond: Tonn, El Teatro Campesino: Short Plays, Large Issues

Thursday, October 7 Embodying Actos (Asynchronous Assignment; Dr. Rua at conference)

Tuesday, October 12 **Creative Collaboration #3** - Present Actos
Submit *acto* to Canvas

Thursday, October 14 **Creative Collaboration #3** - Present Actos
Submit *acto* to Canvas

Unit V: Immersive Theatre

Tuesday, October 19 What is Immersive theatre? Asynchronous Assignment
View& Respond: Powerpoint Slides and Videos
Essay Draft Due if you choose *Dog Act*

Thursday, October 21 How is Immersive theatre used for change?
Theatre for Health and Wellness – Visit with Jeff Pufahl
Read & Respond: Griselda Gambaro, *Information for Foreigners*
Final Paper Proposal Due

Tuesday, October 26	What is the role of the spectator in immersive theatre? What are the ethics of spectatorship in immersive theatre? Read & Respond: A Alston, “Audience Participation and Neoliberal Value: Risk, Agency, and Responsibility in Immersive Theatre,” Performance Research
Thursday, October 28	Asynchronous Assignment – Dr Rua at conference Embodying immersive theatre Submit source material & outline of immersive piece
Tuesday, November 2	Embodying immersive theatre
Thursday, November 4	Creative Collaboration #4 – Immersive Theatre Presentations
Tuesday, November 9	Creative Collaboration #4 – Immersive Theatre Presentations
Thursday, November 11	No class – Veteran’s Day
Tuesday, November 16	How do these techniques apply to my life?/to my discipline? Read & Respond: Sullivan, Theatre of the Oppressed and Environmental Justice Communities
Thursday, November 18	In-class work on Final Presentations
Tuesday, November 23	In-class work on Final Presentations Final paper draft due
Thursday, November 25	No class – Thanksgiving
Tuesday, November 30	In-class work on Final Presentations Essay Draft Due if you chose <i>A Little Night Music</i>
Thursday, December 2	Final Presentations
Tuesday, December 7	Final Presentations
Tuesday, December 14	Final Essay Due, Final Paper Due, Final 500-word R&R due

UF Policies:

Students Requiring Accommodation: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center(352-392 8565,<https://disability.ufl.edu/>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can

complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

University Honesty Policy: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio: The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/or> in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.