

Spring 2005  
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and by appointment

## **THEA 415.01 Topics in Dance: Creative Movement and Dance in Education**

*When Children Create, they are Making Sense of the World.*

Robert Alexander

This experimental course will combine theory and praxis in examining how the arts, and specifically movement, drama, and dance, can serve to make meaning and foster intellectual development and holistic growth. The teaching/learning style will be active, experiential, and highly interactive. Students will learn through first-hand experience in creative, problem-solving classroom activities and field experiences, as well as through readings and discussion. In addition to the readings handed out in class, students will be asked to select and complete supplemental reading in an area of particular interest, and, based on all readings and relevant experiences in and outside the classroom, to prepare and teach at least one class session. Students will have the opportunity to have a voice in the direction the course takes and will be encouraged to view the work as collaborative.

**Materials** - Excerpts from Claudia Cornett's The Arts as Meaning Makers and Sharon Blecher and Kathy Jaffee's Weaving in the Arts will serve as core text. (Available on reserve in the library) You will be asked to choose supplemental readings from the following (on reserve in the library):

Bailey, Wings to Fly: Bringing Theatre Arts to Students with Special Needs

Barker, Theatre Games

Boal, Games for Actors and Non-Actors

Cameron, The Running and Stamping Book

Gallas, The Languages of Learning

Hawkins, Moving from Within

Humphrey, Child Development and Learning through Dance

Johnston, Impro

Levy, Dance Movement Therapy

McCaslin, Creative Drama in the Classroom and Beyond

Mettler, Materials of Dance as a Creative Arts Activity

Spolin, Improvisation for the Theatre

Sternberg, Theatre for Conflict Resolution

Sullivan, Feeling Strong, Feeling Free: Movement Education for Young Children

Other reading suggestions may be generated by the class.

**Methods** - Though there will be time devoted to discussion of readings, assignments, and planning sessions, the bulk of class time will be spent involved in active learning exercises. Though we will be working with one group (first graders) in our field experience, the course will focus broadly on the educational and therapeutic potential of creative movement and dance rather than specifically on child development, age level, or special populations. Materials and discussion on standards-based teaching in the arts will be included. **Student led session:** Each student will be responsible for leading at least one session of the class. The focus of the session will be based on supplemental readings, field experiences, and the student's specific interests and experiences. These sessions will take place with first graders at Ridge Elementary School, will be scheduled well in advance, and shall constitute a final project worth 25% of your grade. Students will be asked to turn in a typed

bibliography of resources and class outline (lesson plan) on the day of the session. In lieu of a bibliography of sources used in preparation of the session, students may turn in an annotated bibliography of at least three texts included on the supplemental reading list. **Paper:** You will be asked to write a 3-5-page paper addressing questions concerning your learning process over the semester. This will take the place of a final exam.

**Field experience** – This course exemplifies a unique partnership with the public school system. The class will meet once a week with second-grade students at Ridge Elementary School, and will have the opportunity to collaborate on planning these session as well as the responsibility for leading one or more sessions. The class will have access to first-grade teacher Sarah Hartwick’s lesson plans, and will collaborate in meeting the challenge of integrating the content of creative movement/drama/dance sessions with Shubert’s curriculum. Transportation to Ridge Elementary will be provided.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Attendance and promptness are crucial! Excessive absences **will** have a negative effect on your grade! You may miss no more than 3 classes, whatever the cause, without risking damage to your grade. If you do not feel well enough to participate, you may observe class. Observing class will count as half an attendance credit. No more than four observation credits can be given. **Promptness** - Chronic tardiness **will** result in a lowered grade. **It is especially important that you be on time for this class since we must travel to Ridge for approximately half of our class meetings. Being late will mean missing the van and therefore the class session. Make a commitment!**

**Grading will be based on:** Attendance; energy investment; focus; demonstrated growth in skill level, awareness, and grasp of the material; final project; participation in group discussion; team work; and willingness to play.

A= Excellent or outstanding work in **all** categories (exceeds requirements)

B= Good, solid work all around (meets requirements)

C= Average-problems in one or two areas, or uneven work

D= Lots of problems

F= Too many problems. Failure to meet the challenge.

### **Reading due dates:**

Arts as Meaning Makers, Chapter 1: 1/20    Chapter 9: 2/1    Chapter 10: 2/8

Weaving in the Arts, Introduction and Chapter 2: 1/25

Dance, Power and Difference Chapter 2: 2/15

### **Other Important Dates/Events:**

Department of Dramatic Arts Department Productions:

*The Secret Affairs of Mildred Wilde* – March 2-5 at 8 PM and March 6 at 2 PM

*On the Road to Kyoto!* April 21-23 at 8 PM and April 24 at 2 PM and 8 PM

Other relevant special events will be announced in class.

Spring Break – March 14-18

Advising Day – March 26

Final Exam Period – May 6 2-4:15 PM. We will have a final meeting at this time.