

CHIC 4350 * DANC 4340 * WS 3383
Latino/Latina Voices in Performance Activism
Spring 2017

TR 3:00 – 4:20 PM

Education Bld. 301

Instructor: S. Paola Lopez R.

Office: FOX M 211 **Office Hours:** TR 12:00 PM – 2:45 PM or by appointment

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This syllabus is subject to change, I will notify you promptly if and when it happens.

Course Description:

This class uses a series of readings, lectures, discussions and movement workshops to investigate the use of performance as a creative response to local and global social problems. Performance activism is an emergent phenomenon that draws from the humanities and social science, including anthropology, performance studies and performative psychology. We will learn about the precursors to performance activism (experimental, political and educational theatre), the influence of performative psychology and philosophy, and Latino and Latina voices in the movement. We will explore other relationships between performance art and activism and integrate theory with embodied experience.

Performance activism embodies a fundamental shift in the way (some) people are working to bring about social change. In the modern era, the dominant modality of social change was confrontation, demonstration and protest. The assumption behind this modality is that conflicting interests can only be overcome by antagonistic struggle. Performance activism embodies a new modality that draws upon the human capacity to play, create and perform. The premise is that people—even if and when their economic, social and/or political interests are in conflict—are capable of creating new relationships, new activities and new ways of moving forward together.

Textbook:

A course reader is available for purchase at UTEP Copy mine. A works cited page on the readings included can be found at the end of this syllabus. **Please purchase this by end of the first week of class!**

Course Objectives:

- √ Address key topics and terminology for learning about performance
- √ Investigate the use of performance in and as activism
- √ Learn about influences and extensions of this movement to other disciplines
- √ Learn about Latino/Latina voices in this movement and their impact in the US and beyond
- √ Gain an understanding of the developmental power of performance through movement and performance-based exercises

- √ Engage in community activities that are performance-based and be able to discuss and reflect on those experiences in relationship to our class.
- √ Create our own performance-based responses to class material and current issues/events.

Late-work Policy: I do NOT accept late work. Please plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time to turn in assignments on time. If something extraordinary comes up that will prevent you from turning in an assignment (accident, death in the family, severe illness, etc.) you must let me know (if at all possible) **BEFORE the due date** to request an extension.

Attendance Policy: You have three (3) absences permitted during the course of the semester without penalty. After that, **your grade will be lowered 1/2 a letter grade for each day missed.** Keep in mind that coming to class late or leaving early will be considered as 1/2 an absence. ***Students missing more than six classes should drop the course.*** **Please make sure you are aware of the course drop deadline, dropping the class is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!**

NOTE: In certain circumstances I will allow you to make up absences. If you want to do this, please schedule an appointment with me to discuss it further.

Criteria for Grading:

Participation and Effort (200 points): You **HAVE** to be engaged and actively participate to pass this class! Ask questions, make comments, send me emails, engage in discussions and conversations, play games, perform and be *mindfully* present.

Reading responses (65 points total, 5 points each): Please respond to the readings with questions, thoughts and comments that you have after reading each article. What makes you curious? What would you like to find more about? What can you relate to? What does the article bring up for you? I DO NOT want a summary of the article. Bring your typed 100-150 word response to class each day **so you can use it in our discussion.**

Performance response (35 points): You will be required to attend a performance and respond in a creative way (see attached guidelines for more info). **Due: March 2nd**

Women's March Assignment (50 points): You will be required to volunteer for at least one of three events organized by the local coalition *Boundless Across Borders*. These events are great examples of grassroots creative responses to social issues inspired by the national mobilization of women in the Women's March in Washington DC (see attached guidelines for more info). Event dates: January 20 & 21. **Due: Jan 26th**

Community Workshop Assignment (50 points): You will choose one of three community workshops lead by local organization *in2improv* to attend and participate in. One of them is scheduled for April 1st and the other two will be scheduled throughout the semester (see

attached guidelines for more info). Workshop dates are April 1st and other TBD. **Due: Thursday after the workshop.**

Midterm Performative Research Project (100 points): Individually or in small groups you will interview and/or research a Latina/Latino performance activist or activist theatre/group assigned to you by your instructor. You will prepare a performative/creative/artful presentation to share in class. Guidelines will be handed to you with your group assignments the second week of class. Midterm performances are scheduled for **March 21st**.

Final Performative Research Project (100 points): Individually or in small groups you will create a performance or installation piece that creatively addresses a social issue that you feel passionate about. The pieces will be presented in class on **May 2nd** and you will come up as a class (with my support and guidance) with a space and time to share these pieces in one or multiple community spaces. Guidelines will be handed out on **March 23rd**. Please have in mind what issue you want to address and if you would like to do it with someone else and who that might be.

Total possible points: 600

A= 100-90% (600-540)

B= 89-80% (539-480)

C= 79-70% (479-420)

D= 69-60% (419-360)

F= 59% and below (359 <)

Remember that the number of absences you have can lower your final grade!!!

Tentative schedule:

Tuesday, Jan 17th – Introduction to the class and going over syllabus.

Thursday, Jan 19th – Contextualize *Boundless Across Borders* events over the weekend and explain assignments. Introduce “Yes, and” concept, getting out of comfort zone, building with what we have. Watch instructor’s TEDx talk.

Friday, Jan 20th and Saturday Jan 21st – *Boundless Across Borders* inauguration events - ***Mandatory activity***

Tuesday, Jan 24th – *Boundless* weekend debrief and conversation. Creating our own performance-based projects (discussing midterm and final performance projects)

- **DUE: *Designing and Documenting Peacebuilding Performance Initiatives* Pg. 27-36**
Midterm assignments are handed out.

Thursday, Jan 26th – Introducing the term/word/activity “performance”

- **DUE:** Women's March assignment

Tuesday, Jan 31st – What is performance activism?

- **DUE:** *Performing the World: The Emergence of Performance Activism* by Lois Holzman and Dan Friedman **Pg. 1-26**

Thursday, Feb 2nd – What is performance activism?

Tuesday, Feb 7th – A new kind of activism and Post-Modern Marxism

- **DUE:** *Good-bye Ideology. Hello Performance* by Dan Friedman **Pg. 37-50**
Guest Speaker via Skype: Dan Friedman, performance activist and author of article

Thursday, Feb 9th – Vygotsky and performative psychology

Skype call with Educational Psychologist Tony Perone (U of Washington Tacoma)

Tuesday, Feb 14th – A look back: Theatre for the working-class

- **DUE:** *Introduction (Theatre for Working-Class Audiences...)* **Pg. 51-70**

Thursday, Feb 16th – A look back: Theatre for the working-class

- **DUE:** *A brief Description of the Workers' Theater Movement of the Thirties* **Pg. 103 – 116**

Tuesday, Feb 21st – How do we define Latinidad?

- **DUE:** *In Quest of Latinidad: Identity, Disguise, and Politics* **Pg. 71-102**

Thursday, Feb 23rd – How do we define Latinidad?

Performances

Saturday, Feb 25th and Sunday, Feb 26th – *knee-jerk* in performance at the Rubin Center for the Visual Arts. ***Mandatory activity***

Tuesday, Feb 28th – El Teatro Campesino and Luis Valdez

- **DUE:** *El Teatro Campesino and the Mexican Popular Performance Tradition* (El Teatro Campesino) **Pg. TBD**

Thursday, March 2nd – El Teatro Campesino and Luis Valdez

- **DUE:** *El Teatro Campesino and the Mexican Popular Performance Tradition* (El Teatro Campesino) **Pg. TBD**
- **DUE:** Performance response

Friday, March 3rd – *Koan* in performance at Star City Studios. Details TBD (Extra Credit)

Tuesday, March 7th – Final Project discussion

Thursday, March 9th – Research/prep for midterms

Tuesday, March 14th - SPRING BREAK ****NO CLASS****

Thursday, March 16th – SPRING BREAK ****NO CLASS****

Tuesday, March 21st – Midterm Performances

Thursday, March 23rd – Midterm Performances/ Improv Games
Final performance assignments handed out.

Tuesday, March 28th – Theatre of the Oppressed and Augusto Boal

- **DUE:** Theatre of the Oppressed reading. **Available on Blackboard**

Thursday, March 30th – Theatre of the Oppressed and Augusto Boal
Games

Saturday, April 1st – Improvisation and Performance for Social Change workshop. 9 AM – 12:30 PM. Location TBD ***Mandatory Activity*** (one choice for many)

Tuesday, April 4th – Playback Theatre

- **DUE:** Playback Theatre Reading. **Available on Blackboard**

Thursday, April 6th – Playback Theatre
Rehearsals

- **DUE:** Community Workshop response for April 1st workshop

Tuesday, April 11th – Applied Theatre

- **DUE:** Applied Theatre Reading. **Available on Blackboard**

Thursday, April 13th – Afro-Latinidad

- **DUE:** Stories of Us article. **Link available on Blackboard**
Guest speaker on Skype: Playwright Jelisa Jay Robinson (Houston, TX)

Tuesday, April 18th – Aboutlessness in performance art

- **DUE:** *Theatre for Nothing* by Dan Friedman **Pg. 271-278**

Wednesday, April 19th – *Koan* performance. Fox Fine Arts Recital Hall @ 7:30 PM (Extra Credit)

Thursday, April 20th – Aboutlessness in performance art
Improvised performances

Tuesday, April 25th – Castillo Theatre: a performance activist theatre

- **DUE:** *Theatre, Community and Development: The Performance Activism of the Castillo Theatre* by Dan Friedman. **Available on Blackboard.**

Thursday, April 27th – Castillo Theatre: a performance activist theatre
Guest Speaker via Skype: Dan Friedman, director of Castillo Theatre

Tuesday, May 2nd – Final performances

Thursday, May 4th – Final performances and Class reflection

Monday, May 8th – Last day to turn in extra credit

Academic Dishonesty:

Any form of academic dishonesty: cheating, plagiarizing or taking a test for another student is considered a very serious matter at UTEP. Our library webpage provides good information on what UTEP considers Academic Dishonesty and what steps the university takes in such cases. Please review this information at:

http://libraryweb.utep.edu/research/copy_plag.php

Copyright and Fair Use:

The University requires all members of its community to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The University will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

ADA:

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that reasonable accommodations be provided for students with physical, sensory, cognitive, systemic, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass.

Technology Problems:

Technology problems are NOT an excuse for work that is late or missing. Students need to complete assignments for this course well before the due date to allow time for dealing with technology problems. Contact IT for technological problems and remember that Atlas lab in the UGLC or LACIT in the Liberal Arts building provide assistance with using Blackboard.

University Writing Center:

Located in the library room 227, UTEP's University Writing Center (UWC) offers free tutoring assistance in writing for all UTEP students. The tutors are undergraduate and

graduate students who can help with all parts of a writing assignment, including prewriting, organizing, revising, and editing. They can also help you understand any writing assignment and will work with you to aid you in comprehending difficult material.

Performance Response Information

Due date: March 3rd

Performance Dates:

Saturday, February 25 @ 7:30 PM

Sunday, February 26 @ 5:00 PM

Location:

Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts
UTEP

Guidelines:

It is very important for me that you take the time to interpret and respond **thoughtfully** to the dance concerts you watch. For this assignment I want to you respond in an unconventional and/or artistic way. You have the following options:

- A poem or script
- A drawing, collage, etc.
- A short dance/movement piece
- A song
- A short video
- A short story
- A website
- If you want to respond in a medium that is not on this list, please talk to me about it before hand.

DO NOT take pictures and/or videotape during the performance to use in your response.

Be prepared to discuss your experience and share your work with the class, this will be part of your grade.

Women's March and Community Workshop Guidelines

Due date:

Women's March: January 26th

April 1st Workshop: April 6th

Other workshops: TBA

Guidelines:

I want you to be able to articulate critically and thoughtfully what your experience was in these events. Even though this is a written response, you can be playful and creative in how you write it. Your reflection should be guided by answering the following questions:

- **How did you feel?** Did your emotions change throughout the event? When and why do you think this happened (or not)?
- **What did you observe?** Who was there (who wasn't)? Where and when did the event take place? How did the space frame this particular event? What were people wearing, doing, saying? What day was it? How was the temperature of the space/outside? Can you tell why were people there?
- **What role did you play in this event?**
- **How was performance evidenced in this event?**
- **Would you describe this as a "performance activism" event, why or why not?**

Feel free to add or use other pertinent information for inspiration. **The response should be at least one page and no more than two.**

Be prepared to discuss your experience and share your work with the class, this will be part of your grade.

Works Cited

- Arrizón, Alicia. "In Quest of Latinidad: Identity, Disguise, and Politics." *Latina Performance: Traversing the Stage*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999. 1-28. Print.
- Broyles-González, Yolanda. "El Teatro Campesino and the Mexican Popular Performance Tradition." *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement*. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994. 3-77. Print.
- Cohen, Cynthia, and Polly O. Walker. "Designing and Documenting Peacebuilding Performance Initiatives." *Acting Together: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict. Volume II*. Eds. Cynthia Cohen, Roberto Gutierrez Varea, and Polly O. Walker. Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2011. 219-228. Print.
- Friedman, Dan, and Lois Holzman. "Performing the World: The Emergence of Performance Activism." *Performance Studies in Motion: International Perspectives and Practices in the Twenty-First Century*. Eds. Atay Citron, Sharon Aronson-Lehavi, and David Zerbib. 1st ed. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014. 1-23. Print.
- Friedman, Dan. *Theatre, Community and Development: The Performance Activism of the Castillo Theatre*. Print.
- Friedman, Dan. *Theatre for Nothing*. Print.
- Friedman, Dan. "Good-Bye Ideology. Hello Performance." *Topoi* 30.2 (2011): 125-35. *SpringerLink*. Web. 07 Dec. 2015.
- Friedman, Daniel. "A Brief Description of the Workers' Theatre Movement of the Thirties." *Theatre for Working-Class Audiences in the United States, 1830-1980*. Eds. Bruce A. McConachie and Daniel Howard Friedman. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985. 111-120. Print.
- . "Contemporary Theatre for Working-Class Americans in the United States." *Theatre for Working-Class Audiences in the United States, 1830-1980*. Eds. Bruce A. McConachie and Daniel Howard Friedman. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985. 197-246. Print.
- McConachie, Bruce A., and Daniel Howard Friedman. "Introduction." *Theatre for Working-Class Audiences in the United States, 1830-1980*. Eds. Bruce A. McConachie and Daniel Howard Friedman. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985. 3-15. Print.