

Latinx Voices in Performance Activism - CEL*
Spring 2022

CHIC 3343, CRN 29057
DANC 4340, CRN 28723 (Selected Topics in Dance)
WS 3383, CRN 29001 (Gender Issues in Humanities)

MW 1:30 – 2:50 PM; FOX D180

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00-5:00 PM

This syllabus is subject to change. Think of it as a map or a constellation of the work we will engage with this semester. It is not an exact timeline or representation of what we will do.

Course Description:

Performance activism is a complex and emergent phenomenon that draws from the humanities and social science, including fields such as anthropology, performance studies and performative psychology. What is performance? What is activism? The answers to these questions are in constant flux, continuously reshaping and redesigning what this field is and what kind of work is labeled as such. In this course, we will question what we think we know about these two terms (and the combination of the two) while focusing on Latinx examples in the movement.

**The “CEL” designation for this course stands for “Community Engagement & Leadership” and is part of a new certificate program in the College of Liberal Arts. The purpose of this CEL course is to strengthen students’ understanding of their role in society as engaged citizens and to build the knowledge and competencies that will enable them to be socially responsible and participating community leaders. Accordingly, course assignments and assessments are developed in line with the CEL Program mission in Liberal Arts, as well as within the broader framework and mission of UTEP’s “Edge Advantages” goals.*

Course Format:

We will engage our topic through readings, interactive discussions, and hands-on workshops and community projects to investigate performance as a creative response to local and global social problems. We will work to integrate theory with embodied experience connecting what we are learning in the classroom to direct action in the community. As we learn about Performance Activism, we will also get introduced to different examples of how this movement looks in varied Latinx settings in the US and beyond.

PLEASE NOTE: Because it is an experiential course, your presence in class is of outmost importance. Please read the absence policy in this syllabus carefully.

Textbook:

Friedman, Dan. *Performance Activism: Precursors and Contemporary Pioneers*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillian, 2021.

Course Objectives:

- √ Address key topics and terminology for learning about performance
- √ Investigate the history of performance in and as activism
- √ Learn about Latinx voices in this movement and their impact
- √ Gain an understanding of the developmental power of performance and the body's political nature through movement and performance-based exercises
- √ Increase social justice and social responsibility awareness
- √ Articulate and practice team-building skills in the creation of community workshops
- √ Organize, participate and reflect on public workshops

Criteria for Grading:

Effort Points (280 points total*, 10 points each): Because this is an experiential course, you are expected to show up and actively participate every day. For each class you attend you will be awarded 10 effort points. If you need to be absent due to illness, a zoom option will be available for you to join class remotely and you will be able to make up the participation points **provided you submit a 300 to 500-word written reflection by the end of the day**. Information on how to join via zoom is available on our Blackboard home page.

*Please note: **Effort points are separate from the absence policy**.* Read the absence policy in this syllabus carefully.

**Keep in mind that the total points for these will be adjusted if any classes are canceled.*

Reading quizzes (65 points total; 5 points each): You will have 13 readings assigned from our textbook throughout the semester. Every day a reading is due, you will have a short quiz about it on Blackboard to be completed by the start of class time (1:30 pm).

Community workshops (200 points total, 50 points each): Throughout the semester you will take part in organizing, promoting, participating and reflecting in community workshops organized in partnership with the Institute for Improvisation and Social Action (ImprovISA) and the UTEP-based collective [Somos Agua/We are Water](#). The workshops will take place at the Rio Bosque Wetlands Park on the following Saturdays: **January 29th from 3-5 pm, February 26th from 3-5 pm, March 26th from 9-11 am, and April 23rd**

from 9-11 am. If you have a conflict with any of these dates, please let me know **ASAP** so I can give you an alternate assignment. For more information on these workshops, see our Blackboard home page.

Workshop reflections (120 points total, 30 points each): After each community workshop you will be required to reflect on your experience by following guidelines handed out ahead of time. Your written reflections will be due in class on the Wednesday after each workshop: **February 2nd, March 2nd, March 30th and April 27th**

Individual reflection paper (50 points): This final paper will include a thoughtful reflection about your experience in the course and how your understanding of the topic was impacted by the community engagement activities throughout the semester. Detailed guidelines will be made available to you by April 27th. **Due on May 6th**

Final Reflection and Conversation (100 points): To close out the semester, you will make a creative response that reflects your overall experience in the course and present this during our last meeting as part of our final. This will take place during our slotted time on finals week on **Wednesday, May 11th from 4:00 – 6:50 pm**

Grade Breakdown:

Total possible points: 800*

A= 100-90% (800-720)

B= 89-80% (719-640)

C= 79-70% (639-560)

D= 69-60% (559-480)

F= 59% and below (479 <)

**Even though the amount of points might change as we adjust throughout the semester, the percentage for each letter grade will remain the same.*

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 you must let me know (if at all possible) **BEFORE the due date** to request an extension.

Attendance Policy: READ CAREFULLY!

To succeed in any course, but especially a performance course where students can often only learn by experiential participation, a student must first and above all be present. Therefore, this policy prioritizes class attendance and participation at the top of the grading process.

However, due to the unforeseen and rapidly changing circumstances dictated by the COVID-19 pandemic, I want to be as flexible as possible to keep all of our health and well-being a top priority.

Because every student's circumstance is unique, I encourage you to be as open and honest as possible when encountering unexpected challenges, as well as to communicate in advance potential issues that could affect your commitment to class (childcare, elder care, shifting work schedule, etc.).

E-mail me as soon as an issue comes up: this is the only way you can get help and possible accommodations while minimizing the impact on your academic progress. While every situation will be assessed on an individual basis, the more a student communicates in a clear and effective way, the easier it will be to find a positive solution. *Make-up classes might be an option depending on your situation. Please discuss this with me if you want to pursue it.*

For courses that meet twice a week like ours, **the maximum number of absences allowed without failing the course is 4**. The 3rd and 4th absences will result in a drop of ½ letter each in the student's overall grade. At the 5th absence, regardless of the student's current course standing or grade, the student automatically fails the course. Being late three times (over 10 minutes) will count as one absence.

Important exceptions and notes regarding attendance:

- √ If a student is quarantining or is not present *because of COVID exposure or COVID symptoms*, as long as the student contacts the instructor and attends class remotely via Zoom, the student will be counted as present and will get all participation points **provided they submit a 300 to 500-word written reflection by the end of the day**. If attending remotely is not an option, an additional assignment can be requested by the student to make up for the absence.
- √ In case of extended injury or illness, the student must contact the instructor to discuss possible accommodations, course continuation or to consider dropping the class.
- √ In the event of international bridge closures that affect students commuting from Ciudad Juárez, the student needs to contact the instructor as exceptions may be made and make-up course work assigned.
- √ In the event of highly unusual or extenuating circumstances, a student may petition the course instructor and department chair for permission to continue in a course.

Some notes and recommendations as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic:

- √ **PLEASE, STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK.** This is the best way to continue to protect each other.
- √ Given the potential spread of variants by vaccinated and unvaccinated people alike, and the fact that we will be doing moderate exercise often in an enclosed space, I **HIGHLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO WEAR A FACE MASK** that covers your nose and mouth during class, regardless of vaccination status.
- √ **WASH YOUR HANDS** or use hand sanitizer upon entering and leaving the classroom.
- √ Please keep in mind that social distancing might be difficult to always maintain during our explorations. Nonetheless, we will be mindful of our distance to each other.
- √ Always bring comfortable shoes that safely secure your feet in the event that we do our class outside. Weather permitting, we will plan on doing this as often as possible to reduce the risk of COVID exposure.

Tentative Class Schedule:

Week 1 (Jan 17th)

Syllabus day and class expectations

Week 2 (Jan 24th)

Introduction to class content

Reading: Chapter 1 – **DUE on Mon 1/24**

Quiz Chapter 1 – **DUE on Mon 1/24**

Guest Artist: rayven armijo (Wed, 1/26)

Community Workshop #1 – Saturday, Jan 29th from 3-5 pm

Week 3 (Jan 31st)

Historical beginnings

Reading: Chapter 2 – **DUE on Mon 1/31**

Quiz Chapter 2 – **DUE on Mon 1/31**

Reading: Chapter 3 – **DUE on Wed 2/2**

Quiz Chapter 3 – **DUE on Wed 2/2**

Workshop Reflection #1 – **DUE on Wed 2/2**

Week 4 (Feb 7th)

Improvisation

Reading: Chapter 4 – **DUE on Mon 2/7**
 Quiz Chapter 4 – **DUE on Mon 2/7**

Week 5 (Feb 14th)

Performance in therapy and the streets
 Reading: Chapter 5 – **DUE on Mon 2/14**
 Quiz Chapter 5 – **DUE on Mon 2/14**

Reading: Chapter 6 – **DUE on Wed 2/16**
 Quiz Chapter 6 – **DUE on Wed 2/16**

Week 6 (Feb 21st)

The body as subject: Performance Art
 Reading: Chapter 7 – **DUE on Mon 2/21**
 Quiz Chapter 7 – **DUE on Mon 2/21**

Community Workshop #2 – Saturday, Feb 26th from 3-5 pm

Week 7 (Feb 28th)

The Avant-guard and Theater of the Oppressed
 Reading: Chapter 8 – **DUE on Mon 2/28**
 Quiz Chapter 8 – **DUE on Mon 2/8**

Workshop Reflection #2 – **DUE on Wed 3/2**

Week 8 (Mar 7th)

The sixties and El Teatro Campesino
 Reading: Chapter 9 – **DUE on Mon 3/7**
 Quiz Chapter 9 – **DUE on Mon 3/7**

Guest Artist: Patricia Machado (Wed, 3/9)

Week 9 (Mar 14th)

SPRING BREAK, NO CLASSES

Week 10 (Mar 21st)

World Water Week (schedule and assignments TBD)

Community Workshop #3 – Saturday, Mar 26th from 9-11 am

Week 11 (Mar 28th)

Performance and social change
 Reading: Pages 141-144 and Chapter 11 – **DUE on Mon 3/28**
 Quiz Chapter 11 – **DUE on Mon 3/28**

Workshop Reflection #3 – **DUE on Wed 3/30**

Week 12 (Apr 4th)

Building bridges

Reading: Chapter 12 – **DUE on Mon 4/4**

Quiz Chapter 12 – **DUE on Mon 4/4**

Week 13 (Apr 11th)

Healing trauma

Reading: Chapter 14 – **DUE on Mon 4/11**

Quiz Chapter 14 – **DUE on Mon 4/11**

Week 14 (Apr 18th)

Building Community

Reading: Chapter 16 – **DUE on Mon 4/18**

Quiz Chapter 16 – **DUE on Mon 4/18**

Community Workshop #4 – Saturday, Apr 23rd from 9-11 am

Week 15 (Apr 25th)

TBD

Workshop Reflection #4 – **DUE on Wed 4/27**

Week 16 (May 2nd)

TBD

Final reflection paper – **DUE on Fri 5/6**

Finals Week (May 9th)

Final presentation and conversation on May 11th from 4:00 – 6:50 pm

Accommodations Policy:

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University. Students requesting an accommodation based on a disability must register with the [UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#).

Scholastic Integrity:

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution \(OSCCR\)](#) for possible disciplinary action. To learn more [HOOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

Student Resources:

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- [Help Desk](#): Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance. Contact the Helpdesk via phone, email, chat, website, or in person if on campus.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- [Math Tutoring Center \(MaRCS\)](#): Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- [History Tutoring Center \(HTC\)](#): Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.
- [Military Student Success Center](#): UTEP welcomes military-affiliated students to its degree programs, and the Military Student Success Center and its dedicated staff (many of whom are veterans and students themselves) are here to help personnel in any branch of service to reach their educational goals.
- [RefWorks](#): A bibliographic citation tool; check out the RefWorks tutorial and Fact Sheet and Quick-Start Guide.