

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

Academic School/ Department: Communications, Arts & Social Sciences

Programme: Performance and Theatre Arts

FHEQ Level: 6

Course Title: Top Girls: Innovators and Outsiders

Course Code: THR 6230

Course Leader: Dr. M. Barclay

Student Engagement Hours: 120

Practical tasks and assignments: 15

Screenings: 5

Lectures: 10

Field-trips: 5

Performances / Rehearsals: 10

Presentations: 5

Independent / Guided Learning: 75

Semester: **Fall and/or Spring**

Credits: 12 UK CATS credits
6 ECTS credits
3 US credits

Course Description:

This course gives students the opportunity to investigate the work of a group of individual female play-makers (playwrights, theatre & film directors, actor-producers and performer-writers) through the last four centuries, starting with the 17th century playwright Aphra Behn, and culminating with the 21st century theatre director Katie Mitchell. The course follows the praxis model of *theory into practice* and students will be given the opportunity to write in an academic register as well as to engage in a series of improvisation workshops & presentations as a method of exploring elements in the material under discussion.

Prerequisites: ARW 4195

Aims and Objectives:

Students will be introduced to female theatre practitioners and their work in order to expand their awareness of the changing role of women through recent history, and the problems

overcome by each practitioner in her particular social environment. Students will discuss at least one key “text” (script, film or performance record) from each practitioner on the syllabus, and will engage with feminist performance / identity discourses set out by writers including Jacques Derrida, Helen Cixous, Susan Melrose and Jaqueline Rose.

Programme Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following programme outcomes.

A1, A2, A3, A5, A7, A8, A17; B1, B3, B4, B6, B13, B14, B15, B18; C1, C2, C3, C5, C6; D3, D5, D10.

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the Departmental page of the portal.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will explore the story of women’s entrances and exits from visibility in theatre and performance over four centuries, with particular reference to the prolific production of women during the late 20th and early 21st centuries.
- Students will analyse a series of plays and films, and will extend this analysis to more in-depth understanding with regard to particular practitioners and / or texts on the syllabus, following their own individual area of interest.
- Students will develop an ability to identify various shifts in society and culture that have had an effect on women’s ability to contribute to theatre, and which women’s theatre writing and film making has in turn commented upon, through the use of particular tracts of appropriate feminist and performance theory.
- Students will be expected to perform within their capabilities as either an actor, playwright or director during presentations and improvisations. No student will be required to perform if they do not wish to. Students will be expected to demonstrate an awareness of the obligation to others during collaboration processes.

Indicative Content:

- Play texts by Aphra Behn, Helen Cixous, Caryl Churchill, Shelagh Delaney, Liz Lochhead.
- Films by Agnes Varda, Emma Thompson, Jane Campion, Nora Ephron, Phyllis Nagy.
- Productions directed by Katie Mitchell, Deborah Warner.
- Performances by Tilda Swinton, Fiona Shaw, Marina Abramovic.

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved by Academic Council on 28 June 2012.

