

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

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

Academic School/Department:	CASS
Programme:	Performance and Theatre Arts
FHEQ Level:	6
Course Title:	Top Girls: Innovators and Outsiders
Course Code:	THR 6330
Course Leader:	Dr. Michael Barclay
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Practical Tasks and Assignments	15
Lectures:	10
Screenings:	5
Field Trips:	5
Performances/Rehearsals:	5
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 a variety of female performance 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:

6A(ii), 6A (iv), 6B (ii), 6B (iii), 6C(i), 6C(iv), 6D(i), 6D(iv)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by the Academic Registry and found at:
<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-schools/academic-registry/program-and-course-specifications.aspx>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the impact of theories of gender, sexuality and performance on women over four centuries, with particular reference to the prolific production of women during the late 20th and early 21st centuries.
- Demonstrate the ability to critically analyse, within specific historical and cultural contexts, a series of plays and films that reflect the theoretical debates surrounding female performance practitioners.
- Demonstrate the ability to use complex and abstract ideas to perform, within their capabilities as either an actor, playwright or director, a series of presentations and improvisations.
- Demonstrate the ability to provide critical appraisals and insights in relation to the debates within the area and to work collaboratively with others.
- Demonstrate the ability to act with minimal supervision, to engage self-reflection and locate their own normative views in the communication process

Indicative Content:

- History of the emergence, publication and performance of the work of a selection of female playwrights, theatre directors, performers and film-makers from 1610 to the present day.
- Analysis and investigation of a selection of 19th and 20th century theories of feminism, gender, writing and performance, as applied to specific texts, plays, performance scores or films.

Assessment:

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

Teaching Methodology:

This course is taught according to the praxis model – theory into practice. A syllabus of full length plays and films are explored through practical improvisation workshops (exploring critical themes and issues that occur in the plays) as well as lectures, seminars and discussions. This course is in part taught as a workshop, in which viewing of films, seeing and reading of plays and sharing in groups will be a central part of the process. Learning will focus around entire class feedback seminars and smaller group work, in addition to observation exercises (including at least one field trip), reading and discussion tasks, co-authoring of texts, pair-work, peer-editing tasks and whole group feedback tasks. Each student will research and write an essay, take part in presentations and also keep a journal to be edited during the semester into a critical reflection, which will provide a reflective forum for examination of the student's growing understanding of the knowledge base and the impact of this knowledge on their personal development and capabilities.

Bibliography:

See syllabus for complete reading list

Indicative Texts:

- Cole, M. & V. Gardner, *Women, Theatre and Performance: New Histories, new Historiographies*. Manchester University Press, 2001.
- Fischer-Lichte, E. & T. Jost, *The Politics of Interweaving Performance Cultures – Beyond Postcolonialism*. Routledge, 2014.
- Goodman, L., *The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance*. Routledge, 1998.
- Kerbel, Lucy, *100 Great Plays for Women*. Nick Hern Books, 2013.
- Manfull, H., *Taking Stage: Women Directors on Directing*. Methuen Drama, 1999.

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

Change Log for this CSD:

Major or Minor Change?	Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
Major	Rewrite of Programme Outcomes	LTPC 30/5/14	
Major	Rewrite of Learning Outcomes	LTPC 30/5/14	
Major	Rewrite of Indicative Content	LTPC 30/5/14	
Minor	Updating of Indicative Texts	LTPC 30/5/14	
	(Note 'Student Engagement Hours' were revised as they did not add up to 120 in original CSD)		