University of North Texas
Department of Dance and Theatre
and Jewish Studies Program

THEA 4500.002    Fall 2012
Staging Atrocities: Theatre and the Holocaust  Dr. Timothy Wilson
ged
Wednesday 6:00 – 9:00pm
Curry Hall 212
Office Hours: Tuesday – Thursday 2:00 – 3:00
And by Appointment
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RTFP 231

Overview

This course involves the exploration and examination of performance and the arts as reflections of the experiences of people during the Holocaust.

Objectives

Through readings, plays, films, videos, exhibitions, personal experiences and family histories students will form and discuss personal points of view regarding the power of the arts as a way of honoring memory.

As a part of this process students will develop the ability to effectively engage in communication about the Holocaust and the individuals impacted by this atrocity in written and verbal forms.

As active participants in this learning process, students will assume a responsibility for identifying and investigating opportunities to broaden and deepen a personal understanding and commitment to issues related to the Holocaust and its continuing effect on contemporary thought.

Attendance / Participation

The structure of this course is focused on experiences, investigation and interaction. It is imperative that students accept the responsibility for attending each class and assigned events as evidence of a commitment to as study of the Holocaust as well as to their peers and themselves. In that the class only meets once a week, and that attending performances/events is integral to successful completion of the course objectives, students should consider attendance and participation as essential to passing the course. Students should be prepared to present documentation for missing a class, and whenever possible communicate with the instructor and peers if an absence is expected.

Absences beyond one excused absence will result in a lowered grade. Three or more absences will be considered sufficient reason for failure in this course.

Late arrivals and early exits are considered as absences and will result in a lowered grade.

The experiential nature of this course requires focused, committed, active and positive involvement. Students should be prepared for each assignment and participate actively in all aspects of the class. Through positive and focused participation, each student demonstrates a commitment to the art form, their peers and themselves.
**Personal Considerations**

In that the study of the Holocaust through theatre, film, performance, arts, and literature as well as the moral, social, cultural and political issues inherent in this area of study, it is possible to cover a wide spectrum of human behavior, practices, language and subject matter that may be considered immoral, anti-social or obscene to some. Some performances, readings and discussions may contain adult themes, language or images which are not within your personal standards or value system. The instructor nor the university plays the role of “censor.” Please consider this matter carefully. If you are easily offended or are not willing to experience standards and values different from your own, this may not be the class for you.

**Requirements / Assignments: 110%**

40% Performances / Readings / Discussion

Discussions are an essential part of each class experience. Students should attend to each assignment and be prepared to participate in all discussions as well as to become aware of respect for and understanding of opinions that are different from their own.

Each student will be required to develop essays in response to each assigned topic / performance / event / reading. The format / content of these papers will be discussed in class relative to each specific assignment.

Note: In addition to content - clarity, spelling, grammar, neatness and promptness are important on all assignments. Written assignments must be typed and received in hard copy. No assignments will be accepted late or by email. You should always keep a back-up copy of all work submitted.

Periodic assignment of additional tasks will be made to enhance the understanding of topics being discussed and investigated.

20% Biography

Each student will select a biography of someone whose life experiences related to the Holocaust interest them. Following the reading, each student will develop a concise, thought provoking paper that amplifies the scope and depth of this individual’s life. This story will be presented in written and oral form – story telling.

20% Selected Theatrical Plays

As part of a group project students will be assigned specific plays as a focus for discussion and interaction. Each group will select a format for presentation of this work within the class.

20% Projects

Each student will identify, propose, develop and present an individual project [activity, research, paper] which demonstrates a personal investment and point of view regarding an identified aspect in the study of the Holocaust. Each project should be proposed and discussed with the instructor in advance.

10% Final Paper

Each student will develop a written reflection statement addressing personal growth through participation in Theatre and the Holocaust.
***Texts


***Plays / Scripts


Additional Readings, Play Scripts, Books, Films and Performances provided on an separate bibliography

***Films / Exhibitions / Plays / Events

Students are responsible for admission fees for scheduled events.

This syllabus is subject to change in response to student or program needs.
**Behavioral Expectations**

Eating, chewing gum / tobacco [or other objects] is not appropriate in an academic classroom. Arrange for lunch/dinner before or after class.

Activities such as reading newspapers, reading books or articles for other classes, studying for other classes, writing letters, balancing your checkbook, planning your next social event or any other activity which is not pertinent to this course are considered inappropriate, and will be viewed as non-participation. No electronic texting / cell phone use. Laptop computers are only appropriate for note taking or relevant research pertinent to the current class. These diversions will result in a lowered grade or dismissal from the class.

Student participation is expected to contribute to a positive learning environment, and respect for others is essential. Through positive and focused participation, each student demonstrates a commitment to the art form, the profession, their peers and themselves.

**Responsibilities for Time Management**

Students are expected to budget and organize their time and efforts in order to meet both their academic and production commitments satisfactorily and on time. The faculty and staff recognize that the academic and production assignments within the Department, as well as outside employment and other obligations, sometimes impose conflicting pressures on students. One of the principal responsibilities of each student is to carefully identify and monitor the commitments that comprise his/her departmental assignments and outside obligations. For Dance and Theatre students, it is important to keep in mind that production work and outside obligations do not constitute an excused absence from classes or from the completion of any required class assignments.

**Americans with Disabilities Act Notice**

The University of North Texas does not discriminate on the basis of disability. The student has the responsibility of informing the instructor of any disabling conditions which will require course modifications.

**Assessment / Grading**

*** All assignments are expected at the announced due date / time. Assignments should be submitted in the format requested. Grades will be reduced for late submissions.

**Student Behavior in the Classroom**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr)