

CMST 3041: PERFORMANCE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Louisiana State University
Montana Jean Smith

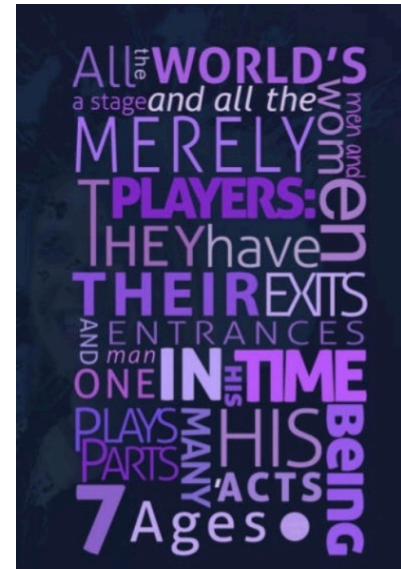
Email: msmi384@lsu.edu **Course Info & Location:** MWF 12:30-1:20, Section 01, Coates 202
Office: Coates 327 **Office Hours:** MWF 11:30-12:20 (and by appointment)

Course Catalogue Description: "All the world is a stage" is more than a metaphor. Scholars across the humanities and social sciences argue convincingly from diverse perspectives that the embodied aesthetics of performance are a central means through which we create, maintain, and change the cultures in which we live.

Additional Description & Goals: This course will examine much of the theoretical work pertaining to Everyday Life as Performance with special attention to the relationship between everyday, taken-for-granted, "normal" life and those "special" occasions, pretenses, and aesthetic events that we most commonly think of as performances. We will consider what significant differences emerge when we understand culture as a set of embodied aesthetic experiences and how cultures adapt to changing circumstances while still holding together.

Through the semester, we hope to:

1. Define and use key terms from performance theory.
2. Discuss the role of performance in the creation and maintenance of culture.
3. Use performance as a theoretical lens to analyze communicative phenomena.
4. Create artistic performances that illuminate everyday experiences
5. Constructively and substantively engage the performances of others.



Required Text: Bell, Elizabeth. *Theories of Performance*. Los Angeles: Sage, 2008.
I may also post readings on Moodle during the course of the semester.

COURSE POLICIES

Class Atmosphere: Embrace this class or drop it. I want us all to have fun and get as much as we can out of our time together. I try and make my courses engaging and avoid "busy work." For your own (and your classmates') mental health, make it the best experience you can or find another course that better meets your needs. If you choose to stay I expect that you will engage the class in a mature way, demonstrate commitment to the learning goals, contribute your thoughts and insights, ask questions, work hard, and challenge yourselves.

Attendance & Participation: This is a highly participatory course in which you will learn collectively (together and from each other) and kinesthetically (with your whole body, not just your mind). Performance requires that we take risks. Therefore, this course requires an ethical commitment to approach one another with care and respect so that we can collectively create a safe and supportive learning environment. Provide constructive comments for your fellow classmates.

Respect diversity and each other. Challenging ideas is wonderful. Challenging people is not. Being late will hurt your ability to learn and is disrespectful to everyone else's time. If you are late for some reason beyond your control, make sure not to interrupt anything as you come in (especially not someone else's performance). Any missed performance days cannot be made up. I do not accept late work. **PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL ME YOUR ASSIGNMENTS!!!!**

Additional Note: I take attendance at the beginning of class each day. If you are late, you can only receive half of the points for that day's assignment.

Mini Performances & Workshops: Mini performances and workshops are a mandatory part of this class, and a necessary part of building a successful final group performance. To receive FULL performance and workshop points, you must actively participate. Active participation is defined in accordance with the needs of the performance and workshop. Come prepared and ready to present your mini performance with your group. You will receive a zero if you come to class with nothing.

Plagiarism: Any student found to have submitted material that is not their own, in part or whole, will immediately be reported to the Dean of Students.

Email: I often use email to maintain communication with the class. Please check your email regularly for announcements. It is your responsibility to remain aware of all comments, announcements, notes and changes.

Cell Phone & Computers: If some piece of technology is helping you to learn and not distracting your classmates, you are welcome to use it. Monitor yourself to make sure that your ipad/iphone/laptop/ kindle/ thingamajig is not getting in the way of your or someone else's ability to learn. Unless you NEED it to help you learn what you need to learn for THIS class, put it away.

Title IX: This class operates in accordance with Title IX and other applicable law under LSU guidelines. It promotes integrity, civility, & mutual respect in a discrimination free environment.

The Americans with Disabilities Act & Rehabilitation Act of 1973: If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office of Disability Affairs (112 Johnston Hall) so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letter, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations.

End of Semester Temporary Empathy Lapse: The last few days of the session are stressful for us all. While I will always do my best to help you learn, please keep in mind that I am significantly more able to help you raise your grade early in the semester than later on. **A lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine.**

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS & GRADING

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS	
<u>PERFORMANCES</u>	<u>50% of Overall Grade</u>
Mini Performances (7)	10.0%
Workshops (7)	10.0%
Final Group Performance	30.0%

<u>IN-CLASS WORK</u>	<u>25% of Overall Grade</u>
Reading Responses (5)	10.0%
Participation/Quizzes	10.0%
Group Participation	5.0%
<u>EXAMS</u>	<u>25% of Overall Grade</u>
Midterm Exam	10.0%
Final Paper	15.0%

Grading Scale:

A+ 100-97%

A 96.9-93.0%

A- 92.9-90%

B+ 89.9-87%

B 86.9-83%

B- 82.9-80%

C+ 79.9-77%

C 76.9-73%

C- 72.9-70%

D+ 69.9-67%

D 66.9-63%

D- 62.9-60%

F below 60%

Performances: Over the course of the semester you will perform seven mini performances in class. These should be prepared ahead of time and ready to present on workshop days. Showings of final performances will be the result of the workshop days. The final performance will be a synthesis of the mini performances we have done throughout the course. It will consist of a “blown up” version of one of your mini performances you have done throughout the semester. Your group will decide on this together. ***More details to come closer to assignment date.

Exams: You will have one midterm exam and one final paper in this class. Final Paper guidelines will be posted on Moodle.

Reading Responses: You will complete 5 reading responses that illustrate an understanding from the course texts. Reading responses will be shared at the beginning of class and used to guide discussion for the day. They are due on “lecture” days. These responses should be 350-600 words in length and discuss the following:

- I. Define a Term: Find a key idea in the text that resonates with you. Provide an explanation of what the idea means to you.
- II. Apply the Term: Please use your own experience (aesthetic or personal) to explain how the term or concept works.
- III. Questions: Please ask three questions for the class that emerge from the reading. These can be questions of clarification or audience feedback. The more complex the question, the more productive our discussions will be.

Participation and Quizzes: This class is heavily performance and discussion based. Participation is evaluated by speaking in class, using office hours, working effectively and respectfully in groups, and demonstrating an improvement over the course of the semester. (This requires more than just showing up for class). If I feel the class as a whole is not participating/reading, quizzes may start to be assigned. Your group members will also evaluate your participation in workshops and outside meetings at the end of the semester. ¹

¹ Special thank you to Dr. David Terry, Dr. Tracy Stephenson Shaffer, & Dr. Nicole Constantini on their guidance crafting this syllabus, contributing course assignments, and overall friendship.