

COURSE TITLE: Theatre I

Teacher: Burchill

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WHO I AM

I graduated from Western Carolina University's Honors College Magna Cum Laude with a BSED in English and a Minor in Theatre. After college, I got my license to teach theatre. I am also a professional actor. I was pretty consistently performing in and directing shows outside of school before COVID. I love my job and my kids. I hope that my passion for my area of expertise is contagious, which leads me to my teaching philosophy.

After reviewing the many formal Education and Teaching Philosophies, I found it very difficult to pick one that I believed described my teaching style and beliefs fully. I actually found that my methods of teaching are a compilation of quite a few. However, due to the overwhelming nature of describing them all, I have chosen two to highlight in this philosophy: Experimentalism and Idealism. Experimentalism focuses on the constantly changing world, and Idealism emphasizes the creation of one's future.

Experimentalism is based on the transience of the world and 21st-century learning skills. In action, it utilizes an abundance of group work and collaboration. I personally believe that teachers should teach for the future rather than for a moment. I also think students and teachers should collaborate on classroom activities to provide an investment from both the kids and the teacher in the success of curricular endeavors. Teachers should not be dictators but mediators in the classroom. I prefer the inductive approach to learning; Experimentalists believe in discovering the world around them. I want my students to be empowered and unpack the knowledge they already possess instead of me (as the teacher) simply forcing concepts that could potentially be useless. Student empowerment is the key to a cooperative and respectful classroom environment, which brings me to my next point.

Idealism is also a philosophy that I favor for my classroom and teaching methods. I want to refine the wisdom of my students because I believe teaching and learning should be empowering. I also think that we can learn a lot from past heroes and literature, and idealistic learning often focuses methods around historic classics. We create the world around us, and our attitudes change how we perceive the world. I truly believe that if the teacher believes wholeheartedly that his/her students can succeed, then the students can and will succeed. Idealism encourages students to empower themselves and create their own futures.

Although philosophies are easy to express in text, they are often difficult to see used tangibly in the classroom. One will see in my classroom that I strive to empower my students, encourage their natural curiosity, and guide them to see the world through a number of lenses. In essence, I have them explore themselves in many different aspects as well as the world around them. Another important theme in my classroom is collaboration. Students work in groups where each of them serves as both the leader and collaborator. They must meet the expectations of me, their group members, and themselves to be successful. Teamwork and leadership are extremely important in the 21st century, so I strive to incorporate them frequently in my classroom.

I also understand that all students learn in different ways, so I adapt the way I teach to the way they learn. On the first day of school, I have students think about how they learn and decide if they are auditory, visual, or tactile/kinesthetic learners. I then tailor my lesson plans to fit their learning style. I have found that most students learn best while up and moving or using

their hands, which is why I have moved my curriculum more toward Problem/Project Based Learning. PBL is wildly successful in my classroom, where students can learn with tangible products but abstract concepts.

Another key to success that I have gathered from experience is the power of positive reinforcement and, more than that, building solid and meaningful bonds with my students. My students know that I stand behind them 100%. I will guide them through difficult coursework, whether they are in my particular class or not; I will help them pursue their passions; I will look out for them in times of need; I genuinely care. And, I do. I am here because I am invested in them, their learning, and their futures. Teachers shouldn't teach because it is a job; teachers should teach because they care.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theatre I will guide students through all the aspects of theatre from pantomime to stage productions. Students will learn to use their bodies, faces, and voices to portray a number of characters in scripted scenes, monologues, and improvisation. Students will also learn stage combat, stage direction, parts of the theatre, and perform a one-act play for the public. Once students have explored the acting aspects of theatre, the class will move into the technical side, where they will learn from the teacher and guest speakers how to design sets, costumes, lights, and make-up. The end of the year comes with student-written, directed, and performed 10-minute plays.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Students will have online and hard-copy textbooks, which we will read through parts together. I consider these lecture days. We start the day off with each student receiving a vocab list. We then popcorn read and demonstrate the things in the text. Students are responsible for catching vocab as we read. Students are given time after the "lecture" to find any missing vocabulary. Vocab sheets are not graded.

The following day we go over the vocabulary and demonstrations in the classroom. We then go to the auditorium or outdoors to put what we have learned into practice. This can be improvisation games, diction exercises, monologue rehearsal, stage combat, etc. Rehearsals are graded by participation only.

Lastly, students culminate what they have learned with a project and vocab quiz (matching). The projects can be improv shows, student-written combat scenes, nondescript dialogue scenes, set construction, lighting plots, makeup designs, costume designs, etc. These are graded with teacher-created rubrics. **There will be a One Act play October 21 @ 7pm, which will serve as the Final Exam Grade.**

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to convey a character and emotion on stage using movement and expression without using voice.
2. Students will be able to speak clearly with diction, projection, and enunciation.

3. Students will be able to create and carry out an arching improvisation with a beginning, middle, and end while avoiding all the don'ts of improvisation.
4. Students will be able to safely carry out stage combat, stage business and stage direction.
5. Students will be able to produce their own 10-minute play through playwriting, directing, set design, costume design, makeup design, and lighting design.

COURSE TOPICS/UNITS AND DATES

Please See 2025/26 Pacing Guide that will be shared with you soon via Google Classroom.

TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED TOOLS OR SUPPLIES

GRADING PLAN

PARTICIPATION 15%

These grades include attendance, work ethic, journals, and contributions in classroom activities and performances.

DAILY GRADES COUNT 30%

These grades include homework, quizzes, rehearsals, etc.

MAJOR TESTS/PERFORMANCES COUNT 30%

These grades refer to all unit tests, projects, and performances.

ONE ACT PLAY 25%

Counts as the final exam in this class.

COURSE COMPONENT SPECIFICS

Classroom Rules

- ★ BE ON TIME.
- ★ BRING REQUIRED MATERIALS TO CLASS EVERY DAY UNLESS INFORMED OTHERWISE.
- ★ MATERIALS
 - Spiral Notebook or Marbled Notebook
 - Paper and Pencils
 - Books as needed
 - **CHROMEBOOK**
- ★ LATE WORK IS FROWNED UPON.

- Please communicate with me in advance if you need an extension on any deadline.

★ WORK MISSED DUE TO ABSENCES MUST BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF THE GRADING PERIOD.

★ **PLEASE BE COURTEOUS AND RESPECTFUL TO EVERYONE IN CLASS. :)**