ENG 615 (CRN 16414): TOPICS: PERFORMANCE STUDIES
FALL 2014, TUESDAYS 2-4:50 PM, 253 PLC

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Office hours: Wednesdays 10:30-12:30, Thursdays 10-11 am, and by appointment
Office: 447 PLC

REQUIRED TEXTS:
  o All other readings available on Blackboard. In “Readings” within “Course Documents.”

Course Description
This interdisciplinary course examines theoretical and methodological scholarship in performance studies scholarship associated with folklore, theater studies, anthropology, and literary studies to explore whether these approaches exist as distinct fields of inquiry or whether areas of convergence represent an identifiable theoretical approach. We will read and discuss works by important contributors to the field of performance studies to examine the relationships between approaches from different disciplines, and we will explore how these different perspectives can increase the breadth and depth of students’ research endeavors theoretically and methodologically.

Learning Outcomes
  • Become familiar with central tenets and vocabulary of performance studies across disciplines
  • Develop methodological and analytical frameworks for analyzing expressive forms using a performance approach
  • Enhance understanding of how performance (defined broadly) operates in situated social and political contexts
  • Obtain nuanced knowledge of the complexities of social interaction as associated with the fluidity of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, and other social categories

Attendance
  • Attendance is mandatory and fundamental to your success in this course.
  • If you have to miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain notes and materials. If absence is due to excusable circumstances, you may meet with me (office hours/scheduled appointment) to review missed materials.
  • Excusable circumstances include: death in family, serious illness, ill dependents, observance of a religious holiday, and other university recognized conflicts. Be prepared to provide documentation.
  • If excusable circumstances prevent your turning in an assignment on time, inform your professor before or within 24 hours after the due date via e-mail, telephone, or a dated note in the professor’s mailbox (this requirement will be lifted in extreme circumstances). Papers will drop one letter grade for each day they are late (if unexcused).
Assessment and Grading:

- **Leading class discussion (10% final grade):** Students will sign up to lead one class discussion revolving around two readings assigned for one class meeting. Part of the presentation must include an example of a performance that is relevant to the discussion theme. You may choose any kind of performance and present it via video, audio recording, reading, description, image, or any other way that makes sense.

- **PAPER #1, due Oct 28 (30% final grade):** Read an important study in your discipline or related to your research interests that is informed by theories of performance studies. Write a five to seven page paper that provides a brief overview of the work and considers how the author defines performance, what the author means by performance studies, how the author applies performance studies to research methods or analysis, and what theorists the author uses in the analysis. Be prepared to discuss your paper in class.

- **Pechakucha, in class on Dec. 2 (10% final grade):** 7-minute presentation on Paper #2 with 21 slides. Guidelines posted on Blackboard.

- **PAPER #2, due Dec 9 by 5:00 P.M. in my office (50% of final grade):** 12-15-page-paper that engages class themes. Topic to be approved by instructor. Some options:
  1) Research paper: an original paper that analyzes primary data--either written text, recorded text (e.g. TV or movie), or live performance--using perspectives in performance studies.
  2) Theoretical paper: read a cluster of theorists of performance studies and write a paper in which you explore relationships between their ideas and begin to develop a theoretical framework for your work.
  3) Draft of an article, conference presentation, prospectus, or thesis or dissertation chapter that engages one or more perspectives in performance studies.

**Accessibility and Inclusion:** The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if aspects of the instruction or course design result in barriers to your participation. If you have special requirements, please meet with me in the first week of class to discuss how I can accommodate you. You are also encouraged to contact Disability Services in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or disabrsrv@uoregon.edu.

**Sexual Violence and Survivor Support**
The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone, and that I am personally committed to supporting you in any way that I can. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that all UO employees are required reporters. If you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will have options about how your case will be handled, including whether you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO's 24- hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu.
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SCHEDULE OF CLASS READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1/SEPT. 30: What is Performance Studies?

Class Discussion:
- What is performance?
- What is performance studies (consider from different disciplinary perspectives)?
- How might performance studies be relevant to your research orientation or objectives?

Readings:

Recommended reading:

Ch. 1: The performance of culture: anthropological and ethnographic approaches
Ch. 2: Performance in society: sociological and psychological approaches
Ch. 3 The performance of language: linguistic approaches

WEEK 2/OCT. 7: Performance in Everyday Life

Readings:
WEEK 3/OCT. 14: SPECIAL GUESTS: STOELTJE AND BAUMAN VISIT

Special guests: Prof. Beverly Stoeltje (Professor Emerita, Folklore and Ethnomusicology, Anthropology, Indiana University) and Prof. Richard Bauman (Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Folklore & Ethnomusicology, Anthropology, Communication & Culture, Indiana University).

**IN ADDITION**, students are expected to attend each of their public lectures on Oct. 15. Please inform me if you cannot attend one or both of the lectures:

**Oct 15: 12-1:30, Browsing Room, Knight Library**
**Prof. Beverly Stoeltje Public Lecture:** "Queen Mothers in Contemporary Asante in Ghana: Authority or Decorative Symbol?"

**Oct 15: 4-6 pm, Browsing Room, Knight Library**
**Prof. Richard Bauman Public Lecture:** "'Accordin' to the Gospel of Etymology': Burlesque Sermons on Early Commercial Sound Recordings."

Readings:


WEEK 4/OCT 21: PERFORMANCE AND “TEXT”

Pick four readings from the following list:

Recommended readings:


WEEK 5/OCT. 28: PERFORMANCE AND THE BODY

***Paper #1 due in class***


Pick two additional readings from the following list:


WEEK 6/NOV 4: RITUAL AND PERFORMANCE

Readings:


Pick one additional reading from the following list:

WEEK 7/NOV. 11: Performance, Gender, and Sexuality

Readings:

WEEK 8/NOV 18: RAP, RACE, AND MASCULINITY


WEEK 9/NOV. 25: PERFORMANCE AND POLITICS


Pick two additional readings from the following list:

WEEK 10/DEC. 2: PECHA KUCHA

Pecha Kucha: Presentations of Term Papers: Guidelines posted on Blackboard

***Paper #2 Due on TUESDAY, DEC. 9 by 5:00 P.M. in my office (447 PLC)***