I. LOCATOR INFORMATION

Course: THEA450-01 Senior Seminar           Semester Credit Hrs: 3
Room, Bldg.:                                  Day/Time Class Meets:
Instructor:                                   Office Location:
Office Hours:                                 Office Phone:         Email:          

FSU Policy on Electronic Mail: Fayetteville State University provides to each student, free of charge, an electronic mail account (username@uncfsu.edu) that is easily accessible via the Internet. The university has established FSU email as the primary mode of correspondence between university officials and enrolled students. Inquiries and requests from students pertaining to academic records, grades, bills, financial aid, and other matters of a confidential nature must be submitted via FSU email. Inquiries or requests from personal email accounts are not assured a response. The university maintains open-use computer laboratories throughout the campus that can be used to access electronic mail. Rules and regulations governing the use of FSU email may be found at http://www.uncfsu.edu/PDFs/EmailPolicyFinal.pdf

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION: A senior experience for students involving a review/exam of aptitudes, both theoretical and applied, relative to an individual’s potential future options, whether graduate study or professional employment. Course activities will involve completion of a capstone project related to a student’s specialization area(s), a research monograph detailing the process involved in the project, as well as completing a finalized portfolio. Topics must be approved by the instructor.

This course is a study of selected topics in theatre, with completion of a major research project and research paper. Prerequisite: Senior Standing. Special Topic Description: Students will examine how to conduct qualitative research in their specialization area of Theatre, emphasizing the process of research, ethical decision-making, methods of conducting a rhetorical analysis of a creative process, and the importance of writing, revision, and peer-review in the creative process.

III. DISABLED STUDENT SERVICES: In accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ACA) of 1990, if you have a disability or think you have a disability to please contact the Center for Personal Development in the Spaulding Building, Room 155 (1st Floor); 910-672-1203.

IV. TEXTBOOK: No textbook is required. You are, however, required to read ALL materials posted on Blackboard. Handouts given are required and must be incorporated into your project and/or paper.

Strongly Recommended:

Recommended Online Resources:
http://www.mla.org - Modern Language Association
http://www.apa.org - American Psychological Association
http://www.uncfsu.edu/writingcenter - Writing Center Help at FSU
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/index.html - Research Aids
http://faculty.uncfsu.edu/tfrobish/studentlinks.htm - Links to News/Information Outlets

V. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of a variety of Theatre research methodologies including survey and experimental research, content and interaction analyses, conversation and discourse analysis, and rhetorical criticism.
2. Use philosophical perspectives of three paradigms: the discovery paradigm, the interpretive paradigm and the critical paradigm to evaluate theatre.
3. Compare and contrast different types of claims that can be made using different methodologies.
4. Design and implement one original creative project and write a research paper describing and documenting your research and process during the project.
VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. GRADE DISTRIBUTION: Your grade depends upon the following elements:

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<th>Grade Distribution:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of Literature</td>
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<td>Analysis of Context</td>
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<td>Paper/Project Draft</td>
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<td>Discussion Board</td>
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<td>Final Draft/Oral Report</td>
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<td>Performance (if required)</td>
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**Grading Scale:**

A = 92 – 100  B = 83 – 91  C = 73 – 82  D = 72 – 63  F = 62-0

B. COURSE REQUIREMENTS –

*** You are REQUIRED to take the National CLA Exam before completing this course. Not taking the test may result in failure of the course. See your instructor for dates, times and places to take the exam. ****

Performance Capstone Project

Performance or Design Component

Seniors are required to complete a capstone project experience in their area of emphasis within the theatre degree. The capstone is an immersion in both theory and practice, and includes research that supports those inter-related processes. Seniors produce a research monograph and portfolio that archives the research, methods and practices employed by the student in their capstone project. The Senior Capstone Portfolio is the major’s testament to the maturity of her/his capacities and skill levels in theatre.

There are three types of Capstone Projects:

I. Performance of a ROLE in a Main Stage production. Capstone roles will be identified by faculty prior to auditions and will be supervised by the instructor.

II. Creation of a SOLO OR PERFORMER-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE PIECE under the supervision of a faculty member.

III. Creation of a design aspect identified by faculty prior to auditions and supervised by the instructor.

Each project must include both a written and a performance/design component. It is the students’ responsibility to submit to the instructor a Capstone Request Form outlining the nature and suitability of their project.

This capstone project centers on the preparation and performance of a leading or major supporting role in a full length production OR a major design for a full length production including but not limited to set, lighting, costume, makeup or any combination. Students must demonstrate a command of skills developed through required classes in the major.

WRITTEN COMPONENT

Students are required to document their process during the capstone project. Appropriate documentation will include artifacts such as a rehearsal and performance journal, a Concept description paper, or plots/renderings and models for designers. Students should consult with their capstone instructor to determine which form is most appropriate for their specific project. Regardless of the scope of the approved project, students must include a detailed written overview of their creative process, summarizing the research undertaken, strategies employed, and lessons learned throughout the process.

The Written Component consists of five sections:

Stage 1

“Preliminary reflection” consists of the expected goals and outcomes of the project and initial expectations concerning the journey ahead. Areas to consider include: questions and/or reactions to the script upon first reading, responses to the audition process, selection of source material or inspiration for devised production, early interactions with collaborating community group(s), and an outline of mutual expectations and benefits. Stage 1 is due within five days of the project approval.

Stage 2

Pre-production summary including elements of research and investigation. Areas to consider should include: historical, political and social situation of the performance text and the performance concept; any discussion of challenges, style peculiarities and show-specific areas of concentration as a performer; a reflection on the process of formulating the text, concept or performance blueprint; a consideration of the needs and opportunities of that production; and an overview of contributory movements and disciplines and their appropriateness to the project at hand. Stage 2 is due five days after the first rehearsal or its equivalent.

Stage 3

Process reflection outlines the stages of rehearsal and development. Areas to consider include: approaches and methods utilized or attempted during the rehearsal process to enrich and create the performance event, including a candid assessment of personal challenges and successes. Candidates should keep a rehearsal journal DAILY to trace their process. This element, however, should NOT merely be the journal itself, but rather a summary or synopsis of any major discoveries. Stage 3 is due within two days after the closing performance.
Stage 4

Production feedback includes any formal (reviews, evaluations, directorial feedback…) or informal (talk-backs, peer review, audience acknowledgments…) assessments of your final project. Candidates summarize the reception of their project by its target audience.

Stage 5

Post-production reflection assesses the overall journey of discovery and performance, including lessons learned, challenges overcome, issues of concern and an earnest contemplation of your work as an artist. Note: In the post-production section, students are strongly encouraged to identify, analyze and comment on any failures and shortcomings they faced - not merely the successes - during rehearsal and performance processes. Stage 4 and 5 are due within seven days after the closing performance.

Written Reflections (2500-3000 words) should exhibit close editing and revision and meet the university’s writing standards. Excessively over-written, under-written or poorly written reflections will not be accepted. Students must display equal care in both performance and research elements in order to successfully complete the Capstone Project. ALL work is due by the final exam time. No extensions will be granted for work you must turn in to the instructor.

SOLO OR PERFORMER-DRIVEN PROJECTS

Performance Component
Under the supervision of a Theatre faculty member, students create an original solo performance piece. Topics and theatrical forms may include scripted theatre, performance art, autobiography, improvisation, devised theatre and/or hybrid performance pieces exploring connections between various disciplines such as design, acting, playwriting, multi-media and dance/movement. The Solo Performance project is particularly recommended for students whose interests fall outside the traditional theatre model. Students must demonstrate command of skills developed through required classes in the degree. A written Component is required as above.

COMMUNITY-CENTERED PRODUCT

Performance Component
Under the supervision of a Theatre faculty member, students identify an under-served community and create a project for and with that community. This may be a solo piece or collaboration with community members. As this is a capstone project, it is assumed that the student will be featured prominently as an actor, director or designer within this work. Students must demonstrate a command of skills developed through required classes in the degree program. A written Component is required as above.

All capstone projects must be approved by the faculty. Majors should be prepared to discuss their area of emphasis and senior project with faculty at their annual review.

Research questions for capstone projects will be developed by faculty and senior majors preceding their senior project semester. These questions will give the senior a sense of the range of preparation necessary to approach each element of the project. Seniors will select three (3) questions as the basis for their initial research. Capstone projects in the fall are encouraged to begin their research during the summer; seniors working on spring shows should begin research during January.

The arc of the Senior Project includes the following required components:

1. Work on research questions for Initial Research Presentation: Summer and September for Fall; January/February for Spring.
2. Initial Research Presentation and Review Session: October (for Fall projects) and February (for Spring).
3. The Praxis Project: Acting/Directing/Design/Stage Management/Dramaturgy, etc., including development and completion of the Senior Thesis Portfolio. The Portfolio includes your Prospectus, complete research (revised and updated, as appropriate), and archives your artistic process.
4. Capstone Review/Defense: The culmination of your research and your portfolio presentation occurs at the end of Fall (December) or Spring Semester (May).

The Portfolio includes all the materials from both the research and project presentation and is an archive for further student research on those questions and/or others. The Portfolio must be organized in sections, so-called “chapters,” using the following outline:

1. Title page, including title of production, playwright, director, dates of production, position held or role played by student completing capstone.
2. Copy of the production program
3. Text Analysis (this also applies to design and any devised work
4. Chapter on production analysis. This includes the initial three research questions, now fully-formed in 5-page papers, with additional investigations into:
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5. Chapter for the presentation of primary and visual sources, using full and proper citations. These images should not be included without annotation re: their significance to the production and/or the student's own work on the project.

6. Specialization-specific documents – performance scores, directors' and stage managers' prompt books, designers' drawings, elevations, draftings, photos of models, etc., as outlined in each Senior Project/Portfolio guidelines. These materials should be professional-quality, neat and ready for public presentation. Drafts which the student and/or advisor deem necessary for understanding the whole process may be included as Appendixes.

7. Chapter for the rehearsal journal. This is a minimum 10-page distillation of the daily process journal. For inclusion in the portfolio document, the capstone student should use key dates and passages and annotate how those events and revelations contributed to the overall process.

8. Chapter for final self-evaluation and reflection addressing the entire process (5 pages).

9. (Optional) Appendixes: drafts of scores, drawings, as deemed appropriate.

**Presenting the Senior Capstone Review and Defense**

**Materials and Procedures**

The Senior Capstone Review and Defense is open to the department community and invited guests and is the crowning moment for the completion of our major: a time when students demonstrate their knowledge, experience, and skills in their area of specialization.

In a 20-minute prepared presentation, students must present:

- their research;
- key questions that emerged from the research;
- the ways that those questions informed the practical work of performance/direction/design etc. -- and vice versa;
- any new questions for analyses.

3. **The Grading Process**

The Final Senior Capstone Defense is graded in four areas:

- Effectiveness of the final production/performance.
- Excellence of the Research and Production Portfolio.
- Clear relationship & interplay between Research and Production.
- Citizenship, Collaboration, & Conduct as an artist-researcher throughout the process.

**Student Responsibilities:** To earn a passing grade, a student must not get behind in the assignments for more than one (1) week. A student wishing to achieve better than a passing grade should actively participate in discussions and activities, and show effort, thoughtfulness, and creativity in assignments.

Plagiarism, using someone else's intellectual work as one's own, WILL NOT be tolerated. Discovery results in failure for the assignment and possible failure in the course! Furthermore, it may lead to action by FSU’s Academic Integrity Board up to and including suspension and expulsion.

**VII. ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES:** FSU Writing Center, Blackboard.

**VIII. COURSE OUTLINE WITH ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE**

TBA
Your Research Paper Template
(aka: your class bible)

I. Introduction- (2-4 paragraphs)
   a. Tell us your main argument/conclusion. Jump right to the point. This is your attention getter! You might want to start this section after you've written the rest of the paper.
   b. Then introduce the topic.

II. Literature Review (3-4 pages)
   a. Start with the big picture items
   b. Move toward your artifact and how that artifact fits into this big picture
   c. Add your “context” paper to elaborate on the situation regarding your artifact

III. Research Problem/Question (2-3 paragraphs)
   a. Now that you've addressed the existing literature and what it has to say about the subject and your particular artifact (object of analysis), what questions are left to answer?
   b. What problem(s) does your particular artifact create or raise that needs to be answered?

IV. Methodology (1-2 pages)
   a. What methodology is best suited to answer those questions or solve those problems created or raised by your artifact?
   b. Define your methodology
   c. How have others used that methodology in their own work?
   d. How will you use it? Give details about how you will apply the critical theory to your artifact.

V. Analysis (2-3 pages)
   b. Don’t try to be lofty in your expressions or dramatic in your analysis, make simple arguments (one per paragraph) and prove them by pointing to the evidence drawn from your artifact.

VI. Conclusions (1-2 pages)
   a. Given your analysis, answer any questions or problems you initially addressed in the beginning.
   b. Answer them one by one. If you cannot answer a question, say that. That is still significant.

VII. Discussion (1-2 pages)
   b. Tell us how your analysis and conclusions now fit into the existing literature that you described in the review. Does your work here add to, complement, or fill any gaps in that literature?

Creative Research Project

Turn in a description of what your project will include.

IX. Teaching Strategies:
This class embraces multiple approaches, including interpersonal interaction, group activities, student-to-class presentations, discussion, individual research, and lectures.

X. Bibliography