

LL 302 CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS: LEARNING THROUGH THE ARTS

Externship
Summer 2008-9

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Competencies offered: L-10, L-11

Location: Loop

Course description:

Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.
Pablo Picasso

During these ten weeks we will be examining our own and others' learning styles through the lens of *the idea of creativity*.

Creativity (noun)

1. the state or quality of being creative.
2. the ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, interpretations, etc.; originality, progressiveness, or imagination.
3. the process by which one utilizes creative ability.

In this course, we will embark on a creative project (a piece of performance, and all the supporting creative endeavors that make the performance possible).

He can who thinks he can, and he can't who thinks he can't. This is an inexorable, undisputable law.
Pablo Picasso

This course will draw from approaches including (but by no means restricted to) David Kolb's *experiential learning* model, Zen Buddhism's practice of *mindfulness*, Julia Cameron's *cooperative noticing*, Viola Spolin's *theater games* (and the work of Intuitive Learning Systems), Second City-style *creative improvisation*, The Original Shakespeare Company's *listening*, and other awareness training methods as we learn more about how we learn while learning how to expand our learning vocabularies.

In the fieldwork portion of the class, students will draw on the richness of Chicago's creative institutions, organizations and communities. They will be encouraged to experience unfamiliar art forms and cultural events. In-class discussion will focus on ways in which students have applied various awareness models and on what they learned about themselves as learners, as artists, as art appreciators, and as human beings.

I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it.
Pablo Picasso

The final assignment will be the in-class presentation of the creative project. This presentation will be based on key insights and experiences collected in the learning journals with an academic component relating experiential learning theory to this and future projects.

Learning resources:

No official textbooks will be ordered for this course. There will be frequent and very diverse handouts.

Assessment:

The grading for Externship, as with other SNL L courses, is PASS/FAIL. Passing will require

1. thorough completion of the assigned number of journal entries (8)
 - Journals are required to be 3 full pages in length.
 - Journals must be handed in (hard copies, double spaced and proofread) at the beginning of class.
 - Unsatisfactory or carelessly written journals will be returned for resubmission.
 - Apart from the 2 journals required for the field trips, only in the case of absence will emailed copies be accepted. These must be emailed before 6:00pm on the day of class, otherwise they will be considered LATE.
 - 2 late journals will automatically result in a failing grade.
It is the student's responsibility to keep abreast of the homework.
2. active participation in both field activities (the *Art Institute* assignment and the *Theatre* assignment)
3. regular participation in in-class discussions and activities
Attendance is mandatory. 1 absence is permitted (though NOT in weeks 2 or 10); 2 absences will jeopardize your grade—it is your responsibility to communicate with me if a second absence is unavoidable; 3 absences will automatically result in a failing grade.
4. the final presentation.

Course outline:

Week 1:

Course/class introductions
Syllabus overview
Learning journal guidelines
Discussion of field activities

Film: *Billy Elliot* (Universal Pictures, 2000, Dir. Stephen Daldry)

Homework:

Journal 1 (Describe a learning experience that was successful for you. This can be something from your SNL experience, work, childhood, whenever. Why did you feel that was a successful experience?)

Week 2:

Kolb and learning style theory

Small group discussion on the themes of *Billy Elliot*

What exactly is *creativity*?

Homework:

Journal 2 (Describe a learning experience in which you feel you were unsuccessful. Select something that did not involve other people or organizations, so that you can think of your own learning process rather than interpersonal interactions. Why did you evaluate this learning experience as unsuccessful? What effects did that lack of success have on your subsequent learning/ How might you have approached that learning project differently? If you are writing about a class, please leave out the instructor's name.)

Week 3:

Introduction to the *Theatre and Art Institute* assignments

Review Kolb learning style mode

Introduction to *mindfulness*

Film: *Art School Confidential* (Sony Pictures Classics, 2006, Dir. Terry Zwigoff)

Homework:

Journal 3 (Find someone outside class of a different learning style from you and interview her. If possible, locate someone who is of the style that you're trying to employ, but you may also discuss any learning style. Ask your respondent what she gains from her kind of learning. As you interview her, be sure not to steer the conversation by talking about your own experiences. Listen and learn.)

Week 4:

Small group discussion of *Art School Confidential*

Introduction to final project

Collaboration: the poisoned embrace?

Leaving your comfort zone: producer, director, dramaturg, actor, designer, stage manager

Theater games and improvisation as learning tools

Homework:

Journal 4 (Explore your experiences at SNL. Are there points at which your preferred learning style inhibited your success? Points at which your preferred learning style meant you were especially unsuccessful? Please do not use names of instructors in this entry. Also, please do not use Collaborative Learning as your example of a difficult learning experience, as it typically involves other people; you are looking here for ways in which YOUR learning style inhibits you.)

Week 5:

The *Theatre* assignment (NO CLASS MEETING)

Homework:

Journal 5 (Reflections on the Theatre Assignment. Your learning styles inventory shows you are especially strong in one area. Did this experience encourage you to explore your own experience as a learner? In what areas do you need to grow and develop?)

Week 6:

The *Art Institute* assignment (NO CLASS MEETING)

Homework:

Journal 6 (Reflections on the Art Institute Assignment. Your learning styles inventory shows you are especially strong in one area. Did this experience encourage you to explore your own experience as a learner? In what areas do you need to grow and develop?)

Week 7:

Discussion of the *Art Institute* assignment

Discussion of the *Theatre* assignment, especially with reference to the final project
Group discussion and work on final project

Sharing of journal entries

Discussion of the impact of Kolb coding: confining or liberating?

*Listening***Homework:**

Journal 7 (When you were a child, what activities did you prefer? What does this tell you about your natural inclinations as a learner? Did your learning style change after childhood? In what circumstances? What might account for the changes?)

Week 8:

Discussion of the origin and benefits of our personal blinders

Work on final project

Progress reports

Homework:

Journal 8 (Summarize your learning in this class. What are the ways in which you see yourself having developed or changed as a result of your Externship? What insights do you want to bring forward from it?)

Week 9:

Keeping the blinders off

Applying course insights (at home, at school, at work, in the world)

Homework:

Work on the final presentation

Week 10:

Final presentations

Discussions of insights gained from the perception/experience models

DePaul Policies:**1. SNL Attendance Policy**

Attendance is mandatory in SNL courses. Students and faculty are expected to arrive on time, and to participate in every scheduled class session. Missing class makes assessment a difficult process, and all students who miss any classwork are subject to grade reduction. Students who miss more than 2 class sessions of this course are subject to failure. Papers must be handed in on time (hard copy, handed in at the class session indicated on the syllabus): late papers will immediately result in a failing grade.

2. SNL Incomplete Policy

The student who wishes to receive the grade of IN must formally request in writing that the instructor issue this grade. This request must be made before the end of the quarter. Deadline for assignments are established and adhered to by the Faculty.

In order to qualify for an IN, you must have regularly attended class, you must have completed two thirds of assignments, and have a signed copy of the Incomplete Contract form.

Receiving an Incomplete does not expunge your class attendance record. It is against SNL policy for a student to attend class meetings of the course for which she has received an Incomplete during a previous quarter.

DePaul University Incomplete Policy: Undergraduate and graduate students have 2 quarters to complete an Incomplete. At the end of the 2nd quarter (excluding summer) following the term in which the Incomplete grade was assigned, remaining Incompletes will automatically convert to F grades. In the case of the Law School Incompletes must be completed by the end of the semester following the one in which the Incomplete was assigned. Ordinarily no Incomplete grade may be completed after the end of the grace period has expired. Instructors may not change Incomplete grades after the end of the grace period without the permission of a college-based Exceptions Committee. This policy applies to undergraduate, graduate and professional programs. NOTE: In the case of a student who has applied for graduation and who has been approved for an Incomplete in his or her final term, the Incomplete must be resolved within the 4 week grace period before final degree certification...Students who feel they may need accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with chronic illnesses should contact the Chronic Illness Initiative to discuss their options and should, of course, also consult the instructor.

