SUSTAINABLE THEATRE COURSE
THE72-304-51, ENV49-304-51
COURSE SYLLABUS
MAYTERM 2011

Instructor: John Ore
Office: Alma Thomas FAC Rm 115
Office Hours: Monday through Friday 3:30-5pm
Phone: Office 863-1364, cell 966-7847 **email:** orej@southwestern.edu

Text: MOODLE site has 'course packet readings and links

Fees: You should be prepared to spend roughly $50.00 on materials and gas for class projects/field trips.

OVERVIEW

This course was devised through collaboration between Bill O'Brien, Kira McEntire, Nathan Shaw-Meadows and John Ore in May of 2010. Using Heather Hall as our laboratory, this course intends to introduce students to sustainable strategies for the production of theatre. All facets of theatre will be dissected with the largest energy user, electricity, being given a significant deal of attention. Students will examine the ongoing Heather Hall sustainable theatre project currently in progress, assisting in the installation of project materials when possible. First we will research and study traditional and renewable power sources with the aid of assorted guest speakers. Then we will concentrate on theatre production with modules on script writing, acting, scenery, costume, sound and lighting, culminating with a collaborative theatre sketch that tackles a subject directly related to sustainable practice.

Learning Outcomes

Develop your working personal definition of SUSTAINABILITY and its place in the theatre and everyday life.

Understand and critically analyze the underlying purposes and the importance of developing alternative and renewable energy resources

Understand the basic principles of the current and developing energy technologies

Develop a conscious understanding of electricity and elect. Energy consumption related to the individual and society at large

Be able to effectively communicate ideas and information to promote positive social change, including the use of theatre arts as a powerful mode of communication

Understand how to write and tell a story using theatrical elements- acting, props, costumes, lighting, sound and setting.

ASSIGNMENTS:

PARTICIPATION-10%- Includes punctuality, attendance, preparedness, and in-class energy

QUIZZES/HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT-20% - It is possible that we will have a few reading quizzes if the discussions are losing steam. There will also be some research reports, giving an opportunity to dig deeper into selected topics.

SUSTAINABLE ROOM PROJECT-20% Given that our campus' electrical energy comes from wind farms, perform an accurate sustainability audit of your life, excluding the Heating and Air conditioning. Then design a plan to zero out your carbon footprint

'COMMERCIAL' for Sustainability ASSIGNMENT- 20% - Collaborate on an original sketch that could be made into a commercial for promoting sustainable practice. Also, it should be a sustainable production. For extra credit, audit carbon footprint usage for the writing/rehearsal/performance period.

OUTREACH 10%- Letter to local businesses, govt., etc. persuading or praising their sustainability efforts.

FINAL EXAM 20%= In class Test on basic knowledge of sustainable technology as studied and a critique of commercial project that can be composed prior to exam or written during Final Exam.

GRADING: Your grades will be calculated on the following scale:

A = 900-1000 *Excellent, above and beyond what is required*
B = 800-899 *Above standard work, clear and thorough*
C = 700-799 *Standard work, getting by*
D = 600-699 *Below standard work, minimum effort*
F = 599 or less *Not here in mind or body*

ATTENDANCE: You are expected to attend all class meetings. Sharing information in the classroom is a vital part of this class. You are allowed one absenece after which your final grade will drop one letter for each unexcused absence. Excused absences are illness with doctor's slip, family emergency, and university-sponsored events-- see Student Handbook for particulars.

PUNCTUALITY: Being late is arriving to class after we have begun. If they accumulate, then your participation points will dwindle.

COURSE SCHEDULE
(subject to change)

Key:
class title
reading/viewing response
reading w/ quiz
Assigned project
Project Due

WEEK ONE

CLASS # 1 – Introduction to Sustainability- Course Syllabus and Objectives

Discussion Topics: Establish a working definition of Ecological Sustainability (Groups), Energy efficiency, energy independence, carbon footprint, global warming (from Renewable Energy) discussion about personal connections with our planet

Laboratory: Watch clips from An Inconvenient Truth

Walk as a group outside for 10 minutes in silence and think about what connections you have with the earth? when they return ask what the noticed about their surroundings.(ex: trees, sounds, animals)

Assignments: Finish watching An Inconvenient Truth and write a response

Read __Text by Robert Bryce

Intro in Creating a Climate for Change (1-21)

Assign Blog post -Personal Definition of Ecological Sustainability

CLASS # 2 – Fair and Balanced Reporting, Critical Thinking & Carbon Footprint

Discussion Topics: Bryce's salient arguments, and Scientists efforts to publicize global warming

Laboratory: Carbon Footprint http://www.myfootprint.org/en/

Assignments: Determine your personal carbon footprint and enter into blog

Read Chapter 1 from Renewable Energy (2-15) (Ed. by Boyle)

Chapter 10: Energy (H & K) (p.317 - 331, 337-344)

CLASS # 3 – Energy Audits and Energy monitoring devices

Discussion Topics: why monitor energy, how to reduce energy loss, including insulation and reduction of heat loss (brief discussion on heat), archival data & the Net-zero equation

Laboratory: Our emon and webmon of Heather Hall: Principles of electricity

Assignments: measure with kill-a-watt meter

Read: Energy from Fossil Fuels- Ch. 7 Energy (205-231)(H & K)

Read: Energy generation Energy (H & K) CH 11 (358-367)

Read: American Energy, (6-7, 20-21)

Assign Sustainable Room Project part 1

WEEK TWO

CLASS # 4 – Carbon-based Electrical Energy Production and Usage-

Discussion Topics: coal, oil, how even renewables are dependent on oil and carbon based fuels, other elements involved in electrical generation

Laboratory: electrical generation

Assignments: Google Earth- Find info on regional power plant, what it burns, how much it generates,

Read: The Long Emergency Ch. 4 Beyond Oil or Read: Hot, Flat, and Crowded Ch. 4 Fill 'er up with Dictators(response)

Assign Sustainable room Project part 2

CLASS # 5— Alternative Energy Generation –Overview-

Discussion Topics: A survey of our earth's attempts at reusing and renewing including the fuel/energy used in production of renewable resources (tidal, hydro, geothermal, biomass, nuclear)

Laboratory: Physics Demonstration- : Go to the roof of FJS and JT

Assignments:

Read Chapter 3- Renewable Energy Solar Photovoltaics (66-100)

Read: American Energy, solar section (28-31)

CLASS # 6 – Photovoltaic generation (Solar) technology

Discussion Topics: discussion of basic mechanics, types of panels, potential for use, problems for use including cloudy days and electrical grid and price, positioning of panels

Laboratory: Go to Texas Life Sciences Bldg/ explore solar toys...

Assignments: Read Chapter 7 Renewable Energy Wind Energy (244-292)

Read: American Energy, wind section (26-27)

DUE: Sustainable Home/Apt Project

CLASS # 7– Wind Turbine technology

Discussion Topics: basic mechanics, potential and problems of use, types of turbines

Laboratory: Google Earth find Wind Turbine Array, note coordinates, share with class, interactive wind turbines:
http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/wind-power-interactive/

Assignments: Read David Stumps report on Solar Demo Project at TLSC (response)

Assign: Research target for Letter Project

CLASS #8 – Working with Municipal Utilities and Stand-alone Systems

Discussion Topics: Meet with David Stump or Russell Peterman from TLSC
Laboratory: Go see solar array at TLSC
Assignments:
Read "Toward a more Sustainable Theater" by Mike Lawler
What Shade of Green http://livedesignonline.com/Green/0421-green-theatre/ (response)
Read Part 1 (pp1-12) from Greening up our Houses A Guide to a More Ecologically Sound Theatre
Read *Oedipus Rex, Theatre: Choice in Action*, Arden Fingerhut, (pp1-7), *The Essential Theatre*, Oscar Brockett (pp 35-50)

WEEK THREE

CLASS # 9 – Theatre Sustainability- Scenery, Costume, Lighting, Sound, Business

Discussion Topics: Theatre Producion What sustainable practices are already being used? Waste Stream- what non-renewables do we use in the theatre?
Laboratory: Case Study: Track materials used by the theatre production- Guest Speaker from Austin's Sustainable Theatre Co. Visit all theatre spaces on campus
Assignments: Read: Led Lighting Demystified
http://livedesignonline.com/mag/led_lighting_demystified/index.html
Semiconductors and the Information Revolution Chapter 7: LEDs (193-221)
DUE: Selected Target and Written Outline of argument/persuasion

CLASS # 10 – Theatre Lighting – Traditional sources vs. the biggest winner- LEDs

Discussion Topics: Natural and Artificial Lighting & Heather Hall LED project, color
Laboratory: Additive and Subtractive Color testing lab- students replicate incandescent filtered light with LED fixture.
Assignments: Heather Hall Energy Usage Report of Incandescent and LED systems
Assign Informercial- research TV sketch or commercial you'd like to parody
Read: http://www.scriptmag.com/resources/tips-articles/writing-the-ten-minute-play.html
Read: Pdf – Checklist for 10-minute play writing TBA Storytelling

CLASS # 11— Conceptualizing the script

Discussion Topics: Share research ideas for Informercial - Writing a short play- Character, Plot, theme, audience
Laboratory: Get together and begin conceptualizing/writing

Assignments Work on outlining your Infomercial

CLASS # 12 – Acting- improv- the concept

Discussion Topics: Work on Infomercial Outline- Improv the outline to fill out the dialogue. Talk about characterization,(Theatre acting rules projecting, cheating out...),
Laboratory: improv games/ exercises
Assignment: Read TBA – Selected articles on Using Technical Theatre elements to Enhance the telling of your story

CLASS # 13 –Rehearsing the script
SCRIPTS DUE
Discussion Topics: Read / act out the script-, handout critiques, technical support
Laboratory: Each group rehearses and performs sketch for John
Assignment: All groups gather tech elements and rehearse
And get final costume and props as needed

WEEK FOUR

CLASS # 14 – Project Review and Technical theatre support & Dress Rehearsal

Discussion Topics: The Technical Theatre Process, Infomercial has a few Dress Rehearsals.
Laboratory: Dress Rehearsals of Infomercials
Assignment: Polish up your act- get final costume and props as needed
Read _____

CLASS # 15 – Infomercial Performance
Discussion Topics: Talk back afterward, discussing Infomercial- review for Final Exam
Laboratory: PERFORMANCE(S) OF INFOMERCIAL
Assignment: Study for Final, put finishing touches on Letter

CLASS # 16– FINAL EXAM -COMPREHENSIVE TEST
STUDENT EVALUATIONS, WRAP UP, MAIL LETTER
Discussion Topics: short test, critique
Laboratory:
Assignment: Final Letter Due