

# TH347-30 Applying Theatre: Histories, Geographies, Practices

**21/22**

**Department**

SCAPVC - Theatre and Performance Studies

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 3

**Module leader**

Bobby Smith

**Credit value**

30

**Module duration**

18 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

---

## Description

### Introductory description

Students on this module will learn through a combination of theory and practice to explore current debates within applied theatre. Topics explored may include uses of theatre and drama in education, applied theatre with refugees and theatre in global development contexts.

### Module aims

Exploring the histories of applied theatre and the varied geographical contexts in which practice occurs, this module aims to introduce students to the key ways in which theatre is applied to meet a range of objectives pertaining to global development, education, health and wellbeing and more. The contexts and practices of applied theatre are continually shifting, therefore this module engages with both the fluidity of practice and the dominant and emergent debates that are shaping research and practice, including the ethics of intervention, sustainability and issues around instrumentalising theatre to achieve social and educative outcomes. Students will engage in ongoing personal reflection throughout the module, considering how the theories and projects engaged with could shape their future work in the field.

The learning will be consolidated through the assessment methods - a reflective portfolio in the

autumn term, a student-led applied theatre project in the spring term and short reflection on this project.

## **Outline syllabus**

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

### **AUTUMN TERM:**

WEEK ONE: Introduction to applied theatre: histories and geographies

WEEK TWO: Key concepts: social change, activism, participation and social justice AND Theory of change workshop from Warwick Arts Centre (to prepare for project proposal presentations)

WEEK THREE: Key practice: Theatre of the Oppressed – critical perspectives and practical workshops (potential for externally-led workshop. For example, with Cardboard Citizens)

WEEK FOUR: Key practice: Theatre and Drama in Education – key theories and practical workshop (potential for externally-led workshop. For example, with Tender Education and Arts)

WEEK FIVE: Theatre and Global Development, AND short meeting ahead of reading week regarding spring term projects

WEEK SIX: READING WEEK - students will also undertake some preparatory work for their spring term assessments with support from staff

WEEK SEVEN: Theatre, health and wellbeing

WEEK EIGHT: Theatre with refugees and migrants (potential for externally-led workshop or lecture. For example, with Dr Anne Smith, from Creative English project looking at belonging and applied theatre with refugees)

WEEK NINE: What next for applied theatre? Challenges for applied theatre practices, challenges to address through applied theatre

WEEK TEN: Reflections on the module so far, check-in for first assessment and discussion about spring term projects.

OVER WINTER BREAK: Students must form their applied theatre project groups, and be ready to share an overview of their project by Week 1, spring term.

### **SPRING TERM:**

WEEK ONE: Group project presentations

WEEK TWO: Key skill session one: Engaging with partners to deliver applied theatre - possibilities and challenges

WEEK THREE: Groups will update each other on their proposals - in particular outlining the applied theatre methodologies they will utilise

WEEK FOUR: Key skill session two: Approaches to facilitation

WEEK FIVE: Group tutorials (these will home in on the particular skills and requirements of the group) WEEK SIX: READING WEEK

WEEK SEVEN: Group tutorials (these will home in on the particular skills and requirements of the group)

WEEK EIGHT: Group tutorials (these will home in on the particular skills and requirements of the group)

WEEK NINE: Group tutorials (these will home in on the particular skills and requirements of the group)

WEEK TEN: Assessments

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Engage with a range of global case studies that demonstrate the trajectories of applied theatre practice across the global North and South
- Develop skills and understandings of working in partnership to deliver applied theatre projects (for example, with schools, youth centres, community centres, etc.).
- Experience and critique some of the foundational forms of applied theatre practice through workshops, lectures and student-led reflection, including in their assessed portfolio and reflections on their student-led project
- Understand and challenge key concepts and practices in applied theatre and consider how these may relate to their future practice, and develop relevant skills such as pitching a project (proposal as reflected in their portfolios)
- Develop skills as performance makers and/or facilitators working in community contexts

## **Indicative reading list**

Balfour et al. (2015) *Applied Theatre: Resettlement: Drama, Refugees and Resilience*, Methuen

Prentki, Tim (2015) *Applied Theatre: Development*, Methuen

Freebody, Kelly and Michael Finneran (Eds.) (2016) *Drama and Social Justice: Theory, Research and Practice in International Contexts*, Routledge

Emert, Toby and Ellie Friedland (Eds.) (2011) *Come Closer: Critical Perspectives on Theatre of the Oppressed*, Peter Lang.

Baxter, Veronica and Katharine Low (2017) *Applied Theatre: Performing Health and Wellbeing*, Methuen

Preston, Sheila (2016) *Applied Theatre: Facilitation*, Methuen

Hughes, Jenny and Helen Nicholson (2016) *Critical Perspectives on Applied Theatre*, CUP

Nicholson, Helen (2015) *Applied Drama: the gift of theatre*, 2nd ed., Palgrave

The journals *Research in Drama Education* and *Applied Theatre Research*

## **Subject specific skills**

Demonstrate an awareness of the key theories and influences on applied theatre, being able to critically assess the ethics and impact of projects

Reflect upon current practices through case studies, and how these relates to a range of conceptual and practical positions relating to applied theatre

Successfully liaise with external organisations to plan and realise aspects of an applied theatre/socially-engaged performance project

Demonstrate appropriate conceptual and practical knowledge of applied theatre methodologies, and reflect upon their value and upon their own practice as part of a project

## Transferable skills

Develop realistic and appropriate aims with an awareness of timeline and budgetary issues  
Manage external relationships  
Work with community groups to achieve project aims  
Reflect on their work individually and in groups

---

## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	12 sessions of 3 hours (12%)
Seminars	(0%)
Project supervision	3 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Demonstrations	(0%)
Practical classes	6 sessions of 3 hours (6%)
Online learning (independent)	18 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	25 hours (9%)
Assessment	190 hours (66%)
Total	290 hours

### Private study description

Reading for each lecture  
Independent research for assessments  
Independent watching shows etc.

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

---

## Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

### Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
Applied Theatre Reflective	50%	100 hours

## Weighting

## Study time

### Portfolio

Students will need to submit a portfolio comprising three elements:

- Critical reflections on at least 4 sessions they have attended in the module, where they will need to engage with the possibilities and limitations of the subjects explored, and make links to how they think this would inform their own practice (approx 1,600 words);
- Critique of a case study of their choice (1,600 words)
- A written project pitch including context, aims and objectives and other supporting materials the student believes necessary (for example, workshop plans, funding information, project plan) (approx 1,600 words)

### Applied Theatre Project

50%

90 hours

Students will either create their own applied theatre projects to be implemented in a community contexts (this will either be set up and provided for students, or - if appropriate - they can set up their own contexts to work in). The project will engage with a form of applied theatre practice, leading to an outcome such as a performance made for, or with, a community group or workshop(s). Project outcomes will be discussed and agreed with the module leader to ensure they represent a suitable amount of work and that there is parity of effort across the projects. Students will be assessed on the outcome of their project. If students create a performance for or with a group, this must not last longer than 30 minutes. If students create a workshop, the assessed practice will be capped at 2 hours. The final assessed outcome must demonstrate a rigorous engagement with applied theatre theories and practices and be appropriate for the group students are working with.

## Feedback on assessment

Written and oral.

---

## Availability

## Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 4 of UTHA-W422 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies (with Intercalated Year)