A note about this special topics course:
This course specializes in a period important to theatre history. While the topic will vary depending on instructor and department need, the course will integrate an examination of performances of identity into course material and discussion. The relationship between performance and gender, ethnic, sexual, and class identities is central to the field of Theatre and Performance Studies and can easily be integrated into any in-depth discussion of a theatrical period.

The following is an example syllabus for a course specializing in Japanese Theatre:

Course description:
This course will provide a historical overview of Japanese theater, from Noh to contemporary performance art. We will focus on the performance of gender on Japanese stages. Throughout the history of Japanese theatre, there have been repeated instances of cross-gender casting onstage. We will explore how theatre forms perform gender and the relationship between these performances and constructions of gender offstage.

The class is divided into two parts: the first part will address traditional Japanese theatre forms. Here, our approach will be twofold—to understand the contexts in which traditional theatres developed and to acknowledge them as living traditions that change over time. The second half of the class will address innovations in Japanese theatre after the Meiji Restoration (1868), when Western influence brought changes to the stage. Building on our knowledge of traditional theatre forms, we will explore these new styles as in conversation with traditional Japanese theatre and newly imported Western theatre. We will work chronologically through the second half to establish connections between theatre and its political environment.

Course Prerequisites:
Junior or Senior standing; instructor permission.

This course satisfies Silver Core Objective 10 of the Silver Core Curriculum:

CO 10: Diversity and Equity: Students will demonstrate an understanding of diversity through courses that focus on topics such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, physical ability, language, and/or social class with an emphasis on the analysis of equity. Students will apply and evaluate approaches of modes of inquiry used to analyze diversity and equity and the social barriers to these goals.

Student Learning Outcomes:
- Students will be able to synthesize major ideas, issues, and themes about a specific theatrical period (topic will vary by semester depending on specialty of instructor and needs of the department).
- Students will be able to situate a theatrical movement within its social, political, and cultural contexts.
- Students will be able to explain constructions of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and/or class that emerge in a specific theatrical period.
- Students will be able to evaluate theatre in relation to both constructing gender, racial, ethnic, and/or class identities and subverting those identities.
- Students will be able to formulate written and oral arguments about a specific theatrical period.

**Required Texts:**
Karen Brazell’s *Traditional Japanese Theater*
All other readings will be available on webcampus

**Requirements:**
- **Participation:**
  This is a seminar style course, so it is absolutely necessary that you attend class on a regular basis and come prepared to discuss the assigned reading. Attendance will be taken. Because the class meets once a week, you are allowed only one unexcused absence; more than one will result in your overall grade reduction of a grade for each unexcused absence (i.e. A to B). Please arrive on time to class. Out of respect for your fellow students, laptop, tablet, and cell phone use is not allowed in class.

  As part of your participation grade, you must submit a discussion question to webcampus by the 10 am the morning of class.

- **Presentation:**
  Give two 10-minute presentations that outline the important points of a day’s critical reading and prepare two to three discussion questions tying that reading to the assigned play. Presentation topics will be assigned on the first day of class.

- **Written Assignments:**
  Papers will be evaluated on organization, development of argument, and quality of prose. Paper guidelines and grading rubrics will be distributed closer to assignment deadlines.

  **Late paper policy:** Due to the schedule of assignments, it is important to turn in papers on time. Unexcused late papers will be docked half a grade for each 24-hour period late (i.e. A to A-). If extenuating circumstances (illness, family emergency) prevent you from turning in a paper draft on its assigned date, please contact Prof. Nakamura before the due date to arrange an alternative schedule.

  **Paper 1:** 5-7 page paper on gender performance in traditional Japanese theater. Detailed assignment guidelines will be distributed closer to the paper due date.

  **Paper 2:** 7-page paper on gender performance in modern or contemporary Japanese theater. The
paper should incorporate 1-2 outside sources. Detailed assignment guidelines will be distributed closer to the paper due date.

**Grading Distribution**
Participation 20%
Presentations 20%
Paper 1 30%
Paper 2 30%
***This class will give +/- grades.

**Grading Scale**
A 100-93%
A- 92-90%
B+ 89-87%
B 86-83%
B- 82-80%
C+ 79-77%
C 76-73%
C- 72-70%
D+ 69-67%
D 66-63%
D- 62-60%
F 59% and lower

**Statement on Academic Dishonesty:**
Cheating, plagiarism, or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include an F for the assignment or for the course. For more details, see the University of Nevada, Reno General Catalog.

**Statement on Disability Services**
Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with the Disability Resource Center (Thompson Building, Suite 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

**Statement on Academic Success Service**
Your student fees cover usage of the University Writing Center (http://www.unr.edu/writing-center) (775) 784-6030. It is your responsibility to take advantage of this service. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

**Statement on Audio and Video Recording**
Surreptitious or covert videotaping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.
Schedule of Readings and Assignments

*Japanese names are written in the Japanese convention—last name before first name.

Week 1: Introduction and Early Performance forms

**Week 2: Before Noh: Gagaku and Bugaku**
Ortolani’s chapter on Gagaku and Bugaku

**Week 3: Noh**

Izutsu
Atsumori
Konparu Kunio’s *The Noh Theater: Principles and Perspectives*, 10-29, 70-95
“The Influence of Zen Buddhism on Medieval Noh Drama”

**Week 4: Noh, class, and gender**

Lady Aoi
Dojoji
Brown’s *Theatricalities of Power: the cultural politics of Noh*, 9-33
Rimer’s “The Background of Zeami’s Treatises” by J. Thomas Rimer
Zeami’s treatise, *Kakyo*, 74-110

**Week 5: Kyogen: reaffirming social class or turning social class on its head?**

Two Daimyo and Busu
William La Fluer’s “Society Upside-Down: Kyogen as Satire and as Ritual,” 133-148
Jonah Salz’s “Mudskippers: Reviving Kyogen’s satire, Castigating Contemporary Authority,” 253-257
Mudskippers (contemporary Kyogen play)

**Week 6: Kabuki: the Onnagata and performing femininity onstage**

Saint Narukami
Musume Dojoji
Ortolani’s Chapters on Kabuki and Bunraku, 162-187, 208-228

**Week 7: Kabuki and Bunraku: Rise of the merchant class in Tokugawa Japan**

Love Letter from the Licensed Quarter
Chikamatsu’s *Love Suicide at Amijima*, in Brazell, 333-363
Gary Leupp’s *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa*, 7-28

**Week 8: Kabuki and Bunraku in contemporary Japan**

Chushingura (Kabuki version)
Henry Smith’s “The Capacity of Chushingura” (jstor)
***Paper 1 Due***

**Week 9: Modern: Influence from the West**
Ortolani’s chapters on Shimpa and Shingeki
Kishida Kunio’s *The Two Daughters of Mr. Sawa*, 89-124

**Week 10: Women Back on Stage: Representations of gender in Modern Japan**
Introduction from Ayako Kano’s *Acting Like a Woman in Modern Japan*

**Week 11: Takarazuka: female actors impersonating male characters onstage**
Introduction (1-24) and Chapter 3 (89-138) from Robertson’s *Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan*

**Week 12: Postwar: Little Theatre and Angura (1960s and 1970s)**
Betsuyaku Minoru’s *The Elephant*
Excerpts from Dower’s *Embracing Defeat*, 33-64
Introduction from Ian Carruthers’s *The Theatre of Suzuki Tadashi*

**Week 13: Butoh**
Bruce Baird’s Introduction to *Hijikata Tastumi and Butoh*
Video: Ohno Kazuko’s *Admiring la Argentina*

**Week 14: post-Angura: next generation of innovators**
Kishida Rio’s *Thread Hell*
Noda Hideki’s *Half God*

**Week 15: 1990s and 2000s**
Hirata Oriza’s *Citizens of Seoul*
Minoru Iwasaki and Steffi Richter’s “The Topology of Post-1990s Historical Revisionism”
Uchino Tadashi’s “Globality’s Children”
Okada Toshiki’s *3 Days in March*

**Week 16: Sum up**

**Finals week:**
*** Paper 2 Due***