

TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
COMMERCE

**THE 397 and 597 Puppetry**  
**Spring 2014**  
**Location: PAC126 TR 9:30-10:45am**  
**Lab: PAC125 Fri 1-4pm**

**Instructor:** Kelly D. Switzer, MFA

**Office Location:** PAC 130

**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday 10-11am, Tuesday and Thursday 11-12am, and by appointment

**Office Phone:** 903-886-5319

**University Email Address:** [Kelly.Switzer@tamuc.edu](mailto:Kelly.Switzer@tamuc.edu)

<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
---------------------------

**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

Textbook Required: *Puppetry, A World History* by Eileen Blumenthal  
ISBN: 978-0-8109-5587-5

On reserve in the Gee Library:

One copy of *Puppetry, A World History*

*Puppet Circus* by Peter Fraser

*The Complete Book of Puppets and Puppeteering* by Robert Hanford

*Self-Supporting Scenery* by James Hull Miller

Other Readings provided in class or through eCollege, see Course Outline/Calendar for specifics. Note that some of these are hyperlinks.

**Additional Materials:**

Notebook/Sketch book (no lines)

Graphite pencils

Eraser

Color pencils

Black construction paper

Dowel rods (variety of widths)

2 Exacto knives, narrow and wide blade, buy extra blades

Cardboard or other surface suitable for cutting on

Ruler or straight edge

Air drying paper clay (at least 2 packages)

Mod Podge

Masking tape

Scissors

Puppet Costume or Fabric scraps and Sewing supplies (if you use scraps or supplies from the costume shop, please ASK first and replenish as needed)

Wire

Acrylic paints

Assorted brushes

Plastic cups for water  
 A collection of found objects  
 Journal  
 Other materials as needed (bungee cords, zip ties, E6000, screw eyes, hinges, etc.)

**Course Description:** An introduction to puppetry as a global art form. In this class we will explore puppetry techniques and styles from around the world. This course will culminate in an original short form puppetry performance.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

To develop:

- knowledge and awareness of the global world of puppetry.
- an ability to analyze, evaluate, and communicate about various aspects of puppetry as an art form.
- an examination of the interrelationship that exists between puppetry and the society of which it is a part.
- puppet skits, plays, and performances that utilize a variety of puppetry forms and techniques.

Additionally, graduate students will serve as Production Assistants for the Puppetry Festival. These students will develop:

- organizational skills related to orchestrating a live performance.
- research and research writing experience.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Assignment instructions can be found on eCollege. I will upload them ahead of time, please familiarize yourself with the requirements and instructions for each assignment.

**Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments**

**Undergraduate Students**

Found Object Puppet	100 pts
Expressive Face Puppet	100 pts
Social Commentary Puppet	100 pts
Shadow Puppet	100 pts
Filmed Piece	100 pts
Original Piece (Puppet Festival)	300 pts
Advertisement	50 pts
Journal	
March 21	25 pts
April 1	25 pts
April 4	25 pts
April 11	25 pts
April 18	25 pts
April 25	25 pts
Final journal	50 pts
Post Mortem	100 pts
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1000 pts</b>

**Graduate Students**

Found Object Puppet	100 pts
Expressive Face Puppet	100 pts
Social Commentary Puppet	100 pts
Shadow Puppet	100 pts
Filmed Piece	100 pts
Original Piece (Puppet Festival)	300 pts
Advertisement	50 pts
Journal	
March 21	25 pts
April 1	25 pts
April 4	25 pts
April 11	25 pts
April 18	25 pts
April 25	25 pts
Final journal	50 pts
Post Mortem	100 pts
Research Paper	
Outline and Annotated Bib.	50 pts
Rough Draft	50 pts
Final Paper	100 pts
Production Assistance	100 pts.
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1300 pts</b>

## Grading

Exceptional work will warrant an	A=90% (900-1000 pts/1170-1300 pts)
Above average work will warrant a	B=80% (800-899 pts/1040-1169 pts)
Average work will warrant a	C=70% (700-199 pts/910-1139 pts)
Below average work will warrant a	D=60% (600-699 pts/780-909 pts)
Unacceptable work will warrant a	F=59% or less (>599 pts/>779 pts)

## Extra Credit

Extra credit is at the discretion of the professor and will be announced in class and on eCollege.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to check their myLeo accounts on a regular basis for communications about the course. Students will also need to access eCollege regularly for readings and assignment instructions. I will also be passing around a contact sheet for the class, please include and email and/or cell phone number where your group members can easily and quickly reach you.

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be enhanced by using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>. You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### Interaction with Instructor Statement:

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. My contact information is at the top of this syllabus.

All emails to the instructor should begin with a salutation, clearly and politely state your inquiry, and close with a signature that includes the specific class you are enrolled in.

### If you are having issues with eCollege, please contact Technical Support:

**eCollege Student Technical Support** (QM 6.6, 7.1) Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Chat Support:** Click on 'Live Support' on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

**Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

**Email:** [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu) to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

**Help:** Click on the 'Help' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to Dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### Course Specific Procedures:

- Please do not be late to my class. If you are late, enter as unobtrusively as possible and find the nearest open seat.
- I do not allow makeup work, except in cases of true emergency. Get your work done.
- Bring your book to class; I frequently reference it during lecture.
- You are expected to participate fully and enthusiastically in all group projects. All students are expected to attend the labs, both graduate and undergraduate. The lab meets in the scene shop (or other designated spaces) every Friday from 1-4pm. There are no exceptions.
- Please bring your supplies to class as needed. Pay attention to the syllabus and what projects we will be working on.
- Graduate students are expected to act as Production Assistants for the Festival. You will assist in coordinating rehearsals, tech, advertising and public relations, and any other duties that are intrinsic to running the Festival. This is a valuable opportunity to get a show up on its feet from scratch; the time-management and organizational skills it takes to do this will be invaluable to your theatrical career.
- I subscribe to the school of Figure It Out. Very few people get to sit at the knee of a master puppeteer to learn the craft, and everyone has to start somewhere. Just because you haven't done it before doesn't mean that you aren't going to excel at it with grit, practice, and organization. By the end of this course you should have learned to problem solve, time manage, organize, and power your way through a live puppet show!

### University Specific Procedures:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

[StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

Gee Library

Room 132

Fax (903) 468-8148

### Student Conduct:

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. From the Code of Student Conduct: "Civility in the classroom or online course and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom/online course. Courteous behavior and responses are expected. To create and preserve a learning environment that optimizes teaching and learning, all participants share a responsibility in creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class/online course and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action."

The Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook can be found here:  
<http://web.tamuc.edu/studentLife/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>

### Academic Honesty:

Students will adhere to the tenets of academic honesty while in this class. Academic dishonesty includes working on non-group projects with others, deception, impersonation, cheating during a test, and plagiarism. These are all offenses that warrant disciplinary action up to, and including, an F in the course. Additionally, any student found guilty of a Breach of Conduct, including Academic Honest, could face the following disciplinary actions imposed by the University:

- (1) Expulsion from the University. Students may not return to the University.
- (2) Suspension from the University for a definite or indefinite period of time.
- (3) Disciplinary probation with or without loss of designated privileges for a specified period of time. The violation of the terms of disciplinary probation or the infraction of any University rules
- (4) Loss of privileges.
  - a. Denial of the use of an automobile for a designated time (on campus).
  - b. Removal from elective or appointive office.
  - c. Ineligibility for pledging, initiation, and representation of the University.
  - d. Removal from residence hall or other University housing.
  - e. Loss of such other privileges as may be consistent with the offense committed and the rehabilitation of the student.
- (5) Admonition and warning.
- (6) Notification of parents.
- (7) Such other actions as may be approved by the University Discipline Committee or the Dean for Campus Life and Student Development.

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's information without proper and formal citation. Information about avoiding plagiarism can be found here: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>

<b>COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR</b>
----------------------------------

Tues. Jan. 14	Course Orientation, review of syllabus
Thurs. Jan. 16	Chapter 1: <i>The Origin of Species</i> Types of Puppetry British: <a href="#">Reading</a> and <a href="#">Punch and Judy</a> Kariagozi: <a href="#">"Jackson Pollock in Shadows"</a> or <a href="#">here</a> Vietnamese: <a href="#">Video</a> Contact information sheet
Fri. Jan. 17	Lab: orientation and discussion of found object puppet assignment Found Object: <a href="#">Jim Henson</a>
Tues. Jan. 21	Chapter 1 continued <a href="#">The International Festival of Puppetry in Jerusalem</a> Bunraku: <a href="#">Reading</a> and <a href="#">Video</a> Javanese Wavang: <a href="#">Video</a> Indian forms: <a href="#">Reading</a> Kathputli: <a href="#">Video 1</a> and <a href="#">Video 2</a>
Thurs. Jan. 23	Chapter 2: <i>Show Breeds</i> What is puppetry? <a href="#">Video</a> Hand: <a href="#">Potehi</a> and <a href="#">Video</a>

Shadow: [The Mania of Bonaparte](#)  
String: [Video 1](#) and [Video 2](#)  
Rod: "[Journey](#)"  
Body: [TED talk "Handspring Puppet Co."](#)  
Mouth Mechanics: [Video](#)  
Puppet Movement Workshop: [Video](#)

- Fri. Jan. 24 Lab: Found object puppet work day  
Discuss Joel Orr Skype interview
- Sat. and Sun. Jan 25, 26 at 1pm: [The Adventures of Pinocchio](#) by  
Le Theatre de Marionette, Extra Credit Option (\$10)
- Tues. Jan. 28 Present found object puppets  
Turn in questions for Joel Orr Skype interview
- Thurs. Jan. 30 Chapter 4: *Casting Characters*  
Discuss expressive face puppet assignment  
Look at Sculpting Demo and [Video](#)  
Watch [Joel Orr Skype interview](#)  
Graduate students: discuss research paper
- Fri. Jan. 31 Lab: expressive face puppet work day (air dry clay)
- Tues. Feb. 4 Present expressive face puppets
- Thurs. Feb. 6 Chapter 9: *Public Service*, Graduate students choose paper topics  
Bread and Puppet: [Reading](#) and [Video](#) (begins at mark 10:45, we will watch until  
mark 27:00—you can watch the rest on your own time)  
Abla Fahita: [Reading](#) and [Video](#)  
Propaganda: [Video](#)  
Discuss social commentary puppet
- Fri. Feb. 7 Lab: expressive face into social commentary puppet (rod puppet)—on Main Stage,  
practicum students come from 1-3
- Tues. Feb. 11 Present social commentary puppets
- Thurs. Feb. 13 Chapter 5: *Puppet Masters*  
Know Your Audience: [Reading](#)  
Watch [A Beginner's Guide to Pre-K Audiences](#)  
Discuss shadow puppet assignment
- Fri. Feb. 14 Lab: shadow puppet work day (children's theatre)
- Tues. Feb. 18 Shadow puppet work day
- Thurs. Feb. 20 Present shadow puppets—to an audience of 4-5 year olds! on Main Stage
- Fri. Feb. 21 Lab: screening of *Dante's Inferno* (bring popcorn!) Possibly on Main Stage

- Tues. Feb. 25 Puppets for Film and Television—Possibly on Main Stage  
 Muppets: [Reading](#) and “[Of Muppets and Men](#)” (8:52), [Video](#) (2:22)  
 In Advertising: [Super Bowl Go Daddy Commercial](#) (0:31), [Brisk Ozzy commercial](#) (0:55),  
[Lexus commercial](#) (1:30), [Mayflower Commercial](#) (1:11)  
 Television: “[Howdy Doody](#)” (1950s, 1:03), “[Kukla, Fran, and Olie](#)” (1960s, 3:26),  
 “[HR Pufnstuf](#)” (1970s, 1:50), “[Fraggle Rock](#)” (1980s, 1:20), “[Dinosaurs](#)” (1990s, 0:55),  
 “[Lazy Town](#)” (2000s, 1:05)  
 Film: [Ray Harryhausen](#) (5:00), [Death of the Skeksis Emperor](#) (2:24)  
 Mixed Media Filmed Puppetry: [Don't Hug Me, I'm Scared](#)(3:25)
- Thurs. Feb. 27 Screening of *Being Elmo* (bring popcorn!), Graduate Outline and Annotated Bibliography Due
- Fri. Feb. 28 Lab: BooTown Theatre presentation  
 Discuss Filmed Piece assignment and break into groups
- Tues. Mar. 4 As small groups, develop a previous project into a filmed piece for YouTube
- Thurs. Mar. 6 No class—UIL
- Fri. Mar. 7 No class—UIL  
 Please review the instructions on eCollege for the Original Piece assignments
- Tues. Mar. 11 Spring Break
- Thurs. Mar. 13 Spring Break
- Fri. Mar. 14 Spring Break
- Tues. Mar. 18 Screening of filmed pieces (bring popcorn!)
- Thurs. Mar. 20 Present script ideas and vote: begin journaling
- Fri. Mar. 21 Lab: Script writing: [Video](#)  
 Break into groups, pre-planning turn in journals
- Tues. Mar. 25 No class—USITT National Conference
- Thurs. Mar. 27 No class—USITT National Conference
- Fri. Mar. 28 No class—USITT National Conference
- Tues. Apr. 1 Script read throughs and critiques, Graduate Draft Due
- Thurs. Apr. 3 Script read throughs and critiques
- Fri. Apr. 4 Lab: original pieces work day, turn in journals
- Tues. Apr. 8 Original pieces progress report, present puppet sketches, research, plans and critique

- Thurs. Apr. 10 Movement exercises: bring a sock!
- Fri. Apr. 11 Lab: original pieces work day, turn in journals
- Tues. Apr. 15 Directing exercises: bring a puppet!
- Thurs. Apr. 17 Original pieces progress report, present advertisements, rehearsal schedule, vote on advertisements
- Fri. Apr. 18 Lab: original pieces work day, turn in journals
- Tues. Apr. 22 Screening of [Cthulhu: A Puppet Play](#) (bring popcorn!)
- Thurs. Apr. 24 Original Pieces work day
- Fri. Apr. 25 Lab: original pieces work day, preparation of the space, turn in journals
- Sat. Apr. 26 National Day of Puppetry
- Tues. Apr. 29 Tech original pieces, Graduate research paper due
- Thurs. May 1 Tech original pieces
- Fri. May 2 TBA—UIL takes over the building

Performances: May 3

**Final Exam: Post-mortem meeting, turn in final journals May 8<sup>th</sup> 8-10am**

*updated: 2/5/2014*