



FUNDS FOR INNOVATIVE TEACHING APPLICATION

Application Cycle: AY 2019-2020

Semester Course Will Be Offered: Spring 2020

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Last Name:	<u>Gunnels</u>	First Name:	<u>Bridgette W.</u>
School:	<u>Oxford College</u>	Department:	<u></u>
Title:	<u>Assistant Professor of Spanish</u>	Email Address:	<u>bridgette.w.gunnels@emory.edu</u>

Co-Applicant Information:

Last Name:	<u></u>	First Name:	<u></u>
School:	<u></u>	Department:	<u></u>
Title:	<u></u>	Email Address:	<u></u>

CLASS INFORMATION:

Course Number: SPAN 201/2020

Proposal Title: IDENTITY & IMMIGRATION

FOR CFDE OFFICE USE ONLY:

GRANT FUNDING HISTORY _____ / _____ / _____

REVIEW ONE NOTES: _____

Suggestion: (circle one) Approve Deny

REVIEW TWO NOTES: _____

Suggestion: (circle one) Approve Deny

Amount Requested: \$3000.00



Course Outline or Proposed Syllabus:

document emailed

Proposed Innovation:

Micro-theatre and dramatic arts based pedagogy in Intermediate Spanish

Budget Detail:

See document emailed to CFDE

Schedule for Integration of the Proposed Project in a Classroom Setting:

Across fall 19/spring 20, with community microtheatre event spring 2020

Bridgette W. Gunnels, Assistant Professor of Spanish
Humanities Division
FIT Grant, April 2019
SPAN201Q/202Q: Identity and Immigration

INNOVATION: Using Dramatic Arts in Intermediate & Advanced Spanish Courses

Micro-theatre is a term used for small performances in small spaces, usually ones not typically intended for theatre. Small performance, in this proposal, will mean a short vignette of 10-13 minutes, usually with a team of 2 actors¹. Micro performance can be an intriguing way to facilitate language study alongside topics that are considered polemic, since teams can work collaboratively from start to finish (brainstorming themes, script writing, rehearsals, stage design and elaboration, performance) on a creative project that incorporates original language production as well as promotes ideas and/or solutions on a shared social problem. Art is a medium that can take students through the classroom walls, into another environment where boundaries are different and people are allowed to express themselves in more creative ways. The arts have the ability to connect students in ways that are unexpected and transformative.

This proposal will help incorporate micro-theatre into my intermediate Spanish classes in a way that encourages deep thinking and personal growth and will culminate in a campus/community-wide micro-theatre experience in the spring of 2020. My intermediate Spanish sequence, SPAN201Q/202Q, already incorporates multiple experiential practices like Boalian technique, Pre-Texts Protocol, photography as a storytelling tool, and community engagement. I will use a micro-theatre final project to bring all of these techniques together in our community on campus and beyond.

“This is Oxford” – a micro-theatre event for spring 2020

This innovation was inspired heavily by the “I am Miami” micro-theatre event that I attended in February (<http://www.ccemiami.org/en/microteatro/i-am-miami>). By gathering together a collection of stories that described Miami’s past, present and future from a variety of voices and perspectives, theatre goers were able to choose between seven original 15min plays that illustrated beautifully the community. Offered over the course of one evening, people moved in and out of different sets and were exposed to multiple languages, set designs, topics, and techniques. Each play is quick – viewers can choose how many and which plays they want to see and in what order. It was one of the most intense and beautiful ways that I’ve experienced the dramatic arts to date. I knew immediately that something very similar could be carried out on our campus. My classes will work over the course of fall semester to establish specific themes that germinate from our identity and immigration scaffolding. We will offer an initial performance of the class plays that will be entirely in Spanish as the final project for fall 2019. In the spring, we will widen our net and open up the process to the wider campus, hoping to attract play submissions that explore our community in a myriad of ways, all with the goal of showcasing to the

¹ Micro-theatre is very popular right now in Latin America, Spain and beyond. Senior students at ECAS already see the potential:

https://news.emory.edu/stories/2018/03/er_frostbaum_microtheatre/campus.html

. In fact, the Aurora Theatre just recently wrapped a series here that sold out:

<https://www.auroratheatre.com/productions-and-programs/view/festival-de-microteatro>.

entire community, both campus and city, what “This is Oxford” means to the students. At this point, the FIT grant will come into play.

The spring semester students will have a direct hand in encouraging their peers on campus in developing a play by generating the advertising, instructions, and all natural collaboration between the Theatre Department that should rightfully happen. While the submissions will extend beyond the scope of SPAN202, the main theme of Identity and Immigration will most likely seat the plays.

I plan to rent several shipping containers to use for our micro-theatre sets. This will account for a large portion of the grant money (\$1750). Additionally, I will dedicate at least \$700 for set props. Each play that is approved for the spring 2020 campus event will receive a \$100 budget for props. We will use the remaining \$550 for incidentals, which would include fees from the city, supplies, or other unforeseen expenses.

My hope is that we extend the invitation to the Oxford/Covington community, so that we can share our student work in a new way. By encouraging these connections by using the arts, we can encourage more interaction that solidifies the relationship that Oxford College has with the community that has grown around it.

TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED: \$3000

Container rental: \$1750

Set décor and props: \$700

Incidentals, food: \$550

Additional Information about the FIT Grant Budget

Response on the use of shipping containers and props:

The shipping containers serve as the actual sets for the micro-theatre plays. I saw this in action at the Miami event, and the particular use of containers allowed for a private and intimate micro-setting, it contained sound usefully (which was key since the containers were all placed in a compact courtyard), it allowed each play a very specific space within which to work as they consider props, actor movement, the use of music (all of these issues I think are key to getting our students to think on many different levels about space in general; how they manipulate their respective spaces creatively and effectively to get the message of the micro-play through), etc. I plan to dry-run the microplays in the fall in classrooms, but that is smaller scale than the event I have in mind for the spring. The micro-theatre event in the spring is set to be a much larger production that involves the Oxford/Covington community as well. I plan to set up the containers on one of the college streets, invite food trucks, allow student groups to sell food, etc. With a much wider audience, this event will have to be at night, and I expect to attract more people from the community. From my point of view, it would be better to have the plays housed all within close proximity to each other, and easily accessible to the public for viewing, and there is less chance of problems if we contain the action to the shipping containers outside. The thought of having a potential great number of people walking in/out of one of the buildings makes me a little nervous, and to be honest, the intensity of the experience that I had resulted from experiencing the plays in that tight space. The Spring event is meant to bring our Covington community and the College into dialogue with each other through the topics of the plays: that will be facilitated by having everyone moving in the same localized space, hopefully eating, enjoying the event, talking about the plays, etc.

In regards to the props, all purchases are to be donated back to our Theatre Department, which actually would help them out tremendously. They are to be involved in the spring event in many ways, so it only makes sense to allow the props to become property of Oxford College Theatre.