**New York City College of Technology**

**Interdisciplinary Committee**

**Course Review Form**

**DATE:** April 20, 2018

**REVIEWER:** Ezra Halleck

**COURSE TITLE & NUMBER:** LIB 2205/ARCH 2205: Learning Places: Understanding the City   
(ID Special Topics course)

**PROPOSED BY:** Nora Almeida (Library) and Christopher Swift (Humanities)

**CREDIT HOURS:** 1 cl hr, 4 lab hrs. 3 cr

**PREREQUISITES:** ENG 1101 and 1 Flexible Core Course

**COURSE IS:** 🗹 Existing New In development

**PROPOSED COURSE DESIGNATION**: 🗹 College Option elective Capstone other:

**DEPARTMENT HOUSED IN:** Library

**PROPOSED STRUCTURE:** co-taught

**CREDIT DISTRIBUTION** (if co-taught): Prof. Almeida, 2.5 credits; Prof. Swift 2.5 credits;

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** This special topics course offers an interdisciplinary approach to investigating our built environment using a case study focused on a specific place each semester. This course combines physical examination with information research and data collection using methodologies developed in multiple disciplines. Students from a variety of departments engage in on-site exploration and in-depth research of a location in New York City.

**DESCRIBE & EVALUATE HOW COURSE MEETS INTERDISCIPLINARY CRITERIA?**

The course focuses on interrelationships between theatrical performance, urban places, and socio-political action. Students will acquire research skills, both archival and performative by conducting research about social activism and theatre, while simultaneously learning how theatre itself constitutes a kind of living ethnography or performative means of communal self-reflection and agency. Locations will include non-traditional libraries and archival sites. It is hoped that students will call into question the traditional boundaries between research subjects and research processes.

**DESCRIBE & EVALUATE THE INTERDISCIPLINARY STRUCTURE?**

The use of case studies in this course will allow for interdisciplinary investigations of space and

emphasize the way that the meanings of spaces are socially constituted and reinforced through

information (signage, historical documentation, site-specific art and performance). Assignments

and class activities will expose students to different rhetorical and performative modes and in a

final group project, students will explore how place or community might be transformed through

a real or hypothetical performance event.

**DOES COURSE MEET REQUIREMENTS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION** Yes.

**STRENGTHS:** The course takes full advantage of the location of New York as a focal point for world culture and politics and treats interdisciplinarity by including a blur of the difference between study and practice. I would be hesitant to recommend that all of our offerings follow this example, but it is a great addition and should be studied intensively as a possible model for additional courses. I in particular praise the accompanying survey and look forward to getting a report after its administration and analysis. However, I would rework the survey so that it includes at least one question regarding the study/practice blurring that is being attempted.

**WEAKNESSES:** None.