**New York City College of Technology**

**Interdisciplinary Committee**

**Course Review Form**

**DATE:** 3/12/19

**REVIEWER:** Christopher Swift

**COURSE TITLE & NUMBER:** **THEATRE OF LAW, THE/LAW 3000**

**PROPOSED BY:** Sarah Ann Standing and Marissa J. Moran

**CREDIT HOURS:** 3

**PREREQUISITES:** **ENG 1101; and COM 1330 or COM 1340 or THE 2180 (or one other course that satisfies the oral communication requirement)**

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

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

**DEPARTMENT HOUSED IN:** Humanities and Paralegal Studies

**PROPOSED STRUCTURE (e.g., co-taught, guest lecture, LC, other):**  Co-taught

**CREDIT DISTRIBUTION** (if co-taught): 1.5 x 1.5

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** *A comparison between law and theatre / performance studies via the creative process that begins with written analysis of a script and the opening/closing arguments of a trial, and includes the learned skills required to convey character on stage or courtroom, as well as oral storytelling. Argument and the courtroom are also investigated as enactments of theatre and performance.*

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

A fascinating course that integrates curricula, ideas, and practices in interdisciplinary ways. The learning outcomes offer opportunities for drawing connections between fields, and assignments are able to synthesize the knowledge and skills of the disciplines. The central writing assignment is designed to allow students to use theatrical terminology and methodologies to examine courtroom drama, encouraging flexible thinking. The topics of investigation engage with issues of social justice and ethics. The final playwriting assignment encourages creative problem-solving, effective communication and collaboration.

**DESCRIBE & EVALUATE THE INTERDISCIPLINARY STRUCTURE?**

The instructors alternate weeks of lecturing, and subject matter is grouped accordingly. There are also two days where the instructors teach together. Readings from the area of performance studies will provide students with ways of thinking about theater outside of traditional stage drama. This is the frame through which students can better understand the theatrical conventions in law practice.

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

**STRENGTHS:**

Students are on their feet and reading/acting trial scenes right from the start of the semester so they begin understand rhetorical strategies and vocal technique, as well as the differences between the written and spoken argument.

The playwriting assignment based on trial transcripts is excellent, especially since it touches on subjects taught throughout the course – climactic structure, roles of courtroom participants, forms of discourse (*voir dire,* cross-examination, etc.)*.*

The focus of week 8 is really interesting, and offers opportunities for students to talk about social justice and courtroom ethics. This also prepares students for thinking through issues of performance ethics in the final paper.

The play selections are wonderful and having some on video will be useful (and perhaps even attending live events).

**WEAKNESSES:**

None.