Appreciation of Theatre
THEA 1503

Fall 2013
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Course Description

This course is intended to enable the student to appreciate and analyze creative work in theatre and related products of the human imagination through a study of the art, craft and business of the theatre. In order to do this, the class will engage in class discussions, writing assignments (the journal and production critiques), pop quizzes, tests and both in-class and out-of-class assignments

Learning Goals

By the end of the semester, the student should be able to do the following:

A) Define the roles taken by theatricians and how those roles interact to create theatre.
B) Evaluate the success of a given group of artists in relationship to the goals of that particular production.
C) Visualize and discuss the elements of theatre in non-theatrical setting.
D) Identity with and explain one’s similarities with a character in a given production.
E) Understand the impact of traditional theatre on popular theatrical forms (television, film and the entertainment industry).
F) Attend and meaningfully discuss theatrical productions, using critical, creative and innovative writing.
G) Demonstrate critical thinking skills through the Playwriting Project and Design Project.
H) Demonstrate teamwork by participation in the Production Project.
I) Demonstrate social responsibility through a journal entry.
Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Project</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playwriting Project</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Project</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First production critique</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second production critique</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal entries</td>
<td>150 (15 points each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total possible points</strong></td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Class Supplies

3 - 2 prong 2 pocket folders

The Enjoyment of Theatre 8th edition by Patterson, Hunter, Gillespie and Cameron

In addition to our regular classroom activities, you are **required** to attend one performance of two productions and write a critical response for each production. **If you are unable to attend at least one performance of each production, drop this class now!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Almost, Maine”</td>
<td>October 4-6</td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 7</td>
<td>2:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Bacchae”</td>
<td>November 15-17</td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 18</td>
<td>2:30 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Privacy Policy

In accordance with Federal Privacy Laws, a student’s personal information is protected. As an instructor it is unlawful for me to share your personal information (including grades) with anyone without a legal “need to know”, unless I have your written consent. This means I cannot discuss your grades with your parents. If you have questions about your grades or have forgotten the grading policy for the course, please come by during office hours.
Student Responsibilities - Attendance

You are expected to attend all classes. Since lectures expand on assignments, missing class means missing important information. This class is, by its nature, participatory. Missing class means missing the chance to participate in your own education and the education of others in the class. Attendance is taken at the beginning of the class. The professor reserves the right to disallow counting a student present who is extremely late. Each student will begin the semester with 50 attendance points. Each absence or tardy will lower your total by 5 points. The professor may drop a student any time during the semester for excessive absences, for consistently failing to meet class requirements, for an indifferent attitude, or for disruptive conduct.

If you skip class and miss a quiz or graded exercise, it cannot be made up. If you miss class due to illness, you can make it up as long as you a) call/email before class and 2) present written documentation when you return to class.

Student Responsibilities - Assignments

You are expected to do the assignments when they are assigned. Failure to do so will result in an inability to keep pace with the class. All graded assignments should be submitted on or before the deadline. All written assignments MUST be typed. Handwritten work will NOT be accepted.

Late assignments will NOT be accepted. Late assignments will NOT be accepted. Late assignments will NOT be accepted.

I do not accept emailed or faxed assignments. I do not accept emailed or faxed assignments. I do not accept emailed or faxed assignments.

Be sure to print your assignments ahead of time. Do not presume that the printer in any given computer lab will be working right before class!

By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a “limited right” in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The “limited right” shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student’s work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and educational purposes.

Student Responsibilities – Honesty

Dishonest work on homework or on examinations is a serious offense, as is plagiarism. The university and the professor will not tolerate either one. If either occurs, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. The 2002-2003 Student Senate wrote and adopted the MSU Student Honor Creed. The highlight of the creed is “As an MSU student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else to do so”. Enough said.
Student Responsibilities – Classroom Behavior

Many of us own and use cell phones as our major method of electronic communication. Students are expected to turn off their cell phones when entering the classroom. Under no circumstances are students to be answered during class. Should the student need to take an emergency call, the professor expects the student to leave the room and not return, minimizing the disruptions for the remaining students. Before class begins, ensure that cell phones are off or are disabled so the phone does not ring during class – better yet, do not bring your phone to class. If other commitments are so pressing that they cannot wait until the end of the class session, it may be in the student’s best interests to reconsider the priority being placed on being in this class. In any case, the professor reserves the right to ask you to leave immediately or to embarrass you mercilessly if your phone makes noise during class. TEXTING and SLEEPING will not be tolerated. You will be called out or publicly embarrassed for this.

In this class, we will be exposed to a variety of playscripts. Some of these plays may confront you about ideas and beliefs that you have long held. That is the nature of art. If you open your mind to the new experiences, you may find yourself exposed to new paradigms that will enlighten you. Social justice is one of MSU’s stated core values, and the professor considers the classroom to be a place where students will be treated with respect as human beings, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Moreover, diversity of thought is appreciated and encouraged, provided the students can agree to disagree. It is the professor’s expectation that ALL students be able to consider the classroom a safe environment. Be civil at all times and focus on understanding the material being discussed. As we discuss theatre, let us do so in a non-confrontational way. A university is a place in which we are each encouraged to grow to our ultimate potential – disparaging comments or words intended to harm others (as a group or individual) are inappropriate in the twenty-first century and will not be tolerated in this classroom. Please consider this carefully. If you are easily offended, particularly by discussing things with which you do not agree morally or philosophically, this class may not be for you. The appropriate time to withdraw is now.

Do not be intimidated by the size of this class. I very much want to hear your well considered thoughts and opinions and to answer your questions. This course is most effective when the overall spirit is one of collaboration – just like theatre!

No food is allowed in the classroom for any reason.

You may not bring any beverage other than water into the classroom. If you bring water, it must be in a sports top bottle. This is a working theatre!

YOU MUST BRING THE TEXT TO CLASS EVERYDAY.

In short: Be on time. Be awakened. Be prepared. Be engaged. Ask questions. Study. Come ready to be a scholar or stay home.
Accommodation

Students with disabilities or who are in need of special arrangements should see the professor as early as possible in the semester. Please note that in order to qualify for consideration of special accommodations, the student must be registered with the MSU Office of Disability Services, and the professor must receive a memo on file from that office, along with the Special Accommodations Request Form.

Performance Etiquette

1. **BE ON TIME!** We will discuss what “on time” means.
2. When attending a public performance, it is both rude and disruptive to use an electronic device of any kind, talk excessively, or create any other kind of disturbance that distracts or interferes with audience members or performers.
3. Ushers and other faculty members regularly attend these performances. If a faculty member or usher reports to me that you, by name, were observed using an electronic device or engaged in disruptive behavior, you will receive a zero for the performance critique.
4. No food or beverages are allowed in the theatre.
5. No photography of any kind.
6. No matter how tempting, do not take notes during the performance.
7. Dress: Upscale casual to dressy. The idea is not to look sloppy as this shows a lack of respect to the artists.

**By accepting this syllabus, you are indicating that you understand and accept all the professor’s policies listed herein.**
Class Schedule

Act One
August 27
In class: Orientation and Syllabus
Homework: Write journal entry #1. Read chapter 1.
August 29
In class: Discuss chapter 1.
Homework: Read chapter 2.
August 31
In class: Submit journals. Discuss chapter 2.
Homework: Read chapter 3.

September 3 – No classes (Labor Day)

September 5
In class: Discuss chapters 2 & 3.
Homework: Write journal entry #2.
September 7
In class: Discuss chapter 3.
Homework: Read chapter 4.

September 10
In class: Discuss chapter 3 & 4.
Homework: Did you finish chapter 4?
September 12
In class: Discuss chapter 4.
Homework: Read chapter 5. Write journal entry #3.
September 14
In class: Submit journals. Discuss chapter 5.
Homework: Read chapter 6.

Act Two
September 17
In class: Discuss chapter 6.
Homework: Write journal entry #4. Read chapter 7.
September 19
In class: Discuss chapter 6 & 7.
Homework: Write journal entry #5.
September 21
In class: Submit journals. Discuss chapter 7 and playwrighting project.
Homework: Begin playwrighting project. Read chapter 8.
September 24
In class: Submit a copy of the plot outline of your play. Be sure to keep a copy for yourself. Discuss chapter 8 and how to get a ticket for “Almost, Maine”.
Homework: Work on playwrighting project. Book your ticket for “Almost, Maine”.

September 26
In class: Discuss chapter 8. Return plot outlines.
Homework: Work on playwrighting project.

September 28
In class: Discuss chapter 8.
Homework: Finish playwrighting project and write journal entry #6.

October 1
In class: Submit journals & playwrighting projects.
Guest speakers – part of cast/crew for “Almost, Maine”.
Homework:

October 3 – No class (11:00 matinee)

October 5
In class: Test #1.
Homework: See “Almost, Maine” and write critique.

Act Three
October 8
In class: Submit critique for “Almost, Maine”. Discuss play in class.
Homework: Read chapter 10.

October 10
In class: Discuss chapter 10.
Homework: Finish reading chapter 10

October 12
In class: Discuss chapter 10.
Homework: Write journal entry #8.

October 15
In class: Discuss chapter 10.
Homework: Review notes.

October 17
In class: Discuss chapter 10 and design project.
Homework: Read chapter 9.

October 19
In class: Discuss chapter 9.
Homework: Work on design project.

October 22
In class: Discuss chapter 9.
Homework: Write journal entry #7. Work on design project.
October 24
In class: **Turn in journals.** Discuss chapter 9.
Homework: Work on design project. Study for test #2.

October 26
In class: **Turn in design project. Test #2.**
Homework: Rest and relax!!!

**Act Four**

October 29
In class: Explanation of production of project and assignment of teams.
Homework: Bring a copy (not your only one) to class on Wednesday.

October 31
In class: Production projects – begin the projects. Choose the play to be produced and who will fulfill which roles (on and off stage).
Homework: Playwright must make a copy of the script for each actor. Director should plan blocking.

November 2
In class: Production projects – in-class rehearsals.
Homework: Actors should have all lines memorized by Monday. Designer/technician should have all props etc by Monday.

November 5
In class: Production projects – in-class rehearsals.
Homework: Book your ticket for “The Bacchae”.

November 7
In class: Production projects – in-class dress rehearsals.
Homework: Rehearse as needed.

November 9
In class: **Production projects – in-class presentations.**
Homework: Rehearse as needed. Begin writing production project paper.

November 12
In class: **Production projects – in-class presentations.**
Homework: Finish production project paper.

November 14 – No class (11:00 matinee)

November 16
In class: Guest speakers – part of cast/crew for “The Bacchae”. **Production project papers due.** Discuss background of “The Bacchae”.
Homework: See “The Bacchae” and write critique.
Act Five
November 19
In class: **Turn in critique for “The Bacchae”** and discuss in class.
Homework: Read chapter 19.
November 21 & 23 – No classes (Thanksgiving Break)

November 26
In class: Discuss chapter 19.
Homework: Read chapter 20.
November 28
In class: Discuss chapters 19 & 20.
Homework:
November 30
In class: Discuss chapter 20.
Homework: Read chapter 21. Write journal entry #9.

December 3
In class: Discuss chapter 21. Handout – review sheet for final exam.
Homework: Begin reviewing for final exam.
December 5
In class: Discuss chapter 21. Write journal entry #10.
Homework: Review for final exam.
December 7
In class: **Submit journals.** Review for final exam.
Homework: Study for final exam.

Final Exam
Wednesday, December 12   10:30am – 12:30pm
Final exam will be a written comprehensive exam.
Journal Entries

Act One
1. Why are you taking this course? Of the various fine arts courses offered, why did you choose this course? What do you expect to gain from this course?
2. How is attending live theatre different from attending a film? Using examples of your last movie theatre experience, discuss how the experience affected your enjoyment of the film.
3. Of the various theatrical jobs discussed in Chapter 5, which one appeals to you the most? Why? Include a discussion of your personality traits and why you think you would do well in this job.

Act Two
4. Go online to find ticket information on four current Broadway productions. Print out the information and place it in the folder.
5. Choose one piece of conversation you have overheard in the last 24 hours. Explain the setting and write the conversation out in script format.
6. Actors often discover that they may be asked to do something onstage that would be anathema to them in everyday life. If you were an actor, what would you refuse to do onstage? Do NOT answer “have sex”. If you were in the position of having to do that very thing, what would you do?

Act Three
7. The text lists six things that make up good directing. Choose a film or television show that you have seen recently and discuss whether the director met these standards.
8. Look carefully at your room, observing all the things in it, the colors, the arrangement of the furniture. If this room was a set for a play, what would it say about the people who live there? Use examples to make your explanation clear.

Act Four
No entries

Act Five
9. We discussed political theatre in class. Choose one aspect of contemporary life in America (a broad subject, not just specific to college students in Wichita Falls, Texas). Explain how this might make relevant political theatre today.
10. All theatricians are artists. Imagine yourself to be a theatrician. As an artist, what responsibility as an artist would you have to yourself, to theatre, and to the greater world? How would you express that responsibility?
Grading of Written Assignments

General guidelines:

A  An essay that is well-developed, show thought and effort, has no major sentence faults, and has few other grammatical or stylistic problems. All assertions and generalizations are supported.

B  Still a very good essay with sufficient development and interesting content. It has few major sentence faults.

C  A good paper overall, although perhaps lacking development or support. It has multiple major sentence faults.

D or F  A problematic paper, generally for one of two reasons 1) lack or support/development or 2) too many grammatical errors.

The Writing Proficiency Exam rubric will be used to evaluate written communication skills.

Journal Submission Guidelines

The following format is to be used for submission of journal entries.

a) All entries are to be kept and submitted in one 3 prong, 2 pocket cardboard folder.

b) The student’s name must be printed on the upper right corner of the outside of the folder.

c) Each entry is to be printed using 12 point New Times Roman font and double spaced. Margins should be no larger than 1” except the left margin which may be 1 ½”.

d) The journal is a collection of responses and commentaries. These entries should be 75-150 words in length.

e) Each entry should begin with the assigned question and the date of the entry. No other information should be at the top of the page.

f) Entries should be written in complete sentences using the attached rubric as a guideline for writing.
Production Critique Guidelines

The following format is to be used for submission of critiques:

a) The critiques are to be submitted in one 3 prong, 2 pocket cardboard folder (NOT the same folder you use for the journal).
b) The student’s name must be printed on the upper right corner of the outside of the folder.
c) The critique should be 3-4 pages in length.
d) Each entry is to be printed using 12 point New Times Roman font and double spaced. Margins should be no larger than 1” except the left margin which may be 1 ½”.
e) Critiques should be written in complete sentences using the attached rubric as a guideline.
f) Your ticket stub MUST be attached to your critique. I will NOT accept any ticket stub that is not attached properly (either stapled or paper clipped).
g) Use a cover page that includes: your name, the name of the play, when and where you saw the production.

The following are the guidelines for a production critique:

a) Answer these three questions:
   - What is the artist/production trying to do/say?
   - How does the artist do it?
   - Is it worth doing?
b) Discuss your opinion of the production, considering the audience reaction, the success of the production as an evening of theatre, and the clarity of the story telling.
c) Discuss any and/or all of the following:
   - The actors’ portrayal of their characters
   - What the play says about life
   - The scenery, lighting, costuming, make-up and sound and their impact on the production
d) Write and rewrite. Proof carefully.
e) Be specific and provide examples.
f) Use past tense to describe the action of the play.

Critiques are due at the beginning of class, the day after the final performance. Critiques will NOT be accepted at any other time. Not 10 or 15 minutes into class. Not that afternoon. Not the next day. If you are too ill to attend class, send your folder with another student.
# Writing Proficiency Exam Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essay</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>Introduction presents a clear and direct thesis statement that indicates the topic and the writer’s position.</td>
<td>Introduction does not provide a thesis statement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Body paragraphs develop the thesis statement by providing reasons, examples, and details.</td>
<td>Body paragraphs do not maintain focus on thesis, or they provide only general reasons without supporting examples or details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Essay flows logically from one idea and/or paragraph to the next and creates a coherent whole.</td>
<td>Essay demonstrates no logic or order but instead merely lists a seemingly random list of ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paragraph</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Each paragraph develops just one idea clearly stated in a topic sentence.</td>
<td>Paragraphs have no apparent central topic and demonstrate a lack of focus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherence</td>
<td>Each paragraph uses appropriate and logical transitional expressions to achieve a smooth flow.</td>
<td>Paragraphs lack transitional expressions, and the relationship between the sentences within the paragraph is unclear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Each paragraph provides sufficient details and examples to support the topic sentence.</td>
<td>Paragraphs provide only general statements and fail to offer specific examples to support topic sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled</td>
<td>Essay uses complete sentences that are organized into standard patterns. Prose patterns indicate the writer’s control over the content.</td>
<td>Essay lacks organized flow of sentences and instead presents random observations that resemble informal speech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>Essay uses sentences that are understandable.</td>
<td>Essay uses sentences that fail to communicate the writer’s ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics and Usage</strong></td>
<td>Essay demonstrates reasonable adherence to Standard Written American English.</td>
<td>Essay contains excessive grammar and usage errors that interfere with readability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style (University level)</strong></td>
<td>Essay demonstrates a reasonable understanding of rhetorical awareness and uses moderately sophisticated prose.</td>
<td>Essay demonstrates a lack of appreciation for the rhetorical situation and uses informal or inappropriate language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>