

Syllabus - Theater Appreciation [Online]

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Instructor

Hello and Welcome to Theatre Appreciation! My name is William Eissler, and I can be reached through the Canvas email system or at wb.eisslerufl.edu. Feel free to reach out with questions that go beyond what is covered in the syllabus and FAQ.

My office is located in Yon Hall 15. This building is attached to the Stadium. However, with the COVID-19 situation, all my meetings will be held via Zoom. Please allow at least 24 hours for a response.

Due to the size of the class, grading is done by my teaching assistants. Questions about specific grades should be directed to them. To find contact information for the TA assigned to you, click on "Home" and choose "How to Contact my TA." Questions about specific quiz questions or the class itself should be referred to me.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to expose you to live theatre so that you will better appreciate its complexities and cultural importance. Over the course of the semester, you will look behind the scenes in order to explore the collaborative processes that make it work. In addition to studying some of the literature, theories, history, forms, and styles of theatre, you will explore how influences such as ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and economic class shape the experience of theatre in the United States. You will also learn to write and speak critically about theatrical production. This course fulfills a general education and diversity requirement.

General Education Objectives

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives. Lectures will provide the framework for understanding the theatrical arts and how they connect to the human experience. Additional instruction will come through textbook and play reading augmented by the watching of live theatre.

General Education Objectives for Diversity

Diversity courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that create cultural differences within the United States. These courses encourage students to recognize how social roles and status affect different groups in the United States. Students are expected to analyze and evaluate their own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures, and to distinguish opportunities and constraints faced by other persons and groups. Lectures will emphasize the struggles and theatrical contributions of marginalized groups while the reading discussion of assigned plays by underrepresented Americans will provide a context for understanding how cultural identity has been negotiated in this country.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes

Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline.

Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline.

Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Student learning outcomes will be assessed in various ways. Exams and quizzes on assigned readings will test mastery of content. Communication and critical thinking will be tested through the writing of papers that critique live performance and creative projects that interpret the symbology of theatrical texts.

Course Requirements

In order to be successful in this course, all students must participate fully in the activities listed below:

- Close readings of assigned textbook chapters, plays, and posted material
- Watch video lectures and supplementary videos
- Weekly quizzes on assigned readings and lectures
- Post on the class' Discussions board
- View live theatrical performances and write a critique about each one
- Produce a creative project based on a required play

A full schedule of assignment due dates can be seen by choosing the Calendar button on the left hand side of the screen.

Required Texts

All of the texts below are required and should be available in the bookstore. You can purchase any edition of these plays from any source but get them at the beginning of the semester. After a few weeks, unsold books in the campus bookstore are returned to the publishers. No exceptions will be made for students who have ordered from third parties and are waiting for delivery. Any additional readings will be available online.

TEXTBOOK:

Theatrical Worlds - Beta Version (University Press of Florida, 2014). This book was developed in response to the high cost of theatre textbooks which commonly retail between \$90 and \$120 for new editions. [A free pdf version is available \(Links to an external site.\)](#) to read online but most students find that a physical copy is easier to read and study.

REQUIRED PLAYS:

Doubt by John Patrick Shanley

A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry

M. Butterfly by David Henry Hwang

The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity by Kristoffer Diaz

Machinal by Sophie Treadwell

Anna in the Tropics by Nilo Cruz

The Laramie Project by Moises Kaufman (Note: The bookstore may have ordered a version which includes an additional piece entitled *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*. You are only responsible for *The Laramie Project*.)

Honky by Greg Kalleres (I noticed this play sells out at the bookstore and online copies can be quite pricey. If you go to Dramatists Play Services, they have affordable copies (<https://www.dramatists.com/> (Links to an external site.)). Make sure you verify that the author is Greg Kalleres. (There is a book by the same title; this is NOT our text).

How the Class is Conducted

There is no live component to this course -- it will be conducted entirely online. Instead of going to a classroom, you will do the assigned reading, watch video lectures or listen to audio material. Many of the lectures you will view are delivered by Dr. Charlie Mitchell, who is also editor of the textbook. I may deliver additional materials to you by video.

The course includes the following assignments:

Quizzes: You will take multiple choice/true-false quizzes based on the material assigned. Most quizzes are worth a total of 20 points. You may not take the quiz after the due date and time.

Discussion Board: You will also be asked to find information or offer ideas and post it for the rest of the class. *Meaningful* posts that are *on topic* and that fulfill the requirements and use college-level writing will receive 10 points. If you are awarded less than 10 points, it is usually for the following reasons:

- Lack of depth in your answer
- Opinions that are not supported by details
- Lack of proofreading, i.e. improper spelling, grammar, punctuation
- Using slang or instant message language (ex. lol, omg, etc.)
- The post is off topic
- The post is late
- Plagiarism (see *below*)

3 Papers: You will see three live performances and write one paper for each performance. Specific directions for each paper will be posted in the Modules section under "Production Critiques."

Creative Project: At the end of the semester, you will be responsible for a creative project based on your interpretation of the play *Honky*. Instructions will be available in the last module.

Late Work

I will accept late work 24 hours after the deadline but you will receive a 20% point deduction.

Understand Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cutting and pasting text from a website without attribution is plagiarism. This includes plot summaries. Plagiarism will result in failure of the course. When in doubt cite your sources. It is fine to build upon the ideas of others, or use them to support your own argument, but you must give the original thinker credit. Look to reliable sources with some kind of institutional stamp -- a news organization or university entity for example.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." Plagiarism is an [Honor Code violation \(Links to an external site.\)](#) at this university. Sharing your work for this class with others (quiz answers and papers for example), writing a critique for a show you did not see, or uploading

anything from this course to an outside website is also considered an Honor Code Violation.

Seeing Live Theatre

You are studying theatre so you need to see theatre. For this class, you are required to see three shows. I will email you directions that tell you exactly what shows to see, when to see them, and how to get tickets.

If you are taking the course outside of the Gainesville area, you will need to make arrangements to see shows in your area. However, they must be either community theatre or professional (no high school or children's theatre). If you are unsure about the show, clear your choice with me.

Make-ups

Make-ups can only be granted under the following circumstances: medical illness documented by a physician; family emergency documented through the Dean of Students office (392-1261); religious holiday; official University of Florida conflict documented by faculty sponsor or pre-arrangement with me. Documentation can be emailed.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx> (Links to an external site.).

Computer Problems

Computers crash and internet connections fail. If you are having computer problems, please contact the UF Helpdesk:

Walk-in: [HUB 132 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Phone: (352) 392-HELP (4357)

They will give you a ticket number. If you request an extension from me, you must provide me with this number. The ticket must indicate a date/time BEFORE the assignment is due.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/> (Links to an external site.).

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that is documented with the Disability Resource Center and wish to discuss accommodations, contact your instructor as soon as possible so they can arrange longer times for quizzes. If you have a learning disability that has NOT been documented, contact the DRC at 352.392.8565, email accessuf@dso.ufl.edu, or go to their office at 0001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall).

Grade Scale

Grading is based upon the scale listed below.

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-63
E	59-

Tipd for Succeeding in an Online Course

Schedule class times for yourself

This course is not self-paced -- there are deadlines that you can find on the class calendar. Schedule regular times for yourself to "attend class." This will help you to manage your time well and eliminate stress.

Read everything twice

Take your time and make sure you understand the material. If you need help, please email me. Please allow 24 hours for a response.

Take notes on videos

As you watch the videos, make notes on paper or in some kind of word processor in a separate window. This helps you do better on quizzes.

Back up your work

Computers can fail at any time so back up your discussion posts, production critiques, and creative project to an external hard drive, thumb drive or a cloud service. When you post something to Canvas, double check to make sure you uploaded it correctly and you can see it on the Canvas system. If you don't see it, I won't see it.

Trust what you know

Quizzes are not meant to trick you. There will always be one correct answer.

[Click "Next" below to read the Frequently Asked Questions]