

THEATRE APPRECIATION

THE2000 – Spring 2026

MON & WED: 1:55 PM-2:45 (Turlington L007)

FRI (breakout session): Check your schedule for time and location

Professor: Dr. Charlie Mitchell

Office: McGuire Pavilion, 2nd floor, room 229

(This building is attached to the Reitz Union.)

Office Phone: (352) 273-0515

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 3-4:30pm or by appointment

Email: cmitchell@ufl.edu

COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, students will explore dramatic structure, techniques, and various organizational elements. The course provides an introduction to theatre as a collaborative art form through the critical analysis of its historical context, production, theory, and connections to theatrical literature, including the Western cannon.

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

Humanities courses must afford students the ability to think critically through the mastering of subjects concerned with human culture, especially literature, history, art, music, and philosophy, and must include selections from the Western canon. 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 relevant factors that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives. For this course, in-class lectures will provide the framework for understanding the theatrical arts and how they connect to human culture. Additional instruction will come through the reading of celebrated and award-winning American plays.

<https://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/general-education/gen-ed-program/subject-area-objectives/>

GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline. This will be measured through quizzes, exams, and a final exam.

Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline. This will be measured through short papers based on watching live performance as well as class discussions which will offer opportunities for self-reflection in relationship to the material.

Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. This will be measured through homework assignments.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will identify the basic principles of theatrical performance, design, technology, organization, and management.

- Students will assess the social significance and the human condition as expressed through the performing arts.
- Students will explore and interpret works of art utilizing creative and critical thinking skills.
- Students will demonstrate college-level writing.
- Students will define, compare and contrast theater as both an expressive art form and a commercial industry.

REQUIREMENTS

- You will do a close reading of all plays and supplemental material. There will be several quizzes given throughout the semester based on your reading.
- You will see two specific shows and write a critique about each one. I will post guidelines on Canvas.
- You will complete one creative homework assignments. I will post guidelines on Canvas.
- There will be three exams and a final based on the lectures and assigned reading. I will provide a topic list on Canvas a few days before each exam. Exam dates are provided in the Course Outline. Make your family aware of exam dates before travel arrangements are made.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Theatrical Worlds, ed. Charlie Mitchell.

ISBN: 1616101660 - University Press of Florida

I developed this book in response to the high cost of theatre textbooks. A free pdf version is available at <https://opensourcetheatretextbook.wordpress.com/>

REQUIRED PLAYS

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. There is no valid excuse for not locating a copy of the play, including waiting for third party vendors.

In this course, we will cover material that you may find controversial or challenging. If you have beliefs or personal experiences that might seriously affect your participation, I encourage you to read about the required plays and performances before deciding to stay in this course.

All of the following texts should be available in the bookstore:

I And You by Lauren Gunderson

ISBN: 9781623842772 - Playscripts.com (or Methuen Drama)

Yellowface by David Henry Hwang

ISBN: 9781559363402 – Theatre Communications Group (or Dramatists Play Service)

A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry

ISBN: 0679755330 – Vintage

Note: There is a Kindle version on Amazon

Buried Child by Sam Shepard (Revised Edition) – Dramatists Play Service

ISBN: 9780822215110

Note: There is a Kindle version on Amazon

Ten Acrobats in an Amazing Leap of Faith by Yussef El Guindi
ISBN: - Broadway Play Publishing
Note: The publisher has an ePlay (pdf) version.

The Laramie Project by Moises Kaufman
ISBN: 0375727191 – Vintage Books
Note: There is Kindle version on Amazon

Anna in the Tropics by Nilo Cruz
ISBN: 0822220008 – Dramatist Play Service
Note: The publisher has an ePub version

The How and the Why by Sarah Treem
ISBN: 1575258021 – Smith and Kraus Publishers
(You might come across a novel with the same title written by a different author. Don't buy it.)

CANVAS

Grades, additional readings, paper/homework guidelines, and topic lists for exams will be posted on the class website in Canvas. Log on to <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>, click the orange button that reads "LOG IN TO E-LEARNING," and then enter your Gatorlink username and password. This course should appear if you are officially registered. If you require technical assistance with your computer, start with the UF Computing Help Desk at <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>.

REQUIRED PERFORMANCES

For this class, you are required to see two shows which will be the basis for two short papers and may be the topic of some exam questions. You will be given a coupon which you will trade for a ticket. The exact process will be explained in class.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS and TA's

Every week on Friday (see your schedule), your section will meet in a different classroom with one of my teaching assistants (TA's). During these sessions, you will discuss assigned reading, do activities, or take exams. When discussing plays, you are expected to bring the text to class and share your opinions and observations.

At the end of the semester, your TA will assign you a grade in Participation (see "Grade Breakdown"). This grade will reflect your degree of involvement in breakout sessions. This means that simply showing up to class is not enough to earn an A in Participation. If you have any questions about the course in general, course material, or exams, feel free to contact me. If you have questions about missing or incorrect grades, contact your TA.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is required for this course. You are expected to attend all lectures and breakout sessions. After the add/drop period is over, a sign-in sheet will be passed around in each class. Signing in for another student violates the Honor Code.

You are responsible for all material covered. If you miss a class, get notes from a friend. I do not provide notes or PowerPoint slides unless it is mandated by the DRC.

The following attendance policy begins the first day after the add/drop period. You can have two *unexcused* classes without affecting your Participation grade. Your third unexcused absence will automatically assure that the highest grade you can receive in Participation is a B. Four unexcused absences will drop your Participation grade to a C. ***Five unexcused absences will earn you a failing grade for the entire course.***

The following absences are excused: illness (doctor's note required), religious holidays, funerals (no documentation required), and participation in official university activities (documentation required). Weddings, job interviews, job fairs, and other life events do not count as excused absences. If you have a logistical problem that is preventing you from arriving to class on time, notify your TA immediately. Being late three times equals one absence. Share all attendance documentation with your TA. Any assignment turned in late will have a full grade deducted (ex. A to B).

Information about university-wide policies and resources can be found here:
<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Three Exams	45%
Production Critiques	15%
Quizzes	15%
Final Exam	10%
Homework (2 assignments)	5%
Participation	10% (assigned by your TA)

Here is the rubric for Participation during breakout sessions.

- A Significant participation
- B Occasional participation
- C Limited participation
- D Very limited participation
- E No participation

Absences, even unexcused ones, may also impact your Participation grade. You cannot participate if you are not in class.

I do not curve grades or drop low grades. I round up final grades by .5 only.

SCALE

A	93-100	Superior Effort	C	73	Average Effort
A-	90		C-	70	
B+	87		D+	67	
B	83	Good Effort	D	63	Minimum Effort
B-	80		D-	60	
C+	77		E	0-59	

A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points can be found in the online catalog at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

EXTRA CREDIT

The *only* extra credit offered in this course is providing proof that you have seen a live play or musical that is not required for this class. You can find details on Canvas.

CLASS CONDUCT

Classes of this size demand mutual respect to function positively. That means I will do my best to provide a good classroom experience and you will not show me disrespect by using your cell phone, sleeping, eating, or doing work for other classes. If you engage in any of these behaviors, you will be ejected and considered absent. Laptops are not allowed in class – they are distracting to other students. However, you can use a tablet to take notes if it lays flat on your desk. If you use it for anything other than taking notes, you will lose the privilege. If you have any special technological needs, you must make me aware of them.

HONOR CODE

As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: “I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.” ***If you cheat on a test or quiz, or plagiarize material, i.e., use someone else's words or ideas without attribution, you will automatically receive a failing grade in this class.*** While AI technology is new and constantly evolving, please know that using ChatGPT or any other AI text generator to assist in writing your papers or other written assignments is considered plagiarism. The absence of intent to deceive does not constitute an acceptable defense in matters of scholarly dishonesty.

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who need accommodations need to register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565/ <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>). Please follow those procedures as early as possible in the semester. If you do not have a disability but feel you need help with your writing, contact <https://studentsuccess.ufl.edu/>.

AVAILABILITY

If you have something you want to discuss with me, feel free to call me, email, or stop by during my office hours. You are never “bothering” me. During my office hours, I encourage you to bring drafts of your papers and projects or ask about lecture material. I will be happy to go over your work and suggest improvements. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, see me before or after class and we will come up with another time to meet.

EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their

Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Your ongoing enrollment is confirmation that you understand and will comply with the requirements of this course. I reserve the right to alter the syllabus and course outline if necessary.

THE2000 COURSE OUTLINE - Spring 2026

Lecture Topics and Assignments

MON	WED	FRI
Lecture Turlington 007 1:55-2:45	Lecture Turlington 007 1:55-2:45	Breakout Session w/ TA (See your schedule for time and location)
Jan 12 What is Theatre?/How Theatre <i>Means</i>	Jan 14 Acting Theory Due: Textbook chapter: "Mapping Reality," p. 3-46	Jan 16 Acting: A Primer Due: Textbook chapter: "Acting," p. 49-62
Jan 19 MLK Day – NO CLASS	Jan 21 Casting	Jan 23 Be prepared to discuss <i>I and You</i>
Jan 26 Directing Due: Textbook chapter: "Directing," p. 63-79	Jan 28 Set Design Due: Textbook chapter: "Set Design," p. 80-112	Jan 30 Be prepared to discuss <i>Yellowface</i>
Feb 2 Costume/Lighting Design Due: Textbook chapter: "Costume Design" & "Lighting Design," p. 113-149 Due: Casting Homework	Feb 4 Minstrelsy/African American Theatre	Feb 6 EXAM #1
Feb 9 Farce & High Comedy Due: Textbook chapter: "Genre," p. 153-167	Feb 11 Melodrama	Feb 13 Be prepared to discuss <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>
Feb 16 Realism and Naturalism	Feb 18 The Avant-garde Due: Paper on P. Funk Junkies	Feb 20 Intro to Improvisation

Feb 23 The Avant-garde (cont.)	Feb 25 Evolution of the American Musical Theatre Due: Textbook chapter: "The American Musical," p. 204-230	Feb 27 Be prepared to discuss <i>Buried Child</i>
March 2 Dance in American Musical Theatre	March 4 Immigrant Theatre	March 6 EXAM #2
March 9 Chinese Theatre	March 11 Gay and Lesbian Theatre	March 13 Be prepared to discuss <i>M. Butterfly</i> (no makeups for this quiz)
March 16 SPRING BREAK	March 18 SPRING BREAK	March 20 SPRING BREAK
March 23 Shakespeare Due: Textbook chapter: "The World of Shakespeare," p. 168-203	March 25 Shakespeare (cont.)	March 27 Be prepared to discuss <i>The Laramie Project</i>
March 30 "Bad" Art and Censorship	April 1 "Bad" Art and Censorship (cont.)	April 3 EXAM #3
April 6 Latino Theatre	April 8 Latino Theatre (cont.) Due: Paper on <i>The Visit</i>	April 10 Be prepared to discuss <i>Anna in the Tropics</i>
April 13 Theatre of the Middle East	April 14 Feminism and Theatre	April 17 Be prepared to discuss <i>Ten Acrobats in an Amazing Leap of Faith</i> Due: Textbook chapter: "World Theatre," p. 231-267
April 20 Review for Final	April 22 Final Exam Note: Go to Turlington 007 at the usual class time Last day to turn in extra credit	I do not give early exams to accommodate travel plans - no exceptions.