

THE 6526: THEATRE HISTORY/LITERATURE/CRITICISM 2
ROOM CON 0218
M/W 12:50-2:45 pm

COURSE CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION: Discussions of dramatic literature, performance theory, and stage practice from the 19th century to the modern and postmodern of Western, Indian, Chinese, and African cultures.

COURSE OVERVIEW: This graduate seminar will examine performance theory as a research discipline and will take an interdisciplinary approach to theatre, theory, and criticism, discussing the effect of Modernism in contemporary theatre and performance studies. The main emphasis of this course is to place dramatic texts and performance traditions in the context of contemporary performance, establishing a dialogue between play texts and dramatic theory within the context of the history of theatrical production and performance.

This course incorporates critical and cultural theories, such as semiotics, post-structuralism, gender studies, cultural theory, and other disciplinary approaches—coming from, for instance, anthropology and sociology—that have transformed theatre and performance. Furthermore, this course emphasizes reading beyond texts, acknowledging the significance of a nuanced learning methodology by integrating videos and podcasts into the discussion.

This course approaches theatre studies from the assumption that there is a diversity of ways of knowing and learning. It combines lectures with collaborative projects that will require you to learn through performance/presentation. I will assess your progress throughout the semester by combining the tools explained below.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Name: Jashodhara Sen (Ph.D.)

Email: jsen@ufl.edu

Office: SoTD 224

Phone: 352-294-9124

Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 3-4 PM, and Tuesday, 1-2 PM

<https://calendly.com/jsen-ufl/meeting-with-dr-sen>

My office operates with an open-door policy; however, if you schedule a 30-minute meeting in advance, we can both come prepared and make the most effective use of our time.

Instructor correspondence:

I prefer UF email over CANVAS messaging, but I will try to respond to both within 24 hours. Website:

<https://www.jashodharasen.com/>

REQUIRED BOOKS (all at the UF Bookstore or order via online stores):

- Gerould, D., ed. *Theatre Theory Theatre: The Major Critical Texts from Aristotle and Zeami to Soyinka and Havel*.
- Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory*.
- All other texts and plays will be uploaded to Canvas.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

After completing this course, the students will be able to:

1. The students will be able to analyze subject matter relevant to the discipline of performance or design through theory, history, and practice in theatre and Performance Studies.
2. Identify and critically analyze key elements, biases, and influences shaping thought within the subject area.
3. Translate knowledge into practical application in the context of live performance.
4. Develop skills to write analytical academic articles for the conference presentation.



- *A Doll's House*, Henrik Ibsen, 1879
- *Miss Julie*, August Strindberg, 1888
- *Trifles* by Susan Glaspell, 1916
- *Phaedra's Love* by Sarah Kane, 1996
- *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry, 1959
- *Evam Indrajit* (And Indrajit) by Badal Sircar, 1962
- *Dance Like a Man* by Mahesh Dattani, 1990
- *Ten Acrobats in an Amazing Leap of Faith* by Yussef El Guindi, 2018

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Attendance: 25 pts

Participation: 25 pts

Mid-term written exam: 50

**Writing assignment (Critical Analysis
and Creative Reimagination) draft#1: 50**

Presentation: 50

**Writing assignment (Critical Analysis
and Creative Reimagination) draft#2:**

100

TOTAL: 300

Score Percent Grade Points

934-1000 93.4-100 A 4.00

900-933 90.0-93.3 A- 3.67

867-899 86.7-89.9 B+ 3.33

834-866 83.4-86.6 B 3.00

800-833 80.0-83.3 B- 2.67
767-799 76.7-79.9 C+ 2.33
734-766 73.4-76.6 C 2.00
700-733 70.0-73.3 C- 1.67
667-699 66.7-69.9 D+ 1.33
634-666 63.4-66.6 D 1.00
600-633 60.0-63.3 D- 0.67
0-599 0-599 E 0.00

NOTE: The grading scale is calculated in proportion to the 100-point scale.

****Please note that if you need to discuss any graded materials with me, please recognize the 24/7 grade policy that I follow in my classroom. If you have any issue with a paper or an exam grade, I request that you wait 24 hours to think it over, then write me an email to make an appointment with me to discuss how you can improve your grade and go over any questions. This process must be initiated within a week from the date the grade is published in your grade book.**

ATTENDANCE (25 points)

Class attendance is mandatory. You are allowed one “unexcused” absence that does not require documentation and does not conform to the UF “acceptable reasons for absence.” Any other “unexcused” absence will result in a penalty of half a full letter grade (5%) from the final grade per “unexcused” absence. To be considered “excused,” an absence must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation. Please remember that even with a letter from the [DRC](#), you do not receive unlimited excused absences. You can discuss your absences and concerns with me during the first month of the semester, allowing me to consider the number of excused absences. Please follow these instructions to ensure clear and effective communication. Any student who acquires 3 absences (either excused or unexcused) will be required to meet with me and/or area faculty to discuss the student’s continued participation in the course. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you are absent for that session. If you come late a lot, that may also result in a cumulative absence count. Any student who acquires 3 absences (either excused or unexcused) will be required to meet with me and/or area faculty to discuss the student’s continued participation in the course.



See the Student Handbook for more information.

You are absent for that session if you are more than 10 minutes late to class. If you come late a lot, that may also result in a cumulative count of absences.

NOTE: If you are having difficulties meeting the course requirements and are thinking about dropping, please reach out to me. I would like to have the chance to hear about what you are struggling with to see if there is a way to help you meet the outcomes of the course.

PARTICIPATION (25 points)

This course relies on developing a community of researchers, writers, and artists responding to each other’s work. Your participation grade is determined by your active, thoughtful, and informed participation in class discussion (distinct from mere attendance) as well as your contribution to the classroom community. Not adhering to these guidelines will result in a greatly reduced participation grade. Tardiness, particularly repeated tardiness, will significantly decrease your participation grade.

Please see the University attendance policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Mid-term***Assignment Description***

The midterm exam for this graduate seminar will take the form of a written, in-class examination designed to assess your developing understanding of the course materials at the midpoint of the semester. The exam will consist of four (4) descriptive, essay-based questions, of which you are required to answer three (3).

The questions will ask you to critically engage with the plays, theoretical frameworks, and literary/critical scholarship covered thus far. You will be expected to demonstrate not only content knowledge but also your ability to synthesize historical context, theory, and critical interpretation. Strong responses will move beyond summary to offer analytical insight, clear argumentation, and precise use of terminology appropriate to graduate-level theatre history and performance studies.

The objective of the exam is to evaluate your ability to:

- Demonstrate historical and theoretical knowledge of theatre and performance
- Analyze dramatic texts and performances critically
- Apply relevant critical and theoretical frameworks
- Communicate ideas clearly and persuasively in scholarly writing

Midterm Exam Grading Rubric(50 points)**A. Knowledge of Plays, Histories, and Scholarship (15 pts)**

- ☐ Demonstrates strong command of assigned plays and performance contexts (15)
- ☐ Demonstrates adequate understanding with minor gaps (12)
- ☐ Demonstrates basic familiarity but limited depth (9)
- ☐ Demonstrates minimal or inaccurate understanding (6 or below)

B. Critical Analysis & Argumentation (15 pts)

- ☐ Develops a clear, sustained, and original critical argument (15)
- ☐ Argument is present but uneven or underdeveloped (12)
- ☐ Primarily descriptive with limited analysis (9)
- ☐ Lacks a coherent argument (6 or below)

C. Use of Theory & Critical Frameworks (10 pts)

- ☐ Effectively applies relevant theories and critical perspectives (10)
 - ☐ Uses theory appropriately but broadly or inconsistently (8)
 - ☐ Minimal or unclear engagement with theory (6)
 - ☐ Theory absent or misapplied (4 or below)
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D. Scholarly Writing, Clarity & Organization (10 pts)

- ☐ Writing is clear, well-organized, and graduate-level in tone (10)
- ☐ Writing is generally clear with minor issues (8)
- ☐ Writing is uneven or occasionally unclear (6)
- ☐ Writing lacks clarity or academic rigor (4 or below)

Total Score: _____ / 50

DESIGN ANALYSIS AND CREATIVE INTERPRETATION

Draft #1 (Written Project)

Overview

You will select one play and one (design) theory to develop a project that combines critical analysis with creative reinterpretation. The assignment connects theory, design analysis, and creative practice to deepen students' understanding of how design functions in theatrical storytelling.

Part I: Critical Analysis

- Select one play and one relevant design theory (e.g., hybridity, feminist theory, phenomenology in set design, or semiotics in costume design).
- Write a 1,000–1,500-word essay analyzing how design choices in a notable production reflect, challenge, or complicate the selected theory.
- Discuss how these design choices shape meaning, storytelling, and audience experience.

Part II: Creative Redesign

- Reinterpret one design element (set, costume, lighting, or sound) through the lens of the chosen theory.
- Submit a written explanation (700–1,000 words) addressing:
 - How the selected theory informed your redesign
 - How the redesign strengthens or reimagines the play's themes and storytelling
 - Challenges encountered during the creative process and how they were resolved
- Visual materials (sketches, renderings, mood boards, or sound concepts) should support the redesign; however, this step is optional.

Grading Scale

- **Excellent:** 90–100
- **Proficient:** 80–89
- **Developing:** 70–79
- **Needs Improvement:** Below 70

If you receive a grade below 70, please schedule a meeting time with me at least two weeks before the final paper is due.

Draft #2 (Revision & Presentation)
Revision

- Revise the written project in response to my feedback to strengthen theoretical clarity, analytical rigor, and creative integration.

Presentation

- Deliver an 8–10-minute presentation to the class.
- Explain how the chosen theory shaped your design decisions and how the redesign enhances the play's dramaturgy and storytelling.

Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Excellent (90–100)	Proficient (80–89)	Developing (70–79)	Needs Improvement (<70)
Theory Connection	Insightful, sophisticated, and clearly articulated	Clear but less nuanced	Superficial or underdeveloped	Minimal or absent
Critical Analysis	Deep, rigorous, and well-supported	Clear but lacking depth	Basic or incomplete	Unclear or irrelevant
Creative Redesign	Innovative and fully integrated with theory	Thoughtful but partially aligned	Limited or unclear	Unoriginal or disconnected
Visual Materials	Professional, polished, and effective	Clear but less refined	Underdeveloped	Poor or missing
Presentation	Engaging, focused, and well-organized	Clear but less engaging	Lacks focus or cohesion	Disorganized or unclear

Total Points: /100

Note: Please visit <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> for additional assistance.

Check out these field-specific conferences and their requirements:

1. Association for Theatre in Higher Education: <https://www.athe.org/>
2. The Association for Performing Arts and Entertainment Professionals: <https://www.usitt.org/conference22>
3. American Society for Theatre Research: <https://www.astr.org/default.aspx>
4. Mid-America Theatre Conference: <http://matc.us/>
5. The Association for Performing Arts and Entertainment Professionals: <https://www.usitt.org/conference>
6. Black Theatre Network: <https://blacktheatrenetwork.org/>

And more...

Please note: All written work should be double-spaced, use 12-point type, and conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. (<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>) Use a single line space between each paragraph and justify your text left.

COURSE SCHEDULE

THIS SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CHANGES, IF ANY, WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS OR VIA EMAIL

READINGS: Please read/view in the order given.

NOTE: If needed, the selection of readings will be modified during the semester, as every effort will be made to accommodate the students' interests and approach to the selected scholarships.

MONTH/WEEK	TOPIC	READING/VIEWING/LISTENING
January WEEK ONE M 12	Introduction, Welcome	Syllabus Assignment handouts Worksheets
W14	Performance and Performativity	Read: Bibler, Zena. "Interview with Richard Schechner: What Is Performance Studies? (2001)." Hemispheric Institute. September 16, 2019. https://hemisphericinstitute.org/en/hidvl-collections/item/1979-wips-rschechner.html <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schechner, "Drama, Script, Theatre, and Performance" (PDF on Canvas)
WEEK TWO M Dr. Martin Luther King, JR. Day		

W 21		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Trip to the Library • Discussing the final paper
WEEK THREE M 26	Modernity, Modernism, and Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Podcast: When is Modernism? https://www.mixcloud.com/READDurham/when-is-modernism/ • Read: <i>A Doll's House</i>, Henrik Ibsen
W 28		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing <i>A Doll's House</i>
February WEEK FOUR M 2		Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emile Zola: Preface to <i>Thérèse Raquin</i> (1873) and Naturalism in the Theatre (p. 351-367 from Gerould, TTT) • “Psychoanalytic Criticism” from <i>Beginning Theory</i>
W 4		Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Miss Julie</i> by August Strindberg, 1888 (Play PDF provided)
WEEK FIVE M 9		<i>Miss Julie</i> Discussion Continues
W 11		Writing Workshop: How to write an academic paper?
WEEK SIX M 16	Hybridity & Performance	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homi K. Bhabha. “Introduction” from <i>The Location of Culture</i> • Chapter 4 “Of Mimicry and Man” (PDF on Canvas)

W 18		Discussion Continues
WEEK SEVEN M 23	Global Modern and Intercultural Performance	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fusco, Coco. "The Other History of Intercultural Performance." Chatterjee, Deepshikha. "Cultural appropriation: Yours, Mine, Theirs or a new intercultural?"
W 25		In-class viewing and discussion: Gómez-Peña, Guillermo, and Coco Fusco. "The Couple in a Cage: Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit the West." (1994)
March WEEK EIGHT M 2	A brief discussion on Postmodernism	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Postmodernism" from <i>Beginning Theory</i> Foucault, Michel. "Discipline." In <i>Rethinking The Subject</i>, pp. 60-69.
W 4		Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team A: <i>Phaedra's Love</i> by Sarah Kane, 1996 Team B: <i>Evam Indrajit</i> (And Indrajit) by Badal Sircar, 1962 "Postmodern Design" by Arnold Aronson
WEEK NINE M 9		Discussion continues Guest: TBD
W 11	Presentation and Representation, A pan-African Reading	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collins, Patricia Hill "What's in a name? Womanism, black feminism, and beyond" (1996) <i>Dutchman</i> by Amiri Baraka, 1964 Watching <i>Dutchman</i> Paper Draft#1 due!
		SPRING BREAK
WEEK TEN M 23		Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matthews, Kristin L. "The Politics of "Home" in Lorraine Hansberry's <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>" <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> by Lorraine Hansberry, 1959
W 25		In-class Written Exam
WEEK ELEVEN M 30	Representation Matters	Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Queer Theory" from <i>Beginning Theory</i> Esteban Muñoz. "What's Queer about Queer Studies Now?" Video: TBD

April W 1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> José Esteban Muñoz, <i>Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics</i> (selected) Davy, Kate. “Fe/male Impersonation: The Discourse of Camp” (PDF on Canvas)
WEEK TWELVE M 6		Read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dance Like a Man</i> by Mahesh Dattani, 1990
W 8		<i>Dance Like a Man</i> Discussion Continues
WEEK THIRTEEN M 13	Contemporary Diasporic Theatre	Read: <i>Ten Acrobats in an Amazing Leap of Faith</i> by Yussef El Guindi, 2018
W 15		<i>Ten Acrobats in an Amazing Leap of Faith</i> Discussion Continues
WEEK FOURTEEN M 20		In-class viewing: TBD
W 22	Last Day of Classes	Final Presentation Day
Thursday, April 30		Final Exam: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Submit your final revised paper.

Content Warning

We are building a community that fosters a safe, brave, and encouraging learning environment. If you find any materials we cover in this course unsettling or challenging, please do not hesitate to share your feelings about the materials with me. The purpose of this course is to examine the past to understand the present and shape the future, and in order to do that, sometimes we need to overcome our fears and discomfort and question the established and normative traditions. I will give you advance notice when specific materials or content covered may contain images, language, or perspectives that some may find difficult. In class, if you need to step away for a period of time as we are covering certain content, you may do so without penalty, but I ask that you remember that you are responsible for any information covered in your absence.

IMPORTANT: Students are encouraged to employ critical thinking and to rely on data and verifiable sources to interrogate all assigned readings and subject matter in this course as a way of determining whether they agree with their classmates and/or their instructor. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

By decision of the faculty in the School of Theatre and Dance, the following statement is included on all departmental syllabi: Since production is the laboratory for all theatre courses, attendance at all mainstage Department of Theatre and Dance productions is required of students enrolled in classes with the following prefix designations: THE, TPA, TPP, ORI. Critiques of and/or responses to these productions may be required. Attendance at all related events is encouraged.

More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades>

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Academic Policies & Resources

Academic Policies:

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. [See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for more information regarding the University Attendance Policies.](#)

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center.

[See the “Get Started With the DRC” webpage on the Disability Resource Center site.](#)

It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Information on current **UF grading policies for assigning grade points**. This may be achieved by including [a link to the University grades and grading policies.](#)

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

- The email they receive from GatorEvals
- Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals
- The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>.

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

The University's Honesty Policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, etc.:

UF students are bound by **The Honor Pledge**, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [See the UF Conduct Code website for more information.](#) If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

In-Class Recording:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal education use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and deliver by an instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course.

A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentation such as patient history,

academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class, or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless, of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Academic Resources:

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at [352-392-4357](tel:352-392-4357) or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, [352-392-1601](tel:352-392-1601). Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Call [866-281-6309](tel:866-281-6309) or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.

Academic Resources: 1317 Turlington Hall, Call [352-392-2010](tel:352-392-2010), or to make a private appointment: [352-392-6420](tel:352-392-6420). Email contact: teaching-center@ufl.edu. General study skills and tutoring.

Writing Studio: Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, [352-846-1138](tel:352-846-1138) | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; [Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.](#)
Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): [View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.](#)

UF Student Success Initiative: Visit <https://studentsuccess.ufl.edu/> for resources that support your success as a UF student.

Public Speaking Lab: (Dial Center, 501 Rolfs Hall). Offering online and in-person help developing, organizing, and practicing oral presentations. Contact email: publicspeakinglab@clas.ufl.edu.

Campus Health and Wellness Resources:

UF Whole Gator Resources: Visit <https://one.ufl.edu/whole-gator/discover> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

