

THEA 3336: History of Theatre II (Enlightenment to the Present)
T/TH 1:00-2:30

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30-3:30pm or by appointment.

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

This course is a survey of the history of theatrical theory and practice from the eighteenth century through the present. I've designed this course with the following goals in mind:

- You will acquire a solid working knowledge of the relevant periods, styles, conventions, texts, events, and people that form a common vocabulary for present-day theatre practitioners. Class discussions and exams serve to make sure that you are absorbing this fundamental knowledge.
- You will encounter and grapple with the various ways in which past and present societies define and practice what we call "theatre." Assigned writing activities are particularly focused on challenging and expanding your understanding of what theatre has meant and can mean.
- You will apply, actively and critically, your growing awareness of the theatrical past and present to your own practices and circumstances. Learning about how people from the past and around the world in the present approach theatre helps to put our own definitions into perspective. The group performance project will push you to explore your own connections to material presented in class.

I expect a considerable amount of effort from you in this course, both in terms of book work (reading and writing) and in terms of critical thought (stretching your imagination beyond what's familiar for you). I have every confidence, however, in your ability to rise to this challenge, and I believe you will find the journey rewarding.

Required Texts

Edwin Wilson and Alvin Goldfarb, *Living Theatre: A History*, 5th Edition.

W.B. Worthen, ed., *The Wadsworth Anthology of Drama*. 5th Edition.

Handouts: *School for Scandal*; *Woyzeck*; *The Intruder*; *The Crystal Spider*; *The Seagull*; *The Eiffel Tower Wedding Party*; *Spurt of Blood*

Assignments, Activities, and Grading

In this course I assign three types of graded activities: chapter study guides, midterm/final examinations, and a group performance project.

Chapter Study Guides

These are short, guided questionnaires that you will complete as you read each chapter. They are

due in class on the date listed. Because they are intended as an aid to class discussion, I will not accept late study guides. If you know ahead of time that you will be missing a class in which a study guide is due, it is your responsibility to get me a hard copy of the completed assignment before the due date. This includes absences due to school activities or departmental productions. Study guides should be typed. Handwritten study guides will not be accepted.

Chapter study guides make up 30% of your grade (7 study guides worth 5 points apiece). Since the total point value of these assignments is 35 rather than 30, you have a “buffer zone” of 5 points built in. Thus:

- You may lose up to 5 points from study guide assignments before your final grade suffers any loss. These 5 points should serve you as a safety net in case you are absent on the day an assignment is due, if you don’t complete an assignment, or if you don’t score well on a few of them. Use this buffer zone sparingly. Don’t use up your 5 points early on only to run into end-of-semester sickness/stress/tech weeks.
- Any buffer points you do not spend get added to your final grade as extra points. If you aren’t a great test-taker, for instance, putting effort into doing well on all the study guides is a good way to boost your grade.

Midterm/Final Examinations

The exams test your ability to synthesize knowledge of the periods, styles, events, people, and texts we study. Both exams are essay format. The final exam covers only material from the midterm on. Each exam is worth 20 points out of the total 100 points for the course. Midterm and final exams cover material from the book, from the plays, and especially from class lecture notes. You should not expect to pass these tests simply by reading the text book. [Otherwise, why come to class at all?]

Group Performance Project

This is intended to engage you creatively with the theatrical past and/or present in ways not covered by the essay format of the exams (however, there will be some writing associated with the project). In groups of 5-6 students, you will address in depth a question that you formulate about some aspect of the material we’ve covered. Working with your group, you will develop and stage a 15-minute response to your own research question. I will provide more details on this project as the semester progresses. Your (performed and written) work on your group's project is worth a total of 30 points.

Final Grade Breakdown:

Chapter Study Guides (7 guides @ 5 points apiece)	35
Group Performance Project	30
Midterm Exam	20
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>20</u>
Total	100 (plus 5 extra)

Final Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72

B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	0-59

Course Policies

Class Environment: In class I expect you to be attentive and respectful toward your classmates and toward any speakers or performers. Such respect involves arriving on time to class, silencing cell phones, refraining from side conversations, keeping outside reading material stored away, and generally staying alert.

Absence and Lateness: This course follows the UH School of Theatre & Dance policy regarding absence and lateness.

Three absences = one full letter grade deduction (i.e. a "B" becomes a "C").

Four absences = two full letters grade deduction.

Five absences = automatic "F" grade for the course.

Entering class after the roll has been called constitutes lateness. Lateness for two classes = one absence.

Course Outline

Week 1 INTRODUCTION

Jan. 15 COURSE INTRODUCTION

Jan. 17 READ CHAPTER 10 OF *LIVING THEATRE*

Week 2

Jan. 22 READ *SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL* *; CHAPTER 10 STUDY GUIDE DUE

Jan. 24 READ CHAPTER 11

Week 3

Jan. 29 READ *WOYZECK* *; CHAPTER 11 STUDY GUIDE DUE

Jan. 31 READ *THE OCTOROON*

Week 4

Feb. 5 CHAPTER 12 STUDY GUIDE DUE

Feb. 7 READ *MISS JULIE* and *NATURALISM IN THE THEATRE* (in Wortham)

Week 5

Feb. 12 READ *THE INTRUDER* * and *THE CRYSTAL SPIDER* *

Feb. 14 READ *THE SEAGULL* *

Week 6

Feb. 19 CHAPTER 13 STUDY GUIDE DUE

Feb. 21 READ *THE EIFFEL TOWER WEDDING PARTY* * and *SPURT OF BLOOD* * and *THE THEATRE AND ITS DOUBLE* (in Wortham)

Week 7

Feb. 26 READ *MOTHER COURAGE AND HER CHILDREN* and “THEATRE FOR PLEASURE OR THEATRE FOR INSTRUCTION” (in Worthen)
Feb. 28 READ *SIX CHARACTERS IN SEARCH OF AN AUTHOR*

Week 8

March 4 MIDTERM REVIEW
March 6 MIDTERM EXAM

Week 9

March 11 CHAPTER 14 STUDY GUIDE DUE
March 13 READ *DEATH OF A SALESMAN* and “TRAGEDY AND THE COMMON MAN” (in Worthen)

****SPRING BREAK****

Week 11

March 25 READ *ENDGAME* and excerpts from *THE THEATRE OF THE ABSURD* (in Worthen) plus “WHICH THEATER IS THE ABSURD ONE?” by Edward Albee (Handout)
March 27 READ *THE HOMECOMING*

Week 12

April 1 CHAPTER 15 STUDY GUIDE DUE
April 3 READ *TOPDOG/UNDERDOG* and “THE GROUND ON WHICH I STAND/SUBSIDIZED SEPARATISM” (in Worthen)

Week 13

April 8 CHAPTER 16 STUDY GUIDE DUE
April 10 READ *INFORMATION FOR FOREIGNERS* and *THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED* (in Worthen)

Week 14

April 15 READ *THE OTHER SHORE*
April 17 READ *TEMPTATION*

Week 15 GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

April 22 PROJECT PRESENTATIONS DAY 1
April 24 PROJECT PRESENTATIONS DAY 2

FINALS WEEK

May 8 (Thursday) FINAL EXAM (2:00-5:00pm)

* Handout (not in Worthen)