TH1310: Introduction to Dramatic Art

Class Syllabus

Prof. Ashley Meyer
Summer 1-2019

COURSE DESCRIPTION
A historical survey of the development of dramatic art; introduction to contemporary theatre practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends) about theatre
2. Learning fundamental principles of theatre
3. Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of theatre

LEARNING OUTCOMES
1. The student will develop a comprehensive overview of the nature and development of theatre
2. The student will be able to identify the different artists involved in creating theatre and apply criteria to the contributions of each of these artists
3. The student will examine how theatre reflects the assumptions of a culture and how theatre artists use their medium to express their belief or disbelief in those systems
4. The student will identify and evaluate criteria for theatre art
5. The student will apply criteria to plays read or viewed & form articulated responses to plays and performances
6. The student will recognize the collaborative nature of theatre – audience, playwrights, directors, actors, designers

CORE LEARNING OBJECTIVES
CT1: Analysis of assigned play performances & evaluate them for the elements of drama. Compare theatre through history with modern theatre and its role in society
CS1: Write analyses of performances. Analyze the stage design and visual elements of the productions viewed
TW1: The student will complete discussion groups
SR1: Written analysis of plays whose theme involves social justice and change

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Daily Class Attendance: Attendance in class is required.
Class Discussion: You contribute to the learning environment and demonstrate your understanding of the material through participation in discussion, both in class and on Blackboard.
Quizzes: There will be quizzes for each chapter and film viewed in class.
Exams: There will be 3 exams, each covering a section of theatre, and a comprehensive final exam.

CONTACT INFORMATION
Professor Ashley Meyer
E-mail: Ashley.meyer@angelo.edu
(Blackboard/Email is the best form of communication)
Phone: 325.486.6194
Office Hours: Skype or Phone call-BY APPOINTMENT ONLY
Office: Carr EFA, Room 160 / Skype

GRADING POLICY

Grade Distribution (with competency for learning outcome given):
Quizzes—18 (1,2,3,4,6) 20%
Tests—4 (1,2,3,4,6) 50%
Short Answer Quizzes – 3 (2,3,4,5,6) 15%
Class Discussion/Attendance (1,2,3,4,5,6) 15%
Total 100%

A 90.0 - 100
B- 80.0 - 89.9
C 70.0 - 79.9
D 60.0 - 69.9
F 00.0 - 59.9

Core Learning Objectives competency
Quizzes—18 (CT1, CS1)
Tests—4 (CT1, CS1)
Short Answer Quizzes – 3 (CT1, CS1, SR1)
Class Discussion/Attendance (CT1, CS1, SR1)
The grade of “C” is given for work that completes all of the assignment requirements and is submitted on time. Grades “A” or “B” are given for work that meets the “C” requirements and clearly demonstrates thought and development in appropriate skills and aesthetic understanding.

GRADE APPEAL PROCESS

As stated in the ASU Operating Policy and Procedure (OP10.03) a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see OP10.03 at www.angelo.edu/opmanual/docs/Section_10_Academic_Policies-Students/OP_10.03_Grade_Grievance.doc
TEXT

*Explore Theatre* – Michael M. O’Hara & Judith A. Sebesta
- this is an online textbook available at [www.pearsonexploretheatre.com](http://www.pearsonexploretheatre.com). You must purchase a student access code to access the text online.

It is understood that you will read each chapter prior to arriving in class on the day it is due. It is also permissible to share texts, though it will be difficult at times throughout the semester.

**How to Register for Explore Theatre:**

You will need:
- **Your school’s zip code:** 76909
- **A student access code**
- **A valid email address.**

**To Register**

- Go to [http://www.pearsonexploretheatre.com/](http://www.pearsonexploretheatre.com/)
- Click Register if you have an access code (click Purchase Access to purchase and register)
- You have a Pearson account if you have used other Pearson online products.
  - Enter your username and password, and click **Next.** If you don’t have a Pearson account, click “No” or “Not sure” to search for possible accounts.
- Complete your account set up by entering your name, email address, a username and password, and any other required information.
- Type in your **Access Code** in the fields provided and click **Next**

Once your registration is complete, you will see a *Confirmation* screen (this information will also be emailed to you). Simply print your confirmation - you are now ready to Log in and access your resources!

**To Sign in to Your Course Again Later**

- Click Log in and enter your Login name and password. Click Login.

**Need Help? Assistance is available** [http://247.support.pearsoned.com](http://247.support.pearsoned.com)
## Attendance and Participation Policy

Quality participation in class is required. Students contribute to the learning environment and demonstrate their understanding of the material by participation. Therefore, class attendance is required and the attendance policy is as follows:

- **Attendance will be taken by your logging into Blackboard and accessing the course content.**
- My attendance policy is strict. Even though this is an online class, missing classes means missing a lot of information. Missing 2 weeks of lecture and assignments will lower your final grade by 10%. Every 2 missed after that will result in another 10% reduction.
- Students representing ASU (traveling groups, class field trips, etc.) will be granted an excused absence, but prior notification must be given to me in writing at least one week in advance.
- Remember, an absence is not an excuse for a late assignment. If you have prior knowledge of your absence, please turn in your assignment prior to your absence.

### Rationale:
I value attendance and participation. A class is only as useful as the time you put into it, and, more than lecturing, I think we learn from active discussion and debate.

### Base Score:
Participation includes coming to class and participating, if not in the large class discussion, in the smaller groups at least. If you are reserved, I understand, and I won’t ask you to do anything that I might assign in class that an actor might enjoy. But, oral communication is a key part of the theatre and it is essential that you learn to communicate as a theatre artist. Using class time to discuss non-class topics, non-engagement, and absence will eat away at your grade.

### The Catch:
Worse than absence and not participating is actively detracting from the learning environment. I really, really, really, really hate having to stop the class because someone is chatting with their friends, writing notes to each other, making faces, texting, or reading the newspaper. It is disrespectful to those of your classmates who have paid good money and want to learn something. This has a far worse effect on your grade. In other words, if I have to say something to you, or if I just have a bad feeling of any kind about you that day, I will subtract points from your participation grade. If you are continually disruptive, I will ask you to leave the classroom, which will result in an absence for that day being recorded.

### The Solution:
If you feel like sleeping, chatting, giggling, or being anywhere else, just don’t show up. Believe me, it will be better for your grade than being asked to leave class.
Plagiarism

Plagiarism: What it means to do it, and the consequences of being caught.
I was a student myself, and I understand the pressures students face in this department. It’s getting close to the end of the semester and you just opened a show. You have two research papers due, a major project, and some final exams. You haven’t started on your final project because you’ve been with your frat or sorority every night until midnight. Your lab partner has been flaking out on you. You’ve fallen behind in all of your classes - and you don’t particularly like anything we’ve studied in this class. Really - you’d rather deal with any other assignments than think about theatre. Understandable. You can cut down on all of this, you think, if you just find some quick material on the internet on a play and copy it in, work in some of the material from your friend’s notes (you didn’t go to class the day we discussed it), and "voila!" A paper! Worse yet, you find just the paper you’re looking for from the internet. Only $10 a page... this is too perfect!

After the final exam you get an email from me telling you that your paper seems to match another one found online. It will be investigated. You find yourself in a disciplinary hearing - your scholarship is revoked, you flunk Intro to Drama or, worse, you are expelled from the University.

You want to finish your degree elsewhere. You audition for another grad program. They’d take you in a heartbeat, they say, but it appears that you were expelled from a school for academic misconduct; they can’t possibly admit you to the program. Other graduate programs turn you down. Employers for stupid bank jobs even balk at your record. You waste your life working in an insurance office job that your loser brother got you in Kalamazoo.

Materials that are available for you to plagiarize are available to me to review. I have read most of the printed sources you are likely to use, and I also can purchase ready-made essays from the same vendors...if they can sell to you, what is to stop them from making money from me? Plagiarism is a lousy shortcut, not just because it leads to the tragic scenario I outlined above, but also because:

1. Projects and Papers put together from lifted sources are usually of poor quality. If you think the people who produce these papers for hire are better writers than you, think again. They are usually 'C' quality papers at best.

2. You lose my respect, and the respect of others on faculty. It will affect the way we evaluate you in the future.

3. You cheat yourself of an opportunity to learn. I don’t assign projects for my own enjoyment! I assign papers because I want to give you an opportunity to explore in greater depth a topic you find interesting. I want to help you learn to be a better writer - to organize your thoughts, to think on a deeper level, and to analyze materials more effectively. What a great opportunity! You paid a lot of money for such an opportunity - and you cheat yourself of that. Think of how much money you are wasting by just 'getting by.'

Remember: Any paper you write yourself, with your own research, will usually be good enough for a 'B' grade or better. I appreciate the effort a student puts into a research project. Find a topic you like. ASK ME if you have any problems. I am happy to help you - even if you have to remind me a gazillion times. I take plagiarism very seriously, and I WILL catch you. I’m terribly zealous about it. So, don’t do it.

The above text was taken from http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jewestla/plagiarism.html and adapted in places to fit this course.
**Academic Honor Code**
Violations of academic integrity are very serious matters and are clearly documented in the ASU Student Handbook. The work a student submits in a class is expected to be the student’s own work and must be work completed for that particular class and assignment. Plagiarism means intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own. This may include your own previous work. Plagiarism includes quoting or paraphrasing from other sources without acknowledging/citing the source of your information or presenting quoted material as your own words. You must be very clear about attribution of sources and you must know how to cite sources in a paper. Please see full Honor Code Policy at http://www.angelo.edu/cstudent/documents/pdf/Student_Handbook.pdf

**Academic Advising**
The College of Arts and Sciences and Department of Communication, Mass Media and Theatre require that students meet with a Faculty Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Faculty Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, faculty advisor, and the department chair. Communication, Mass Media, or Theatre majors who have questions about advising or declaring a major in the department, can call 942-2031. Undeclared majors are supported by ASU’s Center for Academic Excellence located in Library A312, and can be reached at 942-2710.

**Non-Discrimination**
Prejudice of any kind will not be accepted in the classroom. This includes age, race, political stance, religious preference, and ethnicity. Students are allowed to disagree and voice opinions if they do so in a non-offensive manner.

**Incomplete Grades**
The grade I is given when the student is unable to complete the course because of illness or personal misfortune. An I that is not removed before the end of the next long semester automatically becomes an F. A graduate student will be allowed one year to remove a grade of I before it automatically becomes an F. To graduate from ASU, a student must complete all I’s.

**Students with Disabilities**
Angelo State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Dean of Student Life and Student Services at 942-2191. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

**In General**
I do not accept late assignments. However, if you are having trouble keeping up - please come and see me. I would much rather you come and talk to me than let your work slide. I am in during my office hours, during the shop, and other times, and I can be easily reached by email. You will find I am usually pretty agreeable if you take the initiative and communicate with me.
**Instructor’s Philosophy**

I believe students are as much responsible for their own education as their professors are. It is imperative that students read the required assignment before coming to class. In class we can clarify and synthesize the information you have read and add real life examples and situations for better understanding. Please come to class with an open mind, willingness to speak, and an enthusiasm for participation.

Successful class participations includes respectful and active contribution to class discussions that demonstrate comprehension of the material and preparation for class, as well as raising relevant and pertinent questions about the material in an effort to better understand and evaluate the assigned readings and their relationship to theatre.

Please be aware that this class may sometimes use materials or engage in discussions of ideas that you personally find objectionable. It is expected that you will participate fully in all activities of the class. Keep in mind that reading and witnessing something that you find difficult or objectionable does not imply that you believe or embrace that thing. From time to time, I may offer points of view that are geared to stimulate discussion or encourage independent thinking, not necessarily my personal beliefs of points of view.

**Blackboard**

This course utilizes ASU’s Blackboard system. Access to Blackboard is thru Ramport. Please familiarize yourself with how Blackboard functions, as it is key to your success in this course. All discussions, assignments will be turned in and all quizzes and tests will be taken via Blackboard. You can also see your grades in the My Grades area on Blackboard.

Help with Blackboard is provided thru Technology Services. It can be found on the Support tab in Blackboard or by going to

http://blackboard.angelo.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_1_1

**Discussion**

Due to the nature of this course, in-class discussion will not be possible. However, the class will utilize Blackboard’s Discussion Board. For each chapter or video, every student will need to log into Blackboard and participate in the discussion threads for that week. **To receive full credit for discussion a student must actively discuss the topic.** A student must post at least three (3) times per chapter/video. Postings are to be on-topic and not inflammatory in nature. Please respect the opinions of your classmates. You may not agree with their opinion, but they have every right to state them.

**A Note about Questions**

Every semester I get tons of questions about content in the course. Most of the time, the answer is easily found on either Blackboard or in the Syllabus. Therefore, if your question can be answered by checking either of those sources, I will not answer it.
Formatting/Paper Requirements

- All written assignments are to be TYPED using either Times New Roman, Arial, Century, or Cambria, in Size 12 of course.
- Double-spaced.
- All written assignments should be well thought-out and in complete sentences. (FYI: Yes. No. are not complete sentences!)
- Don’t forget: Spell check is your friend!
- Proof reading helps a lot, too!
- Papers must be saved in Microsoft Word format (either .doc or .docx). If it is not in this format, I will not grade it and you will get a failing grade for the assignment.
- All Assignments will need to be submitted via Blackboard by the assignment deadline.
  - I will not accept printed papers.
- Late assignments will not be accepted.

Quizzes

There will be 18 short quizzes, each covering a chapter of the text and the four in-class viewings. Quiz dates can be found on the course calendar.

Quizzes are given via Blackboard. The grading module will open at midnight the 1st day of the week, and will close at 11:59pm at the end of the week. You must complete the quiz during that time frame. You will have one 30 minute opportunity during that window to complete the quiz (you cannot “come and go” from the quiz). Once you enter the quiz do not hit back, log out, shut down, or do anything else on your computer. If you do so, you will not be allowed back into the quiz, and you will receive a 0 (zero) for that quiz. Your grade will be automatically given to you at the completion of the quiz.

It goes without saying that Academic Honesty is expected on the Quizzes. No “group-quiz-taking” or sharing of answers is allowed. To discourage dishonesty, each quiz is randomly generated from a bank of questions. No two quizzes are alike.

Exams

There will be 4 exams. 3 are given at the end of each module, covering a section of the class. Though these exams are not cumulative, you may be asked to compare previous era’s with ones covered on the test. The 4th is the Final Exam.

Exams are given via Blackboard. The grading module will open at midnight the 1st day of the week, and will close at 11:59pm at the end of the week. You must complete the quiz during that time frame. You will have one 75 minute opportunity during that window to complete the exam. You cannot “come and go” from the exam. Once you enter the exam do not hit back, log out, shut down, or do anything else on your computer. If you do so, you will not be allowed back into the exam and you will receive a 0 (zero) for that exam. Your grade will be automatically given to you at the completion of the exam.

It goes without saying that Academic Honesty is expected on the Exams. No “group-test-taking” or sharing of answers is allowed. To discourage dishonesty, each exam is randomly generated from a bank of questions. No two exams are alike.
### Module 1

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Online Chapter</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Discussion Due</th>
<th>Assessment Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, June 9</td>
<td>What is Performance?</td>
<td>CH 1</td>
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<td>Quiz 1 &amp; Syllabus</td>
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<td>Sunday, June 9</td>
<td>The Text</td>
<td>Ch 2</td>
<td>2a, 2b</td>
<td>CH 2</td>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, June 9</td>
<td>Who Decides What is a Good Performance</td>
<td>Ch 3</td>
<td>3a, 3b</td>
<td>CH 3</td>
<td>Quiz 3</td>
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<td>Sunday, June 9</td>
<td>Where Can Performance Be Done</td>
<td>Ch 4</td>
<td>4a, 4b</td>
<td>CH 4</td>
<td>Quiz 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, June 9</td>
<td>Shakespeare Behind Bars</td>
<td>Video</td>
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<td>Shakespeare</td>
<td>Quiz Shakespeare</td>
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<td>Monday, June 10</td>
<td>Into the Woods</td>
<td>Video</td>
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<td>Tuesday, June 11</td>
<td>Module Exam 1</td>
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### Module 2

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<td>Wednesday, June 12</td>
<td>Playwrights</td>
<td>CH 5</td>
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<td>Thursday, June 13</td>
<td>Directors</td>
<td>CH 6</td>
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<td>Quiz 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, June 14</td>
<td>Scenic/Costume Designers</td>
<td>CH 7</td>
<td>7a, 7b</td>
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<td>Monday, June 17</td>
<td>Lighting/Sound/Technical Production</td>
<td>Ch 8</td>
<td>8a, 8b</td>
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<td>Quiz 8</td>
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<td>Tuesday, June 18</td>
<td>Actors</td>
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<td>Wednesday, June 19</td>
<td>Behind the Scenes</td>
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<td>Thursday, June 20</td>
<td>Rent</td>
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<td>The Play</td>
<td>Ch 10 &amp; 11</td>
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<td>Tuesday, June 25</td>
<td>Musical Theatre</td>
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<td>Wednesday, June 26</td>
<td>Film and Popular Entertainment</td>
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<td>Quiz 13 &amp; 14</td>
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<td>Thursday, June 27</td>
<td>Sing Faster</td>
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<td>Friday, June 28</td>
<td>True West</td>
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<td>Wednesday, July 3</td>
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