

Text Analysis for Theatre

THEA 2367 (CRN 81729)
Fall 2017, MWF, 10:00-10:50 a.m.
Dan Rather Communications Building 125

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Catalogue Description

This course examines the methodology for analyzing dramatic masterworks primarily as tools for the theatre craftsman and emphasizes the importance of this practical skill for actors, directors, designers and playwrights. While focusing on the dramatic structure of a script in various plays, this course will concurrently examine the playwright's social and cultural milieu. Credit 3. Prerequisite: THEA 1364.

Course Description

This course examines both the theoretical foundations and practical skills needed by theatre practitioners to analyze scripts in order to bring them to life on stage.

As indicated by the attached itinerary, Mondays will be lecture/discussions; every Wednesday is a due date for an assigned reading and writing ("analytic"), which then will be discussed; Fridays will be reserved for guests, library tours, and special events.

There are two different Text Analysis classes this semester: the 10:00 is taught by Dr. McTier and the 1:00 by Dr. Lantz. While there are many similarities between the two classes, there also are some differences that affect content, scheduling, and assessment.

Course Objectives

- To discover the tools necessary for thorough script analysis over a wide range of dramatic styles and genres.
- To make the analysis of plays a practical tool for making informed, creative choices to utilize in production.
- To understand key dramatic theories that have defined and challenged our understanding of dramatic texts and genres.
- To understand how people may have profoundly different interpretations of and critical responses to a text based on their own personal and cultural contexts.
- To be able to locate and use hard copy and online resources that will enrich class studies and research for production.
- To understand how text analysis can prepare you for other performance-related paths and careers.
- To be able to articulate interpretation of text individually and collaboratively as theatre practitioners.

Required Texts/Required Readings

- Ball's *Backwards and Forwards*
- Diaz's *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*
- Glaspell's *Trifles*
- Gunderson's *Silent Sky*
- Kushner's *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*
- Park's *The America Play*
- Shakespeare's *Hamlet*
- Sophocles' *Antigone* (Fitts/Fitzgerald, trans.)
- Wedekind's *Spring Awakening* (Franzen trans.)

Do not purchase any of these titles until you check Blackboard for availability and accessibility.

Graded Components

Course grade is based on a 1000-point system.

A=900-1000, B=800-899, C=700-799, D=600-699, F=0-599

- 40% from 8 assigned readings (50 pts for each “Analytic”)
- 30% from 4 projects (75 points each)
- 20% from 2 in-class exams (100 points each)
- 10% for class participation (100 points max)

The tentative itinerary indicates when each item is due.

Bonus Points

- 1 point (“tasty treat”) for each “on time” class (40 points max)
- 5 points for each season production attended (25 points max)

Assigned Readings: Analytics

For each assigned reading, you will submit an “analytic” demonstrating that you have read the assignment and are prepared to discuss it in class. Each analytic is worth 50 points and will be posted on Blackboard at least a week in advance of its due date.

Projects

There will be four projects: library, dramaturgy, design, and “wild card.” Each project is worth 75 points and will be posted on Blackboard at least a week in advance of its due date.

Exams

There will be two written, in-class exams: one at mid-term (Oct. 11) and another during the final exam period (Dec. 4). Each exam is worth 100 points. For both exams, you may use your own class notes.

Participation

Your participation in class is worth 10% of your final course grade (up to 100 points). Positives: being on time, alert, engaged, responsive, tactful, thoughtful, relevant, appropriate, etc. Negatives: being late, disengaged, dominating discussion, being distracted by your cell phone or other media, not taking notes, chatting with each other, etc.

Attendance

By university policy for classes that meet three times each week (MWF classes), you may not be penalized for up to 3 absences, nor for any absence due to pre-approved religious observance; beyond that depends on the instructor’s discretion. After 3 absences, you will be penalized -30 points for each excess absence.

If there is legitimate reason for excess absence, please submit your documentation to the Office of the Dean of Students (in the LSC), which then will notify me. All documentation must be submitted to the Dean’s Office within one week of the absence.

Late & Makeup Work

You may make up a test or submit a project or analytic late only if you have legitimate and documented reason approved by the Dean’s Office.

Any project submitted late for other reason will be penalized one letter grade (-10% of item grade).

Classroom Conduct

Food and candy are not permitted in the classroom. Beverages are permitted as long as they are in spill-proof containers. Unless otherwise noted, laptops and tablets are not permitted. Please turn off cell phones and refrain

from texting during class. Students who cannot refrain from using their cell phones during class should expect a participation grade of zero (0). Cell phones are not an effective means of taking notes.

Final Exam

Your final exam is scheduled for Monday, December 4, from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. Location TBA.

Office Meetings & Availability

If you have questions or concerns related to this class, you are encouraged to arrange an office meeting with me. A brief question before or after class is fine; however, anything substantial should be addressed at another time, when I am not setting up or striking class. Please realize that I have a personal and professional life beyond SHSU and am not available 24/7. Please allow 24 hours response time for email and voice mail.

Academic Dishonesty

Any incident of academic dishonesty, most notably submitting someone else's work with your name on it, will result in a grade of zero for the project as well as a report to the department chair. Any subsequent incident will result in automatic course failure and a report to the Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication and the Dean of Students.

Plagiarism is not a matter of opinion. If you copy and paste without citing or even paraphrase, then you have plagiarized. If you do so, you will receive a zero (0) for the assignment and will be reported to our department chair.

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy

A student desiring to miss a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) should present a written statement concerning the religious holiday to me at least 2 weeks before the absence. I will then notify the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments are to be completed.

Students with Disabilities Policy

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance should register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Lee Drain Annex (telephone 936-294-3512, TDD 936-294-3786, and e-mail disability@shsu.edu). They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Services for Students with Disabilities. For a complete listing of the university policy, see:

<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/811006.pdf>