

Text Analysis for Theatre

THEA 2367 (CRN 23002)
Spring 2018
MWF, 10:00-10:50 a.m.
CJ A-201

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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 assignment (analytic or project), which then will be discussed; Fridays will be reserved for guests, library tours, team work, and special events.

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* (This is a very short textbook; the others are plays.)
- Diaz's *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*
- Glaspell's *Trifles*
- Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*
- 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.

Point System

Course grade is based on a 1000-point system. Blackboard will keep a running total of all your accrued points.

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

Graded Components

- 40% from 8 analytics (50 points each)
- 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 UTC production attended (30 points max)

Analytics (40%)

For each of the eight assigned readings, 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; guidelines will be posted on Blackboard at least one week in advance of its due date.

Projects (30%)

There will be four projects: library, reading list, dramaturgy, and design. Each project is worth 75 points; guidelines will be posted on Blackboard at least two weeks in advance of its due date. Note: the dramaturgy project is a team project; however, your grade for that project is individually based.

Exams (20%)

There will be two written, in-class exams: one at mid-term (March 7) and another during the last week of classes (May 2). Each exam is worth 100 points. For both exams, you may use your own notes and handouts.

Participation (10%)

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 laptop, not taking notes, chatting, disrespecting others, 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 an absence, please submit your documentation to the Dean of Students Office (in the LSC), which then will notify all of your professors. All documentation must be submitted to the Dean’s Office within one week of the absence. Department Chair Kris Hanssen will notify me of theatre-related absences.

You do not need to contact, call, or email me if you are going to be absent or late. I don’t excuse any absences; rather, I leave that to the Dean’s Office. This absolves me from any chance of unfairness or inconsistency.

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) for each week overdue. (This is different from my policy last semester.)

Remember that you have an assignment due every Wednesday all semester, except during spring break.

Classroom Conduct

Food and candy are not permitted in the classroom. Beverages are permitted as long as they are in spill-proof containers. Although recent research has indicated that handwritten notes best serve most students, you may take notes on your laptops and notebooks; however, cell phones are not an effective means of taking notes. 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 very low participation grade.

Final Exam

There is no meeting or final exam during the final exams week.

Office Meetings & Availability

If you have questions or concerns related to this class, you are encouraged to arrange an office meeting with me. The best way is to sign up for an appointment time on my office door. 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 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 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>

THEA 2367: TENTATIVE ITINERARY

JAN	19	FRI	Syllabus		
	22	MON	Lecture #1	Aristotle	
	24	WED	Analytic #1 (50 pts)	<i>Antigone</i>	
	26	FRI		Library Tour (First Half of Class)	
	29	MON	Lecture #2	Genres & ISMs	
	31	WED	Analytic #2 (50 pts)	<i>Backwards & Forwards: Part 1 (Shape)</i>	
FEB	2	FRI		Library Tour (Second Half of Class)	
	5	MON	Lecture #3	Structure: Formats & Formulas	
	7	WED	Project #1 (75 pts)	Library Project	
	9	FRI		In-class reading of <i>Trifles</i>	
	12	MON	Lecture #4	Language: Prose vs. Verse	
	14	WED	Analytic #3 (50 pts)	<i>Backwards & Forwards: Part 2 (Methods)</i>	
	16	FRI			
	19	MON	Lecture #5	Translations & Adaptations	
	21	WED	Analytic #4 (50 pts)	<i>Chad Deity</i>	<i>Lady Windermere's Fan</i>
	23	FRI			
	26	MON	Lecture #6	Online Resources	
	28	WED	Project #2 (75 pts)	Reading List Project	KCACTF Region 6 Festival
MAR	2	FRI			
	5	MON	Review for Exam		
	7	WED	Exam #1 (100 pts)		
	9	FRI			
				SPRING BREAK	
	19	MON	Lecture #7	Dramaturgy	
	21	WED	Analytic #5 (50 pts)	<i>Spring Awakening</i>	<i>Clybourne Park</i>
	23	FRI			
	26	MON	Lecture #8	Critical Perspectives	
	28	WED	Analytic #6 (50 pts)	<i>Curious Incident</i>	
	30	FRI		NO CLASS: GOOD FRIDAY	
APR	2	MON	Lecture #9	Libretti & Screenplays	
	4	WED	Project #3 (75 pts)	Dramaturgy Project	
	6	FRI			
	9	MON	Lecture #10	Aesthetics & Design	
	11	WED	Analytic #7 (50 pts)	<i>Angels in America</i>	<i>Director Debut</i>
	13	FRI			
	16	MON	Lecture #11	Non-Aristotelean Approaches	
	18	WED	Analytic #8 (50 pts)	<i>The America Play</i>	<i>Pippin</i>
	20	FRI			
	23	MON	Lecture #12	New Directions	
	25	WED	Project #4 (75 pts)	Design Project	
	27	FRI		Design Project	
	30	MON	Review for Exam		
MAY	2	WED	Exam #2 (100 pts)		
	4	FRI			