

THTR 212-002 From Page To Stage  
Tuesday/Thursday 10:00am–11:20am  
Kupfrian Hall, Rm 110

Instructor: Courtney Self  
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Office Hours: Tuesday 1-3pm or by appointment  
Office: Kupfrian Hall, Room 133

## **Course Description**

**From Page To Stage** endeavors to equip the student with an understanding of dramatic literature and its analysis. The work in this class will involve reading of plays and its analysis, readings and lectures on the 'how-to' of play analysis and theatrical process, discussion on plays and readings in class, and attending performances outside of class. This course will also examine how play analysis gets applied in all areas and jobs in theatremaking.

## **Course Objective**

The objective of this course is to provide students with the tools needed to understand the how, what, and why of a play in order to analyze and discuss it effectively. In addition, the hope is that these tools will foster a greater enjoyment of the experience of theatre as well as an enhanced ability to express what is or isn't effective, in their view, of any given production/play. Beyond formal theatre events, the lessons taught in this course also follow story structure in any format, including 'in real life' situations that will enable a student to dig deeper into human experience in general.

## **Course Outcomes**

By the end of this course, students will have made progress toward:

- demonstrated knowledge within a play of story structure, plot, characters, language, genre, and style
- increased knowledge of theatrical process, from the writing stage, through rehearsals, to production
- demystifying ideas behind what makes a play 'good' or 'bad' by learning frameworks through which to examine a play
- gaining confidence in speaking within a group about a play and the ideas within them
- learning how to collaborate with a group and provide constructive feedback that leads to new ideas and positive action steps

## **Class Policies**

**Attendance:** Attendance is a vital aspect of this course. Theatre is experiential and communal; our work in this course will be no different. Lateness and absences will be reflected in your grade. You will be allowed two absences over the course of the semester. Every subsequent absence will result in a 3% drop in your final grade. In other words, I am giving you two excused absences without requiring any proof from you—but this also means that you must ‘use’ these absences only when there actually is an emergency and you are physically unable to attend. Please note that any work that is due on those days is still due and any in-class quiz or presentation still requires attendance in class in order to fulfill that assignment.

If you believe you have a reason that qualifies your absence as excused after your allotted two absences, a note is needed from the Dean of Students. Please note that your previous two absences without a note from the Dean of Students will no longer be unexcused and will result in the 3% drop in your final grade for every absence beyond the ones that are accompanied by a letter from the Dean of Students.

Please make every effort to contact me before any class you have to miss. If you are feeling sick, please do not attend class in-person. Email me at least 2 hours before class and I will give you a zoom link to attend remotely. You cannot attend remotely for any reason other than being sick. Attendance virtually if you are sick will not count as absences for up to two virtual classes. Beyond that, it is subject to the 3% drop in final grade.

Note: You are required to attend *Legally Blonde* February 28-March 3. More information will be provided later in this document.

**Participation:** Related to the importance of attendance, participation is critical to success in this course. We will be reading aloud plays and writings, sharing our viewpoints, and challenging ourselves to think outside the box and use the tools given in the lessons. I promise to foster an environment of curiosity and openness if you promise to approach the class with effort and bravery.

**Communication:** Reaching out to me as soon as you know of any concerns or problems is very important. I know that extenuating circumstances happen and I am committed to finding a way to best help all of us through this course whenever possible. This means I must get communication from you as soon as you think there may be an issue. Please reach out to me—email is typically best, but I am available to chat briefly after class (typically) and during my office hours and by appointment.

**Consent and Respect:** I work to create a room welcome to everyone and rooted in tolerance. Disrespect toward anyone in the classroom will not be tolerated. If an event occurs that makes you feel unsafe or disrespected, please let me know so it can be addressed.

**Anti-Racism:** Racism is systemically a part of our society and I will be working hard to dismantle these practices where I find them. We may be addressing issues of race within this course. I welcome any feedback about ways I can be more effective in this process.

**Questions/Concerns:** Always feel free to visit me during office hours or email me with any questions/concerns. If there is something you aren't comfortable communicating with me directly, please use the 'Anonymous Question Form' in Canvas and I will respond in a subsequent class for everyone.

**Missing or Late Assignments:** Missing or late work will not be accepted. If you feel you have legitimate circumstances that prevented you from finishing your work on time, please reach out to both me and the Dean of Students to discuss if there might be appropriate options.

**Academic Integrity:** *Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found at: [NJIT Academic Integrity Code](#).*

*Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university. If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at [dos@njit.edu](mailto:dos@njit.edu)*

**Land Acknowledgement:** We acknowledge that NJIT is located on stolen land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Lenni-Lenape people. Lenni-Lenape literally translates to "Men of Men" but is taken as "Original People." (<https://nanticoke-lenape.info/history.htm>) To learn more about the Lenni-Lenape people, visit <https://nanticoke-lenape.info/>.

**Texts:** All readings and plays will be available digitally on Canvas. If you would like a physical copy of any book or play we are using, let me know and I can help you find a physical copy to print or purchase.

Excerpts from: *A Student Guide to Play Analysis* by David Rush

*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansbury

*Antigone* by Sophocles

*The Flick* by Annie Baker

*Our Town* by Thornton Wilder

*Drowning* by Maria Irene Fornes

*Legally Blonde the Musical*, book of the musical adaptation by Heather Hach

**Additional Costs:** \$15 for a ticket to see *Legally Blonde* Feb 28-March 3. You can purchase tickets at the door or online [HERE](#) (buying in advance online is the preferred way to make sure you secure a ticket).

**Grading Breakdown:**

Participation/Attendance: 30%

Quizzes: 18%

Short Answer Papers: 15%

Play Analysis Paper: 12%

Final Presentation: 25%

**Final Grades:**

A = 90 – 100 B+ = 87 – 90 B = 80 – 87 C+ = 77 – 80 C = 70 – 77 D = 60 – 70 F = 0 – 60

**Schedule** (*syllabus subject to change*):

**WEEK ONE:**

1/18: Introductions, Going over syllabus

**WEEK TWO:**

1/23: 'How to Look at a Play,' **DUE: Introduction (pgs 1-18)**

1/25: Quiz #1; **DUE: *A Raisin in the Sun***; Discuss the play

**WEEK THREE:**

1/30: Structural Components: 'What is a Play?'; **DUE: Chapter 1 (pgs 19-34)**

2/1: Structural Components: Plot; **DUE: Chapter 2 & 3 (pgs 35-67)**

#### WEEK FOUR:

2/6: **DUE: Short Answer Paper #1**; Continue discussions of Plot

2/8: Structural Components: Characters and Language; **DUE: Chapter 4 & 5 (pgs 68-93)**

#### WEEK FIVE:

2/13: Quiz #2; **DUE: *Antigone***; Discuss the play

2/15: Genres: Classic Tragedy; **DUE: Chapter 6 (pgs 95-112)**

#### WEEK SIX:

2/20: Genres: Classic Comedy; **DUE: Short Answer Paper #2 and Chapter 7 (pgs 113-139)**

2/22: Quiz #3; **DUE: *Legally Blonde***; Discuss the musical

#### WEEK SEVEN:

2/27: Genres: Farce and Alternate Genres; **DUE: Chapter 9 & 10 (pgs 155-182)**; Cont. discussing *Legally Blonde*

*Extra Credit: Read Genres: Melodrama (pgs 140-154) and discuss with class*

Reminder: Go see *Legally Blonde* Feb. 28-March 3!!

2/29: Styles: Realism; **DUE: Chapter 11 (pgs 183-204)**

#### WEEK EIGHT:

3/5: **DUE: *Legally Blonde* Response Paper**; Post-Mortem on *Legally Blonde* production

3/7: Styles: Expressionism & Epic Theater; **DUE: Chapter 13 (pgs 216-229) and Chapter 15 (pgs 242-259)**

#### WEEK NINE:

3/12: SPRING BREAK

3/14: SPRING BREAK

## WEEK TEN:

3/19: Quiz #4; Styles: Postmodernism; **DUE: *Drowning* and Chapter 12 (pgs 205-215)**; Discuss the play

3/21: **DUE: Chapter 16 (pgs 260-277)**

*Extra Credit: Read Styles: Theater of the Absurd (pgs 230-241) and discuss with class*

## WEEK ELEVEN:

3/26: Quiz #5; **DUE: *The Flick***; Discuss the Play

3/28: **DUE: Short Answer Paper #3**; Discuss Play Analysis Paper assignment

## WEEK TWELVE:

4/2: Quiz #6; **DUE: *Our Town***; Discuss the play

4/4: Discuss Final Group Presentation and set groups

## WEEK THIRTEEN:

4/9: Discuss how Play Analysis affects different theatre industry jobs

4/11: **DUE: Play Analysis Paper Draft**; Discuss how Play Analysis affects different theatre industry jobs

## WEEK FOURTEEN:

4/16: Discuss Play Analysis Papers and Work on Final Group Presentation

4/18: Work on Final Group Presentation

## WEEK FIFTEEN:

4/23: Work on Final Group Presentation

4/25: **DUE: Play Analysis Paper**; Work on Final Group Presentation

## WEEK SIXTEEN:

4/30: Final Presentations in class