

THTR 315-02 - Theatre History II
M/W 10:00a-11:20a
Kupfrian Hall, Rm 110

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Course Description

Study of theatre history from post- Renaissance Europe to present. Dramatic literature will be related to the historical events that influenced theatrical style, political movements, and technical advancements in society.

Course Objective

This class explores theater history using dramatic texts. We will examine the impact theater has in shaping society and vice versa. This is a Writing Across the Curriculum Class for Rutgers, so a strong emphasis is placed on organizing and writing papers.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to

- articulate the various conventions of plays written in the 19th and 20th centuries.
- to identify the intentions of various theater artists and how they relate to the historical context that surrounds their work.
- explain the timeline of the theatrical movements studied in class.
- develop an empathetic understanding to the characters in the plays and understand the character's intentions.
- Analyze and critique a performance to acknowledge the influences that shaped it.

Prerequisites

HUM 101 and HUM 102 or HUM 211 or HUM 212 or HIST 213.

Class Policies

Attendance: Attendance is important for this course as most of the coursework will be discussions happening in class. Lateness and unexcused absences will be reflected in your grade. To get absences excused, a note is needed from the Dean of Students. If there are mitigating circumstances, contact me before the class you will miss. If you are running late, please text me to let me know. If you are feeling sick, please do not attend class in-person. Email me 2 hours before class for a zoom link, and you can attend remotely. You cannot attend remotely for any reason other than being sick.

Consent and Respect: I actively cultivate a room that is welcome for everyone and is grounded in consent. Consent may be given and revoked at any time. Disrespect towards your peers will not be tolerated. If a misstep or action has occurred that makes you feel unsafe or disrespected, please let me know and I will address it.

Anti-Racism: I acknowledge that racism is systemically a part of our culture and am doing my best to dismantle these practices where I find them. Note that we will be discussing some sensitive topics in this class regarding race and marginalized communities. I welcome any and all feedback about ways I can be more effective in this process. If you have concerns about these particular days of class when we address these topics, please reach out to me and I will do my best to accommodate your needs.

Land Acknowledgment: We acknowledge that NJIT and Rutgers University are located on stolen land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, specifically the Lenni-Lenape. While many Lenni-Lenape people were forcibly removed from their homelands, they are still an active part of New Jersey culture and society. To learn more about the Lenni-Lenape people, visit nanticoke-lenape.info

Questions/Concerns: If you have a question or concern you are not comfortable communicating to me directly, please use the “Anonymous Question Form” in Canvas and I will respond to question or concern at the next class for everyone.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty. If you have a letter from DoS, the penalty may be removed. If you have mitigating circumstances that keep you from completing an assignment, please reach out to talk to me about it.

Honor Code: “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: <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>. 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” **Using AI or ChatGPT on written assignments can and will be considered plagiarism.**

Costs and Texts

The Norton Anthology of Drama Vol. 2 (3rd Edition)

Additional Articles and Plays (Provided on Canvas)

Approximately \$25-60 for theater tickets

Assignments

Quizzes: There will be a group quiz at the start of class once a week. The quizzes will cover the reading material. You will work in groups of 4 or 5 to complete the quiz. Quizzes that are missed due to excused absences (with note from Dean of Students) may be made up. You may also make up 1 additional missed quiz due to an unexcused absence or lateness.

Research Paper: You will choose a topic within the range of the subject matter for this class that you wish to explore further. An example could be “Is Chekhov Still Relevant Today?” Or “How the Theatre of the Absurd Influenced Modern Playwrights”. The paper will be 8-10 pages long, with 5 outside sources, noted in a bibliography at the end of the paper. MLA format.

Group Project: You will work in a group to create a 5-8 minute presentation about an additional play within the subject course matter. These presentations should have visual components and a list of sources. You will also hand in a copy of your presentation with an explanation of everyone’s role in putting together the project.

Performances: You are required to see 2 live performances and write a 2-3 page reflection paper for each one. This paper should not be a summary of the show, but rather a critical analysis about the show from a historical viewpoint. Were there elements or themes you recognized from the plays we have read? If you have a barrier with this, please talk to me so I can accommodate you.

Exams: There will be a midterm and final exam on the materials we have learned. You are allowed one 8.5” x 11” handwritten sheet of notes for each of these exams.

Grading Breakdown

Attendance/Participation - 20%

Group Project - 15%

Quizzes - 10%

Performance Papers - 10%

Research Paper - 15%

Mid-Term -15%

Final - 15%

Grade Breakdown

A : 90%<

B+ : 88% - 89%

B: 80% - 87%

C+: 78% - 79%

C: 70% - 77%

D: 60% - 69%

F: > 60%

Schedule

Syllabus subject to change.

1/17 - Welcome and Intro

1/22 - Recap of Theater History I

1/24 - Peking Opera, **Read Excerpt from *The Peony Pavilion* (on Canvas)**

1/29 Romanticism and Melodrama, **Read Norton Pg. 54-59**

1/31 - Romanticism and Melodrama, cont. **Read *Woyzeck* by Georg Büchner** (Norton)

2/5 - Realism and Naturalism, **Read Norton Pg. 60-61**

2/7 - Realism and Naturalism, cont. **Read *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen** (Norton)

2/12 - Russian Theater, **Read Norton Pg. 59-60**

2/14 - Russian Theater, cont. **Read *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov** (Norton)

2/19 - Revolt against Realism: Expressionism, Futurism, Dadaism, **Read Norton Pg. 62-63**

2/21 - Revolt against Realism, cont. **Read *Machinal* by Sophie Treadwell** (Norton)

2/26 - Minstrelsy, Burlesque, and Vaudeville, **Read Lemons Article (on Canvas)**

2/28 - Takarazuka, **Read Berlin Article (on Canvas)**

Legally Blonde 2/28-3/3, Jim Wise Theatre, Kupfrian Hall, \$15

3/4 - Review for Midterm

3/6- Midterm Exam

Spring Break 3/11-3/15

3/18 - The Postwar World, Epic Theater, **Read Norton Pg. 63-64, 67-72**
1st Performance Paper DUE

3/20 - The Postwar World, cont. **Read *The Good Woman of Setzuan* by Bertolt Brecht**
(Norton)

Topics for Research Paper DUE

3/25 - Existentialism, Theater of the Absurd

3/27 - Existentialism, cont. **Read *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett** (Norton)

4/1 - Harlem Renaissance, Black Theatre, **Read Norton pgs. 74-75,
Sources for Research Paper DUE**

4/3 - Harlem Renaissance, Black Theatre cont. **Read *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine
Hansberry** (Norton)

4/8 - Theatre of the Oppressed and Theatre of the Poor, **Read Augusto Boal Interview** (on
Canvas)

4/10 - Latinx Theatre, **Read *Fefu and Her Friends* by María Irene Fornés** (Canvas)
First Draft of Research Paper DUE

4/15 - Nigerian Theatre, Post-colonialism, **Read Norton pgs. 77-80
Peer Review of First Draft of Final Paper DUE**

4/17 - South African Theatre, **Read *Death and the King's Horseman* by Wole Soyinka** (Norton)

*Closing Night Party: The Alumni Project 4/17-4/21 Black Box Theatre, 110 Warren St. RU-N
Campus, \$15*

4/22 - Queer Theater and Performance Art, **Read Miller Article** (on Canvas)

4/24 - Queer Theater and Performance Art, cont., **Read *Angels in America: Part 1 Millennium
Approaches* by Tony Kushner** (Norton)

4/29 - Review for final exam, **Research Paper DUE**

TBD - Final Exam

5/8 - (no class) **2nd Performance Paper DUE,
LAST DAY THAT ALL LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED**