

THTR 212-001 From Page to Stage
M/W 10:00–11:20a
Kupfrian Hall, Rm. 110

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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 theatre-making.

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 Outcome

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 important for this course as most of the coursework will be discussions happening in class. Lateness, early departures, 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. Note: You are required to see *Amelie*, Apr. 10-12th.

Participation: For this class you may be asked to read out loud in class and do some acting. While I do not expect it to be award-winning caliber, I do expect you to make an effort. Please bring a device to class that allows you to easily access the plays we are discussing.

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. We will be addressing issues of race within this course. I welcome any and all feedback about ways I can be more effective in this process.

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.

Missing or Late Assignments: Missing or late assignments will not be accepted without communication. If you have mitigating circumstances that prevented you from completing an assignment, please reach out to me so we can discuss options. You can make up a missed quiz if you have a note from the Dean of Students.

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” Please note that using AI and ChatGPT to write papers is considered academic misconduct and will be dealt with accordingly.

Texts

A Student Guide to Play Analysis by David Rush

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams (on Canvas)

A Nice Indian Boy by Madhuri Shekar (on Canvas)

Eurydice by Sarah Ruhl (on Canvas)

Amelie by Craig Lucas (on Canvas)

Sweat by Lynn Nottage (on Canvas)

Philip Glass Buys a Loaf of Bread by David Ives (on Canvas)

[PORTO] by Kate Benson (on Canvas)

True West by Sam Shepard (on Canvas)

Additional Costs

\$35 - Lincoln Center’s Production of *Ghosts* 2/13-4/13

\$15 - Tickets for NJIT Production of *Amelie* 4/10-4/12

Assignments

Quizzes: There will be an in-class quiz to assess your familiarity with each play covered in the course. If you are absent the day of the quiz and have a note from the Dean of Students, you can make it up, but it must be within one week of the original quiz date.

Play Analysis Paper: You will attend 2 live plays over the course of the semester and write a 2-3 page response paper to each of them. One will be *Ghosts* at Lincoln Center and one of them will be *Amelie*. These papers should not be a summary of the show, but rather an analysis of what you noticed about the show. Based on what we have discussed in class, what did you notice? What surprised you in the show? And finally, did you like it? Why or why not?

Final Paper: The final project of the class will be 5-7 page play analysis paper on *True West*. It should incorporate all the concepts we have covered over the semester.

Presentation: There will one group presentation at the end of the semester that examines the final play from the perspective of a theatre role (director, actor, designer, etc).

Extra Credit: Work a minimum of 5 hrs on *Amelie* in some capacity. You can help with sets, costumes, ushering (2 performances), etc. This will earn you an additional 2% for your grade. You cannot work 10 hrs and get 4%, but you are welcome to work more hours if you wish.

Grading Breakdown

Attendance/Participation 30%

Quizzes - 20%

Play Analysis Papers - 10%

Presentation - 15%

Final Paper - 25%

Grade Breakdown

A : 90%<

B+ : 88% - 89%

B: 80% - 87%

C+: 78% - 79%

C: 70% - 77%

D: 60% - 70%

F: > 60%

Schedule

Syllabus subject to change.

1/22: Introductions, Syllabus Review, What is Theatre?

1/27: How to Look at a Play, **Due: Introduction (pgs 1-18)**

1/29: Quiz #1 Discussion of Play **Due: *A Glass Menagerie***

2/3: Structural Components: 'What is a Play?' **Due: Chpt. 1 (pgs 19-34)**

2/5: Structural Components: Plot **Due: Chpt. 2-3 (pgs. 35-67)**

2/10: Structural Components: Plot, cont.

2/12: Structural Components: Characters and Language **Due: Chpt. 4-5 (pgs 68-93)**

2/12 - Newark Playwrights Festival - 7:30, Jim Wise Theatre, Free

2/17: Genres: Classic Tragedy, **Due: Chpt. 6 (pgs 95-112)**

2/19: Quiz #2, Discussion of Play, **Due: *Eurydice***

2/24: Discussion of Play

2/26: Genres: Classic Comedy, **Due Chpt. 7 (pgs 113-139)**

3/3: Quiz #3, Discussion of Play, **Due: *A Nice Indian Boy***

3/5: Styles: Realism; **Due: Chpt. 11 (pgs 183-204)**

3/10: Quiz #4, Discussion of Play, **Due: *Sweat***

3/12: Discussion of Play, **Due: *Ghosts* Analysis Paper**

3/17-3/21 - Spring Break

3/24: Genres: Melodrama, Farce, & Others **Due: Chpt. 8-10 (pgs 155-182)**

3/26: Quiz #5, Discussion Play, **Due: *Amelie***

3/31: Discussion of Play

4/2: Styles: Symbolism and Expressionism, **Due: Chpt. 12-13 (pgs 205-229)**

4/7: Quiz #6 Discuss Play **Due: *[PORTO]***

4/9: Discussion of Play

4/10-4/12 - Amelie, Jim Wise Theatre, \$15

4/14: *Amelie* Post-Mortem

4/16: Styles: Post-Modernism, Discussion of Play **Due: Chpt. 16 (pgs 260-277), *Amelie* Analysis Paper**

4/21: Quiz #7, Discuss Play **Due: *Philip Glass Buys a Loaf of Bread***

4/23: Discussion of Play, Final Project introduction

4/28: Quiz #8, Discuss Play, **Due: *True West***

4/30: Work on Group Presentations, In-class Peer Reviews of papers, **Due: Rough draft of final paper**

5/5: Last Day of Class, **Class Presentations**

5/12: (NO CLASS) Final Paper Due

5/14: (NO CLASS) - LAST DAY FOR ALL LATE WORK