

THEATRE APPRECIATION

THE2000 - Summer 2024
Web-Asynchronous
Tom Vazquez (Lead Instructor)

Instructor

Hello and welcome to Theatre Appreciation! My name is Tom Vazquez (he/him) and I will be your instructor this semester. My Zoom office hours are by appointment. Please email me to set up a time to talk if you need.

I can be contacted by email at thomasvazquez@ufl.edu.

Because of the size of the class, grading is done by my teaching assistants (TA's). If you have questions about grades or extensions on specific assignments, you should contact them directly. To find contact information for the TA assigned to you, click on the page "How to Contact Your TA" in this module. If you have questions about the course, quizzes, or just theatre in general, contact me.

Most of the questions to your answers are located in the syllabus. Look through this module thoroughly for answers to your questions before you reach out.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to expose you to live theatre so that you will better appreciate its cultural importance and the processes that make live theatre happen. Over the course of the semester, you will look behind the scenes in order to explore the collaborative processes that make live theatre work. In addition to studying some of the literature, theories, history, forms, and styles of theatre, you will explore how influences such as ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and economic class shape the experience of theatre in the United States. You will also learn to write and speak critically about theatrical production. This course fulfills a general education and diversity requirement.

General Education Objectives

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and

approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives. Lectures will provide the framework for understanding the theatrical arts and how they connect to the human experience. Additional instruction will come through textbook and play reading augmented by the watching of live theatre.

General Education Objectives for Humanities (H)

Humanities courses must afford students the ability to think critically through the mastering of subjects concerned with human culture, especially literature, history, art, music, and philosophy, and must include selections from the Western canon.

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General Education Objectives for Diversity

Diversity courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that create cultural differences within the United States. These courses encourage students to recognize how social roles and status affect different groups in the United States. Students are expected to analyze and evaluate their own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures, and to distinguish opportunities and constraints faced by other persons and groups. Lectures will emphasize the struggles and theatrical contributions of marginalized groups while the reading discussion of assigned plays by underrepresented Americans will provide a context for understanding how cultural identity has been created this country.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes

Content: Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline.

Communication: Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline.

Critical Thinking: Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems.

Student learning outcomes will be assessed in various ways. Exams and quizzes on assigned readings will test mastery of content. Communication and critical thinking will be tested through the writing of papers that critique live performance and creative projects that interpret the symbology of theatrical texts.

Course Requirements

In order to be successful in this course, all students must participate fully in the activities listed below:

- Close readings of assigned textbook chapters, plays, and posted material
- Watch video lectures and supplementary videos
- Every week, take a quiz on assigned readings and videos
- Every week, you have to post on class Discussions board based on a prompt I will give you
- View two (2) theatrical performances and write a critique about each one.

- One (1) critique will be about **the Donmar Warehouse production *Julius Caesar* by William Shakespeare**, which you will watch via the Digital Theatre Plus subscription service provided by UF. (<https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/theatreguide>)

To access the Digital Theatre Plus subscription off-campus, you'll need to download the VPN from the UF website to access the platform, and instructions to do this are found under the FAQ section in the Canvas shell. Please reach out sooner rather than later if you are having trouble finding plays to watch. This is not something to troubleshoot at the last minute!

(<https://it.ufl.edu/ict/documentation/network-infrastructure/vpn/>)

- The other production **must be in-person: you must attend the School of Theatre and Dance's summer devised AI production**. You have registered for an online course meant for students in-residence at UF, and that is why this requirement is in place. Tickets for the show are already paid for with the course fees, and you will receive instructions to acquire a coupon to redeem at the box office later in the semester.

If you are absolutely certain that you are unable to attend this production in-person, you must reach out to the instructor of the course (Alina Sunoo: asunoon@ufl.edu) or your TA for an alternative assignment .

- Produce a creative project based on a required play

A full schedule of assignment due dates can be seen by choosing the Calendar button on the left hand side of the screen.

Required Texts

All of the texts below are required. You can purchase any edition of these plays from any source but **get them all at the beginning of the semester**. Don't wait. After a few weeks, unsold books in the campus bookstore are returned to the publishers. No exceptions will be made for students who have ordered texts from third parties and are waiting for delivery. I can't violate copyright laws by sending you pdf versions of plays. Playwrights make very little money -- please support their work.

TEXTBOOK:

Theatrical Worlds - Beta Version (University Press of Florida, 2014). This book was developed in response to the high cost of theatre textbooks which commonly retail between \$90 and \$120 for new editions. [A free pdf version is available](#)

[Links to an external site.](#)

to read online but most students find that a physical copy is easier to read and study. It's your choice.

REQUIRED PLAYS:

I And You by Lauren Gunderson
ISBN: 9781623842772 - Playscripts.com

The Mountaintop by Katori Hall
ISBN: 9780822226031 - Dramatist Play Service

Tiger Style! by Mike Lew
ISBN: 9780822239826 - Dramatist Play Service

Anna in the Tropics by Nilo Cruz
ISBN: 0822220008 – Dramatist Play Service

Kill Move Paradise by James Ijames
ISBN: 9780822240020 - Dramatist Play Service

Angels in America Pt. 1 by Tony Kushner
ISBN: 9781559363846 - Theatre Communications Group

Ten Acrobats In An Amazing Leap Of Faith by Yussef El Guindi
ISBN: 088145754X - Broadway Play Publishing

Some of these plays have epub versions available. Check the publisher's websites for details.

How the Class is Conducted

There is no live component to this course -- it will be conducted entirely online. Instead of going to a classroom, you will do the assigned reading, watch video lectures or listen to audio material.

The course includes the following assignments:

Quizzes: You will take multiple choice/true-false quizzes based on the material assigned.

Discussion Board: You will also be asked to find information or offer ideas and post it for the rest of the class. *Meaningful* posts that are *on topic*, fulfill the requirements, and use college-level writing will receive 10 points. If you are awarded fewer than 10 points, it is usually for the following reasons:

- Lack of depth in your answer
- Opinions that are not supported by details
- Lack of proofreading, i.e. improper spelling, grammar, punctuation
- Using slang or instant message language (ex. lol, omg, yolo etc.)
- The post is off topic or you didn't answer the entire question
- The post is late
- Plagiarism (*see below*)

Papers: You will watch two (2) theatrical performances and write a two-page paper about each one. Guidelines will be provided.

Creative Project: At the end of the semester, you will be responsible for a creative project based on your interpretation of a play. Instructions will be available later in the semester.

Late Work

We are not required to accept late work or provide an extension on quizzes. Should you need an extension due to sickness, please send me and your assigned TA a doctor's note with a formal request. For all other emergencies, late work may be accepted on a case-by-case basis with a penalty. The best way to ensure that your extension is granted is to keep me and your TA updated about your needs as soon as possible. Please update your personal calendar with due dates to make sure that you do not miss any assignments.

Understand Plagiarism

Plagiarism is an Honor Code violation at this university and will not be tolerated. If you plagiarize, I will fail you for the course. Cutting and pasting *any* text from a website without attribution (no matter how much) is plagiarism. That includes plot summaries. I understand getting behind and panicking when due dates arrive but you are better off telling me you screwed up and ask for help rather than risk your academic future. Besides, plagiarism is easy to catch. All of my TA's are trained to find it and we are assisted by very good detection software. Other Honor Code violations include soliciting quiz answers from other students, writing a paper about a show you did not see, or uploading anything from this course to an outside website. The penalty is the same.

So how do you avoid plagiarism? Simple - always cite your sources. It is fine to build upon the ideas of others or use them to support your own argument. All you have to do is give the original thinker credit. Look to reliable sources with some kind of institutional stamp -- a news organization or university entity for example, someone who is invested in the accuracy of the material. Think of yourself as joining a community of thinkers that's been debating since the beginning of time. It's ok to agree with ideas in the community and use them to prove a point. You just need to tell me who said it first. College is not a system to beat. It's a space where, for four years, people like me want to know what you think.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

Make-ups

I will accept makeup work under the following conditions: medical illness documented by a physician; serious family emergency, military obligation, and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g. jury duty or subpoena). For university activities and other events that fall on a deadline, I expect you to complete your work in advance.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

[Links to an external site.](#)

Computer Problems

Computers crash and internet connections fail. If you are having computer problems, please contact the UF Helpdesk:

Walk-in: [HUB 132](#)

[Links to an external site.](#)

Phone: (352) 392-HELP (4357)

I am not a technology guru! If you have any technological issues, I will send you to these capable folks.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at

<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

[Links to an external site.](#)

.I understand it can be an annoyance during a busy part of the semester but it helps me make the class better and hang on to elements that are working.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability that is documented with [the Disability Resource Center](#)

[Links to an external site.](#)

and wish to discuss accommodations, contact me as soon as possible so I can arrange longer times for quizzes. If you have a learning disability that has NOT been documented, contact the DRC at 352-392-8565 or email accessuf@dso.ufl.edu.

Course Outline

Week 1 - Syllabus Quiz

- What is Theatre?
- Shakespeare
- Performative Acts
- Acting
- Focus on *You and I*

Week 2 - Directing

- Stage Pictures
- Paper 1
- Reading a Set

Week 3 -Theatrical Design

- Expressionism & *Kill Move Paradise*
- Midterm
- African American Theatre
- Focus on *The Mountaintop*

Week 4 - American Musical Theatre

- Focus on *Anna in the Tropics*
- Latinx Theatre
- Engaged Theatre

Week 5 - Asian American Theatre

- Focus on *Tiger Style!*
- Focus on *Angels in America Pt 1*
- Gay and Lesbian Theatre

Week 6 - Final Exam

- Paper 2
- Submit Creative Project

Grade Breakdown

Discussion Board Posts:

11 posts @ 10pts each = 110 total points

Quizzes:

THE 2000 Syllabus Quiz, 10pts

Topic Quizzes, 12 @ 20pts each = 240 total points

Production Critiques:

2 Papers @ 20pts each= 40 total points

Final Creative Project: 50 points

It's set up as a point system so you can ignore any group percentages Canvas shows you. The formula is [total points earned] divided by 450 [total points possible]. Any .5 grades are rounded up (ex. 89.5 becomes 90).

I do not curve grades or drop low grades. I round up final grades by .5 only.

Grade Scale

Grading is based upon the scale listed below.

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-63
E	59-0

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points can be found in the online catalog at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>