

THEA 1440.001: Play Analysis
Fall 2007 – Dr. Andrew Harris
TR 9:30 – 10:50 AM

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Office Hours: TR 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

(To schedule an appointment, call during office hours or see me after class.)

In this class, we will ask such questions as: What is theatre? How do we analyze a play? What is the purpose of the plot structure, characterization, language, and stage directions, and how do these elements vary from play to play? We will consider genre classifications and discuss the nature of tragedy and comedy.

We begin with the premise that the script is a score for live performance. The purpose of our analysis as theatre professionals -- actors, directors, designers, playwrights, producers, and scholars – is to be able to read scripts so that we are able to present them to audiences. We seek to discover what the playwright has dramatized and how we can best realize his or her work on stage clearly, powerfully and imaginatively.

TEXTS

- ***Stages of Drama***, ed. Carl H. Klaus, et al. Paperback: 1490 pages, NY: Bedford/St. Martin's; ISBN: 031218333X; 4th edition (January 1999) or 5th edition (2003) ISBN: 031239733x
- Aristotle's ***Poetics*** (in the bookstore and on reserve in Willis)
- William Shakespeare's ***Macbeth*** NY: Folger
- Joan Torres' ***Better Half Dead***, NY: Samuel French
- Andrew B. Harris' ***Broadway Theatre***, NY: Routledge
- Anton Pavlovich Chekhov ***Three Sisters***, A Play. Translated by David Mamet. ISBN 0802132766 (112 pages)

Online

Moliere's *Tartuffe*: <http://www.online-literature.com/moliere/tartuffe-or-the-hypocrite/>

Andrew Harris's *Tar-tuff*: http://www.danceandtheatre.unt.edu/professors_index.htm

Most of the titles read are also available in the Theatre Department's Holland Library located on the 2nd Floor of RTFP across from the Theatre Department's Main Office or in the Willis Library.

CLASS SCHEDULE

All assignments are due the next time class meets unless otherwise indicated.

- Tue, Aug. 28 Introduction. What is drama? What is theatre? Why do we analyze plays? How do we analyze plays? What terms do we use?
Assignment: Terms assignment, due Tuesday September 4th.
- Thu, Aug. 30 Continue introduction. *The Zoo Story* by Albee.
Assignment: *Zoo Story* – finding the beats and the climax. Read *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. Determine group project preferences.
- Tue, Sep. 4 **Quiz 1 – terms and Zoo Story. Terms assignment due. Beats/climax assignment due, group preferences due.** *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles.
Assignment: *Oedipus* plot diagram
- Thu, Sep. 6 Finish *Oedipus*. Discuss *Macbeth* concept project.
Assignment: Read *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare and complete play analysis form. Witches concept assignment.
- Tue, Sep. 11 **Quiz 2 – Oedipus Rex.** Concept assignment due. *Macbeth* discussion. **Play analysis form due.**
Assignment:
- Thu, Sep. 13 *Macbeth* discussion. **1st Group Presentation.**
Assignment: Read *Antigone* by Sophocles.
- Tue, Sep. 18 **Quiz 3 – Macbeth.** *Antigone* discussion.
- Thu, Sep. 20 *Antigone* discussion. **2nd Group Presentation**
Assignment: Read *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen and complete play analysis form.
- Tue, Sep. 25 **Quiz 4 – Antigone.** Realism and *A Doll's House*, the “well-made play.”
Play analysis form due.
Assignment: Well-made play assignment
- Thu, Sep. 27 *A Doll's House* discussion. **3rd Group Presentation**
Assignment: Read *Miss Julie* by August Strindberg and complete play analysis form.
- Tue, Oct. 2 **Quiz 5 – Doll's House.** Expressionism, Naturalism, and *Miss Julie*. **Play analysis form due.**
Assignment:

- Thu, Oct 4 *Miss Julie* in performance. **4th Group Presentation.**
Assignment: Read *Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov and complete play analysis form.
- Tue, Oct. 9 **Quiz 6 – Miss Julie.** Drama/Tragedy and *Three Sisters*. **Play analysis form due.**
Assignment:
- Thu, Oct. 11 *Three Sisters* discussion. Review for Midterm. **5th Group Presentation.**
Assignment: Study! Read the assigned play for the midterm exam. See *SLASHER* and write a review, due on October 23rd!
- Go see...SLASHER**
October 12, 13, 18, 19, & 20 @ 8:00 pm
October 14 & 21 @ 2:30 pm
Studio Theatre
- Tue, Oct. 16 **MIDTERM EXAM**
Assignment: Read *Tartuffe* by Moliere.
- Thu, Oct. 18 High Comedy and Beyond. *Tartuffe* by Moliere.
Assignment: Read Dr. Harris's adaptation, *Tar-tuff*. (Online at the department website!)
- Tue, Oct. 23 **Review of SLASHER due.** Adaptations – *Tar-tuff*. **6th Group Presentation.**
Assignment: Read *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* by Tennessee Williams.
- Thu, Oct. 25 **Quiz 7 – Tartuffe.** *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* discussion.
Assignment:
- Tue, Oct. 30 *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* discussion. **7th Group Presentation.**
Assignment: Read *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller and Ch. 4 of *Broadway Theatre*.
- Thu, Nov. 1 **Quiz 8 – Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.** *Death of a Salesman* discussion.
Assignment:
- Tue, Nov. 6 *Death of a Salesman* discussion. **8th Group Presentation.**
Assignment: Read *Life of Galileo* by Bertolt Brecht.
- Thu, Nov. 8 **Quiz 9 –Death of a Salesman.** *Life of Galileo* discussion.
Assignment: Go see *Antigone* and write a review – due November 20th!

Go see...Antigone
November 9, 10, 15, 16, & 17 @ 8:00 pm
November 11 & 18 @ 2:30 pm
University Theatre

- Tue, Nov. 13 *Life of Galileo* discussion. **9th Group Presentation.**
Assignment: Read *Angels in America: The Millennium Approaches* by Tony Kushner and Ch. 9 in *Broadway Theatre*.
- Thu, Nov. 15 **Quiz 10 – Life of Galileo.** *Angels in America* discussion.
Assignment: Read *Better Half Dead* by Joan Torres.
- Tue, Nov. 20 ***Antigone* review due!** *Better Half Dead* discussion with Joan Torres.
Assignment:
- Thu, Nov. 22 No class – Happy Thanksgiving!
- Tue, Nov. 27 *Angels in America* discussion. **10th Group Presentation.**
Assignment:
- Thu, Nov. 29 **Quiz 11 – Angels in America.** Catch up day.
- Tue, Dec. 4 Review for final exam.
- Thu, Dec. 6 Review for final exam.
- ???, Dec. ? FINAL EXAM

GRADING

Quiz average - 100 points (the lowest grade will be dropped)
6 analytic exercises - 300 points (Each exercise is worth 50 points)
Group Project - 100 points
Homework – 50 points
In-class participation – 50 points
Written Theatre Reviews - 200 points
Midterm Exam -100 points
Final Exam – 100 points

850-1000 points: A
700-849 points: B
600-699 points: C
500-599 points: D
Below 499 points: F

Students entering the Theatre program under the 2004-2005 Catalog and any following catalogs are required to earn a grade of “B” or better for department credit.

ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED IN THIS COURSE. YOU ARE ALLOWED 4 ABSENCES WITHOUT PENALTY. After that, 3 points will be subtracted from your course total for every absence. There are no excused absences, nor can any be made up, so don’t squander your allowed 4.

The Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities (www.unt.edu/csrr) publishes a document entitled “10 Student Academic Rights and Responsibilities.” Among the prohibitions is the following: “Students may not disrupt class or any other University process by any means whatsoever . . .” You should be familiar with this and the 9 other items in this document.

A student who reaches 5 absences by the twelfth class day (September 12) will be dropped from the course for nonattendance.

Lateness policy: If you are more than 5 minutes late to class, do not walk into the classroom. You are absent. If possible, I will have the door closed at that time. When you see a closed door, do not enter. Late arrivals are rude and disruptive, and, therefore, they are banned.

Leaving class early will also count as an official absence. Leaving early is also disruptive and is grounds for administrative withdrawal from the class.

Students are also banned from leaving and returning during class, except for emergencies.

Cell phones, iPods, and other devices must be turned off during class. Do not text message during class. Students using laptops to take notes must sit near the front of the class. Students who use laptops for any use not related to class may be asked to leave, and will lose credit for attendance.

Because of the high demand for this course, students who miss the first class without consent of the instructor are liable to be dropped from the course so that other students may be added.

Policy on “Incomplete” grades: A grade of “Incomplete” for the course will be given only if

- a) the student is passing the course; *and*
- b) the only missing work is the 6th exercise; *and*
- c) the reason it is missing is extended illness or extended family emergency; *and*
- d) the student requests the incomplete in writing.

Important: The incomplete must be made up within the next semester.

Make a copy of any assignment before you turn it in to me. Also, keep all graded work I hand back to you until the end of the semester.

If you need help, please talk to me or the graders! Please inform me of any difficulties you may be having. I will be available during office hours and, if necessary, will make special arrangements.

This syllabus is not a contract. The instructor may change requirements, change the class schedule and change the due dates as he deems appropriate.

ANALYTIC EXERCISES

A form will be provided that should be filled in completely. This form can be downloaded from the Departmental Web Page (see Current Students, Professor’s Page.)

http://www.danceandtheatre.unt.edu/professors_index.htm

No extensions are possible for these assignments because we will use them in class. **They must be brought to the beginning of the first class for which a given play is assigned.** To receive credit, both you and your completed analytic exercise must be present in class. You cannot give it to somebody else to turn in. You must do 6 of these exercises out of a possible 10, beginning with *Macbeth*.

If you hand in more than six, I shall count only your best six and omit the lowest grade (or grades). The more you do, the better you will get at doing them. Please don’t put them off. If you decide you’re going to do only the last plays, I can almost guarantee that circumstances will prevent you. You will undoubtedly have some emergency toward the semester’s end that will keep you from class but you will want to turn in the exercise for that class anyway because you’re behind—remember that you can’t. And if you do only six, I won’t be able to drop your low grades.

Class discussion is important. You are required to read all the plays, **including the introductions** to the plays in the *Stages of Drama* text, come to class with the text, ready for discussion, even if you skip the written assignment.

The purpose of the course is to teach you how to analyze a play so that you will be able to work, communicate, and produce in the theatre. We always encourage library research, but we want to hear from you. Our purpose is to develop interpretive skills rather than to gather facts (or the conclusions of others). Any information you transmit from another source, such as a previous

course or your own reading, must be footnoted. All the work you do in this course must be entirely your own, with the exception of occasional footnoted references to sources, as mentioned above. Plagiarism or collaboration with another student in any of your assignments (except the Group Projects where you will be working as part of a specific group) will result in your receiving no credit for the assignment. There is no way to make up such an assignment.

REVIEWS

You will be required to attend and review the University's productions of *SLASHER* and *Antigone* (dates are given in the class schedule above). Specific outlines for the review requirements and expectations will be handed out before the first show opens.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE is found on pages 101 – 109 of the 2004-2005 Undergraduate Catalog. Students should be aware that “acts of dishonesty” include cheating, plagiarism, furnishing misleading information, forgery, as well as theft. The penalties for perpetrators as well as accessories (which includes advising, instigating, or encouraging) are extremely severe and we will uphold the policies and regulations of the University.

COURSE-RELATED ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENTS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The UNT Department of Dance and Theatre Arts does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and admission of students. THEA 2440 is a lecture-participation course that requires the reading of scripts at home and in UNT facilities, the composition and typing of exercises, the presentation of a group project and the taking of a written examination. The student has the responsibility of informing the instructor of any disabling condition that will affect his or her completion of the course assignments. It is the policy of the Department of Dance and Theatre Arts to make reasonable accommodations to help such a student perform well in the department's courses.

2440.001 PLAY ANALYSIS

GROUP PROJECT

Plays to choose from class schedule:

- 1) *Macbeth*
- 2) *Antigone*
- 3) *A Doll's House*
- 4) *Miss Julie*
- 5) *Three Sisters*
- 6) *Tartuffe*
- 7) *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*
- 8) *Death of a Salesman*
- 9) *Life of Galileo*
- 10) *Angels In America: The Millennium Approaches*

Group Project presentations and its written components are due on the date indicated in the class schedule syllabus. Choose three plays and indicate in order of your preference. Not every group will be given the play it chooses. List the members of your group and their respective roles.

PLAY:

1st CHOICE: _____

2nd CHOICE: _____

3rd CHOICE: _____

NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS IN GROUP AND POSITIONS:

DRAMATURG: _____

DIRECTOR: _____

DESIGNER A: _____

DESIGNER B: _____

This form is due on Tuesday, September 4th.

This form will be returned to you indicating below the project you have been assigned.

GROUP #: _____ PRESENTATION DATE: _____

PLAY ASSIGNED: _____

Due dates for play analysis forms:

- 1) *Macbeth* by Shakespeare **(Required!)**.....**September 11th**
- 2) *Antigone* by Sophocles..... September 18th
- 3) *A Doll's House* by Ibsen **(Required!)****September 25th**
- 4) *Miss Julie* by Strindberg **(Required!)** **October 2nd**
- 5) *Three Sisters* by Chekhov**(Required!)** **October 9th**
- 6) *Tartuffe* by MoliereOctober 18th
- 7) *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* by WilliamsOctober 25th
- 8) *Death of a Salesman* by Miller November 1st
- 9) *Life of Galileo* by Brecht.....November 8th
- 10) *Angels in America: The Millennium Approaches* by Kushner.....November 15th

- You are required to complete SIX play analysis forms over the course of the semester. Four are specified as required, the other two are your choice out of the other nine plays listed.
- Late forms will be dropped a letter grade.
- Handwritten forms will be dropped a letter grade.
- These forms are not group work – if we suspect that two people worked together, each will receive half a grade.
- You may redo a form if you are not satisfied with your grade.
- Please pick up graded forms from Dr. Harris's office – you cannot improve if you do not know what you are doing wrong!