Theatre Appreciation – THR 161 Spring 2016

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Office Hours: MW 11am-12pm  Others by appointment.

Catalogue Description: Intended primarily for non-theatre majors. Credits: 3

Objectives: This course will expose students to the art of theatre and theatrical works through reading, lecture, discussion and required attendance at play productions. A variety of dramatic literature will be read. Students will synthesize and interpret these works through written assignments, group projects, and discussion that will encourage critical thought and the development of intellectually defensible, conscientiously expressed personal opinion.

CORE OBJECTIVES:

1. Critical Thinking Skills: to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills: to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication.
3. Teamwork: to include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared goal or purpose.
4. Social Responsibility: to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will develop basic understanding of dramatic literature, dramatic theory and criticism, and performance from multiple perspectives (supports objective #1)
- Students will develop their abilities to analyze, write about, and discuss performance, both informally and through formal presentation (supports objectives 1 and 2)
- Students will learn functions of the various theatrical sub-disciplines and how they relate to each other in production, and the value and purpose of professional and artistic collaboration (supports objective 3)
- Students will learn a broad history of the theatre from ancient to modern, including non-traditional theatrical forms, theatre produced in non-Western cultures, and theatre for specific audiences (supports objective 4)

General Education Core Curriculum: This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.
Assessment of these objectives at SFA will be based on student work from all core curriculum courses. This student work will be collected in D2L.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment(s) that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to LiveText this semester, and the date the assignment(s) should be uploaded to LiveText. Not every assignment will be collected for assessment every semester. Your instructor will notify you which assignment(s) must be submitted for assessment in LiveText this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Course Assignment Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
<td>Production Critiques</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>Play Reading Journal</td>
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Required Texts:

Plays:  
* A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry  
* The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde  
* Clybourne Park* by Bruce Norris  
* TBA* by William Shakespeare

Graded components:

1) Exams (2)  ... 30%  
2) Quizzes (4)  ... 20%  
3) Production Critiques (2)  ... 20%  
5) Play Reading Journal  ... 10%  
6) Participation  ... 20%  
Final Grading:  (0-59) F  (60-69) D  (69.5-79) C  (79.5-89) B  (89.5-100) A

Exams: Two exams will be given covering the lectures and reading material. No makeup exams are given for unexcused absences. (See “Attendance” for what qualifies as an excused absence.) Exams will include multiple choice/short answer questions, and some writing.

Quizzes: Four quizzes will be given covering the reading of the play scripts. No makeup quizzes are given for unexcused absences.

Production Critiques: You will be required to attend both SFA Mainstage productions and one student production (in the Downstage Theatre). You will select two of these productions and write a critique about them. Details about what to include in the critiques, criteria for evaluation and due dates will be discussed in class. Each student will be given a card to obtain tickets at the box office well in advance of the productions. A student who loses this card will be required to purchase tickets at the student rate. You are required to turn in one production critique before mid-semester.

Play Reading Journal: While reading *A Raisin in the Sun*, students will complete five assigned journal entries. The topics of these journal entries relate to cultural, social and community issues in the play. Details about the journal, its format, content and grading will be discussed in class.

Participation: The participation grade consists of attending the required theatre productions during the semester, contribution to class discussions, appropriate participation in class activities, regular attendance, and adherence to class rules. Some discussion may take place online using D2L. Two absences are allowed before grade deductions (2 pts per absence) take place.

Participation/Absences/Tardies: As stated by School policy: **Seven (7) absences in a T/TH class or ten (10) absences in a MWF class will result in an automatic failure of the course.** Only religious holidays, sponsored school events, and *documented* medical or personal issues may qualify as excused absences upon the instructor’s discretion. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain any missed notes from a dependable classmate. It is the responsibility of the student to check in with the instructor after class if s/he is tardy or arrives after attendance is taken. Instructors will establish other guidelines regarding attendance and tardiness and their effect on grading for their classes.
**Course Work:** All course work must be done and turned in as indicated by the calendar or discussed in class. This includes tests, quizzes, papers, and other assignments. Tests and quizzes cannot be made up without an excused absence. Students who arrive in class after quizzes or exams have been completed may not take the exam/quiz. Additionally, once the exams/quizzes are passed out students are not allowed to leave the classroom until they have turned in their work.

Students with documented disabilities must meet with the instructor in advance of accommodations and exams to arrange accommodations for that disability.

**Classroom Expectations:**

Please respect others as well as yourself; this includes other students, the instructor, guest speakers, and performers. The majority of the following guidelines for behavior reflect this principle.

1. Recording lectures is not allowed unless arranged in advance.
2. Cell phones should be set to silent or turned off before class begins. Absolutely NO use of cell phones is allowed in class unless approved in advance or requested by instructor. The only exception to this rule is the 5 minute technology break on most class days. Exceptions will be made for tests, quizzes, and guest speakers.
3. Use of a cell phone (or other electronic device) during a quiz or exam will result in a grade of zero.
4. During class there will be no reading of outside materials, listening to MP3 devices, or wearing ear phones/ear buds.
5. Disorderly conduct or talking inappropriately in class is not permitted.
6. Students who sleep or give the appearance of sleeping in class will be counted absent (unexcused).
7. Failure to follow any of these expectations will result in being dismissed from class and counted absent (unexcused).

**Theater Etiquette (Production Behavior)**

1. Students are expected to dress and behave appropriately while attending theater productions.
2. Students seen to be sleeping, using cell phones or engaging in any distracting behavior during productions will earn a 0 on both production critiques.