THAR 101-501: INTRO TO WESTERN THEATRE AND DRAMA
Spring 2013 M/W/F 3:00pm – 3:50pm CHEM 100

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Office Hours: M/W/F 10am-12pm

Course Description
Survey of the styles and genres of dramatic literature, theatrical production and tasks of the actor, director and designer. Examination of the diverse connections between society and theatre arts, locally and globally.

The course includes in-class discussions and quizzes, as well as lectures, and attendance is mandatory. Students will utilize “Poll Everywhere” for text or web-based feedback. This course also requires attending one play, reading from the textbook and watching media recordings outside of class. Students will be broken into groups to work on a project throughout the semester.

There is no prerequisite for this course.

Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Identify the elements involved in creating a theatrical production – playwrighting, producing, directing, designing, acting – and accurately describe their responsibilities.
- Differentiate between different types of performance and performance spaces, as well as the structure of plays and different dramatic forms.

The tools for these critical thinking skills (understanding and analyzing) include; attending lectures, textbook reading and media viewing.

- Discuss and critique different theatrical elements in theory and in practice, historic and contemporary movements in theatre, as well as articulate ways in which theatre has reflected and affected society.

The tools for these advanced critical thinking skills (evaluating and communication) include; participating in class discussions, writing a critique in essay form, taking quizzes and exams.

- Work with a group of peers in order to analyze theatrical diversity and theatre as a window into the conscience of a specific society.
- Recognize and appreciate theatre as a form of personal, often controversial, expression; and judge the merit of personal expression in comparison with its possible social and political ramifications.

The tools for teamwork and practicing personal responsibility include; participating in class discussions and group projects.

- Experience theatre as a collaborative means of both global and communal expression by attending a live theatre production over the course of the semester, and following guidelines for audience etiquette.

Attendance of a live theatre performance expands social and personal responsibility.
Course Requirements  (detailed in paragraphs below)

- Online access to ELEARNING http://elearning.tamu.edu/
- Register with “POLL EVERYWHERE” (to be discussed first week of class)
- In-class use of text-enabled cell phones, tablets, or laptop computers with Poll Everywhere for attendance, responses and quizzes
- Assigned READINGS from the textbook. There may be additional handouts.
- Viewing of MEDIA assignments outside of class via https://mediamatrix.tamu.edu/ (to be discussed first week of class)
- In-class DISCUSSIONS over the textbook reading and media viewed
- In-class and online QUIZZES over the textbook reading and media viewed
- Attendance of a LIVE THEATRE PRODUCTION
- 450-word ESSAY based on this production (to be uploaded to elearning)
- 3 EXAMS
- 1 GROUP PROJECT

Elearning
TAMU's elearning web page will be discussed during the first day of class.
Check elearning OFTEN for due dates, quizzes, changes or to prepare for class.
On rare occasions, requirements, policies, and schedules are subject to change.
Students will be notified of changes through elearning announcements.

Poll Everywhere
During the first class there will be a demonstration and training for this tool (which takes the place of clickers.) Poll Everywhere is an audience feedback system that utilizes text messages or web-based responses to provide input from participants. Students can use text-enabled cell phones, tablets, or laptop computers to answer multiple-choice questions or to provide narrative comments. The web-based program requires no software downloads.

Textbook Reading/Viewing Media
Outside of class, students will be required to read selections from the textbook and watch assigned media to prepare for in-class discussions and quizzes over the material.

Discussions
Discussion questions listed in the syllabus schedule are associated with reading from the textbook and media viewed. I will call on students to discuss these questions. If you are absent or unprepared, you will be required to write 300 words over the material and submit online. There is no point value for these papers, however you cannot take the next exam if you have not submitted discussion papers owed.

Quizzes
There are 3 ONLINE quizzes. TWO films are covered by each quiz. The quizzes include 20 questions, (10 questions per film), worth 2 points each.
There are 10 IN-CLASS quizzes covering course materials and media, worth 20 points each.
LIVE Theatre Production and Essay
A list of TAMU (and non-TAMU) productions will be posted on elearning. Students are required to write a 450-word essay about a live theatrical production attended. The essay requirements will be discussed in class and will be posted on elearning. Ticket stub and program must be turned in.

Feel free to join the “Texas A&M Department of Performance Studies” Facebook group – it’s an easy way to access information on ALL the events the department has to offer and how to get involved.

Groups/Group Project
At the beginning of the semester, students will be broken up into groups of 10-12. Throughout the semester there will be steps the groups must complete to create a “final project.” These steps will include researching and answering monthly questions and blogging on our elearning page. The details of this project will be discussed in class.

Exams
There will be a review beforehand, and study guides will be posted on elearning. Exams will cover material from discussions, in-class quizzes and from the textbook. Exams will start promptly. Late entry is allowed until the first student leaves the classroom. After the first student leaves, late entry will not be allowed.

Attendance
Students are expected to attend every class. Attendance will be tracked via Poll Everywhere. 1 point will be subtracted from the Bonus points for every unexcused absence. For more information about the University policy on excused absences, see the Student Rules at http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07

Grading
3 IN-CLASS EXAMS: 75 questions, 2 points per question, 150 points per exam.
3 ONLINE QUIZZES: 20 questions, 2 points each, 40 points per quiz
10 IN-CLASS QUIZZES: 20 points each
1 PERFORMANCE ESSAY: 100 points
1 GROUP PROJECT: 100 points

Exams..........................450
Quizzes..........................320
Essay.............................100
Group Project...................100
Bonus points....................30
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS...1000

Grading Scale:
A=900-1000
B=800-899
C=700-799
D=600-699
F=below 599
Schedule
"Textbook reading" = come to class having already read the pages indicated
"Discussion" = be prepared to discuss the topics/questions indicated when called upon
"★" = starting a new chapter  "▲" = group project assignment

WEEK ONE Jan 14-18
MONDAY
• Introduction to Course: review syllabus and address procedures and questions
WEDNESDAY
• Demonstration of Poll Everywhere – bring your text-enabled cell phones, tablets, or laptop computers
FRIDAY
• Group divisions and discussion of group projects
• In-class quiz on the first three pages of the syllabus

WEEK TWO Jan 21-25
MONDAY - HOLIDAY
WEDNESDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 1, “Theatre: The Art Form” pp. 2-21
★ Discussion: “Thinking About Theatre” – both topics on page 20
FRIDAY
• Lecture and in-class quiz

WEEK THREE Jan 28-Feb 1
MONDAY
• View media
• Discussion: Be prepared to apply the “criteria for criticism” on pp. 40-41 to the media viewed
WEDNESDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 3, “Creating the Dramatic Script” pp. 44-73
• Lecture and in-class quiz
FRIDAY
• Discussion: “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf” Which characters are in opposition to each other?
   How do shifts in power and control reveal the personalities of the character?
▲ GROUP PROJECT ASSIGNMENT DUE FEB 1 (see elearning folder)

WEEK FOUR Feb 4-8
MONDAY
• Lecture and media viewing
WEDNESDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 4, “Theatrical Genres” pp.74-93
• Lecture and in-class quiz
FRIDAY
• Discussion: “A Doll’s House” What do you think it is about this drama that allows people in the 21st century to identify strongly with the characters and the situations?
   Re-write “Three Little Pigs” as a heroic drama OR melodrama OR theatre of the absurd.
WEEK FIVE  Feb 11-15
MONDAY
• Review for Exam 1, covering Chapters 1-4
WEDNESDAY
• EXAM 1 (which will include extra-credit questions over “Noises Off”)
• Online Quiz 1 closes
FRIDAY
• Media viewing and acting warm-up exercises

WEEK SIX  Feb 18-22
MONDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 5, “Acting for the Stage” pp. 94-117
• Lecture and in-class quiz
WEDNESDAY
• Discussion: Research the idea of “viewpoints” as described in the writing by and about Anne Bogart. How do her ideas differ from Stanislavski’s? Would an actor trained in one tradition be more suited for certain types of roles than others?
FRIDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 6, “The Director/Producer” pp. 118-135
• Lecture

WEEK SEVEN  Feb 25 – Mar 1
MONDAY
• Lecture and in-class quiz
WEDNESDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 7, “Theatre Spaces” pp. 136-155
• “Guess That Stage” game show!
FRIDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 8, “Scenery/Costumes” pp. 156-187
• Lecture
▲ GROUP PROJECT ASSIGNMENT DUE MAR 1 (see elearning folder)

WEEK EIGHT  Mar 4-8
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 9, “Lighting/Sound” pp. 188-205
• DURING THIS WEEK THERE WILL BE ONE IN-CLASS QUIZ AND WE WILL MEET IN THE THEATRE. DETAILS TO FOLLOW

SPRING BREAK  Mar 11-15

WEEK NINE  Mar 18-22
MONDAY
• Review for Exam 2, covering Chapters 5-9
WEDNESDAY
• EXAM 2 (which will include extra-credit questions over “The Importance of Being Earnest”)
• Online Quiz 2 closes at midnight
FRIDAY
• Media viewing
WEEK TEN Mar 25-29
MONDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 10, “Early Theatres” pp. 206-237
• Discussion: Compare last Friday’s media viewing and “The Mysteries” to Classical Greek Old Comedy
WEDNESDAY
• Lecture and in-class quiz
FRIDAY – NO CLASS, READING DAY

WEEK ELEVEN Apr 1-5
MONDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 11, “Early Asian Theatre” pp. 238-263
• Lecture and media viewing
▲ GROUP PROJECT ASSIGNMENT DUE APR 1 (see elearning folder)
WEDNESDAY
• Discussion: Some of the Asian theatres evolved into entertainment for the elite members of their societies. Name at least three examples of entertainment today that appeal primarily to a specific group of individuals.
FRIDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 12, “Renaissance Theatre” pp. 264-297
• Lecture and media viewing

WEEK TWELVE Apr 8-12
MONDAY
• In-class quiz
• Discussion: What elements of commedia dell’arte are found in the filmed production of “The Taming of the Shrew”?
WEDNESDAY
★ Textbook reading: Chapter 13, “Restoration/Romanticism” pp. 298-325
• Lecture and media viewing
FRIDAY
• Discussion: Why was the emergence of the director in the eighteenth century so significant? Explain why a film or television show you have seen recently might be categorized as melodrama.

WEEK THIRTEEN Apr 15-19
MONDAY
• In-class quiz
WEDNESDAY
• Lecture and media viewing
FRIDAY
• Discussion: The director has been particularly influential in productions of the nonrealistic style (Craig, Meyerhold, Brecht, etc.). Discuss why the director might be more important in a nonrealistic production than in a realistic production.
WEEK FOURTEEN Apr 22-26
MONDAY
• Lecture and in-class quiz

WEDNESDAY
• Discussion: Read selections from Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed. (Will be uploaded on elearning.) How does his idea of “Invisible Theatre” fit into our discussion of the nature of theatre? What purposes does it share with theatre of the past? What is different about its techniques?

FRIDAY
• Lecture and media-viewing

REDEFINED WEEK Apr 29/30
MONDAY
• Review for Exam 3, covering Chapters 10-15
TUESDAY (Redefined)
• Review for Exam 3
• Performance Essay due online, programs and ticket stubs turned in during class

FINAL EXAM (EXAM 3)
TUESDAY, MAY 7, 10:30am-12:30pm IN CLASSROOM

ADA Policy Statement
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services, in Cain Hall Room B118, or call 845-1637. For more information, visit http://disability.tamu.edu/.

Honor Code
An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.

Cheating in this class will not be tolerated. This includes plagiarism. Violators will receive a failing grade and be referred to the Academic Honesty Committee for disciplinary action (http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/).

A Note on Content
Theatre, historically and currently, deals with complex and controversial issues; it is often challenging and at times uncomfortable. It would therefore be impossible to offer a meaningful introduction to theatre that did not engage, at times, with potentially difficult issues including religion, gender, race, sexuality, class, violence and politics. Many of us will have different responses to the plays we read and attend, and that is an excellent thing; in our discussions, all thoughtfully and respectfully expressed viewpoints are welcome and encouraged. However, no one will be excused from reading, viewing, or discussing a play based on its content. Students who are concerned about the content of this class or their ability to complete the required work should talk to me.