SYLLABUS – PLAY ANALYSIS AND DRAMATIC LITERATURE

Instructor: Jackie Rosenfeld  
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Office Hours: MWF 1:00 – 2:00pm + By Appointment  
Office Location: GFNA 225

Semester: Fall 2017  
Course Number: THR 162  
Meeting Room: GFNA 302

I. Course Description
This course in dramatic literature will chronologically and thematically introduce you to a wide variety of plays. We will read and discuss plays as literature intended for theatrical performance, often dealing with the translation of the written page onto the stage. The plays will be examined from the angles of theatre movements, history, cultural context, structure, genre, and form as various viewpoints from which playwrights write and scholars criticize and interpret.

II. Course Objectives
Program Learning Outcomes: This course applies at an introductory level to the following Program Learning Outcomes as identified by the School of Theatre:

● The student will be able to analyze a script in ways that are necessary to a theatre practitioner or scholar/critic. (All degree plans.)

● The student will demonstrate an understanding of theatre history and a variety of theatrical styles. (All degree plans.)

● The student will be able to form and articulate a critical analysis and evaluation of a work of theatre. (BA, BA with Teacher Certification.)

● The student will demonstrate an understanding of the component areas of theatrical creation, process, production, performance, and study, and their interrelationships. (All degree plans.)

● The student will demonstrate intermediate to advanced competence in one or more theatrical specialization(s). (BA)

Student Learning Outcomes: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

● articulate and describe the defining attributes of various theatrical genres as they were practiced in different historical eras. (PLOs A, B)

● critically analyze, evaluate and describe a dramatic work and its underlying structural elements. (PLOs A, C)

● read and analyze a play with an understanding of its various technical requirements (i.e., setting, costumes, lighting, acting style, etc.). (PLOs A, D, E)

● demonstrate a richer basic knowledge of dramatic literature and be able to place a theatrical work in its historical context. (PLOs A, B)

● analyze both a dramatic text and a performance text and note the correspondences between them. (PLOs A, C, D)

III. Texts + Materials
Attendance of all Mainstage and Downstage productions.

Backwards and Forwards: A Technical Manual for Reading Plays
by David Ball  Southern Illinois University Press (1983)

The Longman Anthology of Drama and Theater: A Global Perspective
ed. by Michael Greenwald, et al.  
Longman (2002)

Additional readings – both plays and smaller, supplementary readings – will be provided as PDFs at
least one week prior to the date by which the reading must be completed. You may procure the books however you choose (campus bookstore, online, textbook rental, locally owned bookstores, sharing with a friend, etc.). However, it is your responsibility to have completed the required reading by the due date.

IV. Class Procedures and Policies
School of Theatre Attendance Policy: A career in the fine arts demands dedication and discipline: preparation for this career requires conscientious development of effective work habits. To this end, regular and punctual attendance is expected for all classes, laboratories and other activities for which a student is registered or assigned. It is University policy to excuse students from class attendance for certain reasons related to health, family emergencies, student working the University Series, and other situations of similar importance. Excused absences from theatre classes will only be granted upon presentation of written documentation from the teacher, sponsor or physician involved upon the first day of the student’s return. In the case of absences caused by university-sponsored events, inclusion in the university’s public listing of such absences will constitute an official excuse. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor that he/she has scheduled the planned official absence. A total of TEN excused and/or unexcused absences in MWF classes … will automatically result in the student receiving a failing grade. Excessive unexcused absences will affect a student’s grade. In the case of missed classes, the student will be held responsible for the successful completion of assigned work and/or projects.

Class Rules:
1. No cellphones or laptops to be used during class without prior consent from instructor.
2. Sleeping students will be counted absent.
3. Respect
   a. Your instructor
   b. Your fellow students
   c. Yourself

V. Requirements
This is a university course, taken mostly by prospective majors. It involves a good deal of reading. Expect to spend 2-3 hours of work outside class for every hour in class. Part of the expectation of this course is that your writing level be appropriate to a university-level course in the humanities. If you are not confident regarding your writing ability, make arrangements now to take advantage of the university’s various writing assistance programs. Start with the Academic Assistance and Resource Center (AARC) on the first floor of Steen Library.

Quizzes: There will be pop quizzes during the semester. They will be short, lasting approximately 10 minutes each. Quizzes will cover both terminology employed in the class and individual plays. 100 points total

Production commentaries: Students are required to see the Mainstage productions of The Arabian Nights and Macbeth. A two-page commentary on the production is due at the class period immediately after each production closes. This is not a performance review, but rather a commentary on the means by which structural and critical analyses are revealed in theatrical production. Specific assignments will be distributed prior to each production. 100 points x 2 = 200 points

Group presentation: Students will be assigned to groups at random (you may swap dates, but only with my advance permission, and only at least two weeks prior to the earlier of the presentations).
Each group will be responsible for initiating and facilitating the first day’s discussion of one of the plays. (They are welcome to lead the discussion for subsequent days, as well, but need not do so.) I will provide an outline of suggested (not required) topics to cover. Each student will receive two grades for this project: one group grade and one individual grade. 100 points x 2 = 200 points

Critical Paper: You will submit a paper of approximately 1500 words (five pages) on or before Monday, November 23. Papers will employ the terms and concepts of the class to discuss any one play from the anthology other than those assigned for the class. 200 points

Final exam: The comprehensive final in-class exam will be at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, Dec. 14. It will consist of a variety of questions covering all terms and concepts discussed in the course, ranging across plays read, lecture material, assigned productions and in-class discussions/presentations. Typical question types may include: true / false, short answer, multiple choice, term identification, passage identification, and an essay. 200 points

Participation / Effort: You are expected to come to class prepared and to be fully engaged during class discussions. 100 points

Acceptable Student Behavior: Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

VI. Grading Policies
Grading Scale: Final Grades are assigned as follows:
A = 900-1000  B = 800-899  C = 700-799  D = 600-699 F = less than 600

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54): Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

VII. Diversity
This class engages material covering a diverse range of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, and disability. While I encourage you to formulate and express your thoughts and opinions throughout the semester, discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated.

VIII. Academic Integrity
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or
plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf.

You are expected to be in full compliance with both the SFA policy and the School of Theatre policy: SFA policy: Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

School of Theatre policy: The School of Theatre expects students to maintain the highest standards of academic conduct. Misrepresenting someone else's work as your own or knowingly allowing someone else to represent your work as his/hers constitutes academic dishonesty. Such behavior is antithetical to our work as scholars, as artists, and as members of a community founded on trust and mutual respect. It is an insult to faculty and an affront to honest students. Penalties for academic dishonesty may range from failure of a specific project to failure of the course, suspension from the production season for up to one year, and referral to university authorities for further action, which may include suspension or expulsion from the university.

Please Note: I will trust that you are invested in your own education and will not cheat. Hence, I will not be hovering over your shoulder during exams, etc.. However, this trust should not be confused for a lack of vigilance on my part. If you are caught, I will consider it a violation of personal trust and will not hesitate to penalize you to the full extent possible.

IX. Additional Information

If you have a disability: To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Religious observance: If your observance of a religious holiday will prevent you from attending class, please contact me immediately so we can make appropriate arrangements.