



Introduction to Theatre (SP 114A) – Spring 2004

Texts: Theatre: Collaborative Arts. (2004). Waincott, R. & Fletcher, K. Allyn & Bacon
12 Plays: A Portable Anthology. (2003). Gardner, J. (ed). Bedford St. Martens

Instructor: Mari Miller Burns, Assistant Professor
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Office Hours MWF 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. & 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.; TR 11:00 a.m. – Noon.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Introduction to theatre introduces drama as a separate literary form as approached historically from Greek drama to the present, including both classic and contemporary drama. This course also examines the various duties of all persons involved in theatrical productions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Students are expected to gain an understanding and appreciation for theatre by: 1) completing reading and writing assignments, 2) attending theatrical events, and 3) participating in class discussions and read-throughs.

GRADING: A total of 150 points are possible throughout the course. Grades will be determined by the following weighted categories:

Assignments (150 pts)	50%
Final Project (100 pts)	40%
Participation (100 pts)	10%

Even though Iowa Lakes only recognizes whole letter grades, I use the following grading scale:

95-100%	A	67-69	D+
90-94	A-	63-66	D
87-89	B+	60-62	D-
83-86	B	0-59	F
80-82	B-		
77-79	C+		
73-76	C		
70-72	C-		

<u>Date</u>	<u>Tentative Schedule</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Jan 15	<i>The Elements of Theatre</i> Course overview Complete information sheets	
Jan 20	Cultural Collaboration: Theatre & Society	Chapter 1
Jan 22	Understanding the Play: A Theatrical Blueprint	Chapter 4
Jan 27	Interpreting the Play: Understanding Genre, Reading & Writing	Chapter 5
Jan 29	Foundations: Classical Theatrical Forms <i>Theatre's Role in Society</i> Paper Due	Chapter 7
Feb 3	<i>Oedipus Rex</i> by Sophocles	Anthology pp. 1-45
Feb 5	<i>Oedipus Rex</i>	
Feb 10	Reinterpretations: Europe Rediscovered the Western Classics	Chapter 8
Feb 12	<i>Hamlet, Prince of Denmark</i> by Shakespeare	Anthology pp. 91-212
Feb 17	<i>Hamlet</i>	
Feb 19	Revolutions: Romanticism to Postmodern Experiment Debate	Chapter 9
Feb 24	<i>A Doll House</i> by Henrik Ibsen	Anthology pp. 213-271
Feb 26	No Class: ICCOC Conference	
March 2	<i>A Doll House</i>	
March 4	Experiencing Theatre: Collaboration of Actor, Audience & Space Analyzing Theatre: Thinking & Writing about Live Live Performance	Chapter 2 Chapter 3
March 8 – 12	No Classes: Spring Break	
March 16	Spencer Community Theatre (SCT) Tour	
March 18	<i>Death of a Salesman</i> by Arthur Miller	Anthology pp. 390-469
March 23	<i>Death of a Salesman</i>	
March 25	The Director: Vision and Leadership	Chapter 10

March 30	The Actor: From Mask to Contemporary Performance Actor Interviews	Chapter 11
April 1	The Playwright: Imagination & Expression	Chapter 12
April 6	The Designer: Materializing Conception and the World of the Play Playwright Paper Due	Chapter 13
April 8	No Class	
April 13	The Final Project Begins	
April 15-May 6	Rehearsals All Reaction Papers Due no later than May 6th	
May 11(1 – 3 p.m.)	Final Project Performance	



Categories

ASSIGNMENTS:

Theatre's Role in Society – This one-page, typed paper is meant to express your opinions and beliefs of the theatre's role in today's society. You should address such questions as the value of live theatre in this age of technology and the future of live theatre. (Due January 29th - 20 points)

Debate – Imagine you are the executive board for the Spencer Community Theatre with one more slot to fill for your upcoming season. You must choose between *Oedipus* and *Hamlet*. Your discussion should bring out the strengths and weaknesses of each play according to characterization, plot, setting, staging, appropriateness for audience, and any other topics you feel merit discussion. Students will be graded on the quantity and quality of their contributions to the discussion. (Due February 19th – 20 points)

Actor Interview – Students will research a favorite actor and be prepared to answer questions in first-person during a five-minute press conference wherein classmates will ask questions. The interviewee will be graded on thoroughness of answers as well as answering from the actor's point of view. (Due March 30th – 35 points)

Playwright Paper – Researching one of the playwrights from the provided list, students will write a three-page, typed biography of that person's life and accomplishments. Please don't make this a dry recitation of factual information, but rather act as a storyteller to make this person's life come alive! (Due April 6th – 50 points)

Reaction Papers – Students will attend two area theatrical productions. For each production, students will write a two-page, typed reaction paper according to the guidelines provided by your textbook and the instructor. A copy of the production's program must also be included. (No later than May 6th – 25 points each) *Note: Students may attend additional theatrical performances and write reaction papers for extra credit.*

THE FINAL PROJECT: The entire class will become a production company presenting a one-act play. The following roles will be determined and each student will fulfill the expectations of those roles. You will receive points according to the successful completion of each task, and some points may be divided if multiple people fulfill them. You must complete each obligation or not only will points be lost, but the overall production will suffer. The production will be open to the public. (100+ points)

The Director:	Determine the overall focus/direction/interpretation – 20 pts Cast roles – 10 pts Develop rehearsal schedule & provide copies – 10 pts Blocking/Lighting/Sound – 20 pts Direct rehearsals – 40 pts
Designer(s)/ Technician(s)	Research play and time period of play – 10 pts Determine appropriate staging (i.e. arena, black-box, etc.) - 5 pts Prepare set layout – 30 pts Prepare property list – 5 pts Secure props, light, & sound – 15 pts Secure costumes – 10 pts Secure make-up – 5 pts Technical support for performance – 20 pts
Actor(s):	Audition for roles – 10 pts Attend all rehearsals – 30 pts Performance (w/ lines memorized) – 60 pts

PARTICIPATION: All students are expected to participate in class discussions and play read-throughs. Most read-throughs will require each student to take on the role of at least one character. (Ongoing – 100 points) *Note: Students may receive extra credit for participating in Iowa Lakes' spring musical revue.*

