

Eastern Illinois University
THA 2140-008: Introduction to Theatre
TU/TH / 12:30pm – 1:45pm / Doudna Fine Arts Bldg Rm 2040
Fall 2009

Instructor: Allison Robertson
Office: 2423 Doudna Fine Arts Center
E-mail: ar Robertson@eiu.edu
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 2:40pm to 3:40pm
Tuesday 1:45 to 2:45 or by appointment
Theatre Department Website: <http://www.eiu.edu/~theatre>
Telephone: 581-5923

Texts: Cohen, *Theatre*, 8th ed.
Gwynn, R.S., *Drama: A Pocket Anthology*, 3rd ed.
Wilson, *Anthology of Living Theatre*, 2nd ed.

Prerequisites: None

Course Goals:

By the end of the course you will have gained the following:

1. A knowledge of the uniqueness of theatre as an art form
2. A basic understanding of theatre movements and key theatre artists
3. A basic understanding of the theatre ensemble: playwright, actors, director, and designers
4. The ability to analyze both theatre (the performance) and drama (the script)

Classroom Etiquette:

Respect everyone's opinions, thoughts and ideas
Be open minded
Turn off or silence all cell phones
Absolutely no text messaging during class

Method:

You will attend lecture once a week, during which you will be introduced to the basic concepts, ideas, and theatre movements that provide the foundation for an appreciation of theatre. In addition to conventional lectures, you will participate in exercises, brief performances, discussion and debates to break through the "fourth wall" and include you in the process of learning. You are also strongly encouraged to visit during office hours if you have questions about the material.

Attendance:

An attendance sheet will be circulated at every class meeting and it is your responsibility to ensure you have signed it before you leave class. Absences for approved University events and serious illness are considered excused absences with proper documentation. You are permitted 2 unexcused absence from class without penalty. Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to the following:

I was sick but didn't go to the doctor
My ride home left early
My ride back left late
I had to take my (roommate, boyfriend, girlfriend, teammate, etc) to the (doctor, hospital, dentist, etc)
Etc, etc, etc.

Tests, projects or papers missed cannot be made up unless the instructor has prior notification. In addition, the student will lose 5 points from the final grade average per absence over the allotted number (2). Students more than 15 minutes late for class will be considered absent.

Performance Attendance:

You are required to attend the following University Theatre productions this semester.

The Tempest

The Theatre, Doudna Fine Arts Center
November 13, 14, 16 and 17 at 7:00pm
November 15 at 2:00pm

Student Directed One-Acts

The Movement Studio, Doudna Fine Arts
December 4 and 5 at 7:00pm
December 6 at 2:00pm

You must make reservations prior to attending each performance by contacting the Box Office at either 581-3110 or doudnatix@eiu.edu

You are strongly encouraged to attend:

Step on a Crack

The Theatre, Doudna Fine Arts Center
October 3 at 11:00am

Annual Theatre Research Symposium

Movement Studio, Doudna Fine Arts Center
December 9 at 7:00pm

EIU Theatre/Opera

Recital Hall, Doudna Fine Arts Center
October 22 and 24 at 7:30pm

You will lose 10 points (the equivalent of one letter grade) off your final grade for missed required performances. This includes not staying for both one-acts during the Student Directed One-Acts.

Exams:

There will be 3 exams throughout the semester.

Paper:

You are required to write one paper for this class. Your paper will be a 2 to 3 page critiques of *The Tempest*. Your paper must include the program and ticket stub. Papers missing either of these elements will not be accepted resulting in a grade of "0" for the assignment. Details are forthcoming. *Tempest* papers will be due on Tuesday, December 1. Late papers will be reduced by 5 points every class day they are late.

Class Projects:

There will be three class projects. Complete details for each project are forthcoming. You will present some of your projects to the class.

Final Project:

In lieu of a final exam you will be required to complete a final project to be presented to the class during the final exam period. Your project will require you to work with a group in creating a concept and designs for a mock theatre production. You will apply the knowledge you have gained throughout the semester to help you with these projects. Complete details are forthcoming.

[All exams, projects and extra credit reports not picked up by students at the end of the semester will be retained for one year. After that time these records will be destroyed.]

Extra Credit:

1. You may earn extra credit by auditioning for a mainstage production. You will earn 5 points for auditioning for a play and another 10 points if you are cast and adequately fulfill your responsibilities in the production.

Mainstage auditions will be held on Thursday August 27 at 6:00pm in The Theatre, Doudna Fine Arts Center. You will be required to perform 2, one-minute, memorized, contrasting monologues and 16 bars of a song if interested in the children's play. Please see me for more detailed information.

Spring Musical Auditions will be held on Monday, December 7 at 6:00pm in The Theatre. Requirements are forthcoming.

2. You may earn extra credit by attending plays. **All productions must be approved in advance.** You may only attend one high school play for extra credit. In addition, you must turn in your program, ticket stub and a short, ½ page, summary of the production. You will earn 3 points on your final average for each play you attend.

Disabilities:

Should you require special accommodations due to a documented disability, please contact the office of disability services at 581-6583 as soon as possible and let me know how I can be of assistance. Website: www.eiu.edu/~disabty/index.html

Academic Integrity:

Committing plagiarism by copying the words or the original ideas of another person without giving that person full and proper credit is an especially serious violation of the University academic dishonesty policy. If you violate this policy you will be reported immediately for disciplinary action. The complete standards of student conduct can be accessed at www.eiu.edu/~judicial/code.html.

Tentative Schedule
Introduction To Theatre / TU/TH 12:30pm
Fall 2009
(Subject to Change)

- Week One: “Getting to Know You”
Aug 24-28 What is Theatre? (Chapter 1)
Project #1 Assigned – Theatre Research
Theatre Spaces
Theatre Majors & Others Meeting: Wednesday, August 26 @ 5:30pm in the Movement Studio, Doudna Fine Arts Center. This meeting is open to anyone interested in becoming involved in the theatre program. You do not have to be a major or a minor!
Auditions: Thursday, August 27 @ 6:00pm in The Theatre, Doudna Fine Arts Center
- Week Two: **Project #1 Due Tuesday, September 1-** Presentations
Aug 31-Sept 4 Audiences and Critics – Chapter 16
- Week Three: **September 7 – Labor Day**
Sept 7--11 Writing about Theatre
How to Read a Play
- Week Four: Read *Tartuffe*
Sept 14-18 Begin Video: *Tartuffe*
- Week Five: Continue *Tartuffe*
Sept 21-25 Discussion of *Tartuffe*
What is a Play (Dramatic Genres) - Chapter 2
Review for Exam #1
COVERS: Chapter 1 (What is Theatre?), Theatre Spaces, Chapter 16 (The Critic), Audiences, Writing about Theatre, How to Read a Play and Moliere’s *Tartuffe*
- Week Six: **Exam #1: Tuesday, September 29**
Sept 28-Oct 2 What is a Play (Dramatic Genres) (continued)
Actors – Chapter 12
- Week Seven: Actors (continued)
Oct 5-9 In-class Acting Exercises
Friday, October 9 - Fall Break
- Week Eight: Director – Chapter 15
Oct 12-16 In-class Directing Exercise
- Week Nine: In-class Directing Exercise (continued)
Oct 19-23 **Project #2 Assigned – Directorial Concept**
Review for Exam #2
COVERS: Chapter 2 (What is a Play, Dramatic Genres), Chapter 3 (Actors), and Chapter 15 (Director)
Playwright – Chapter 13
- Week Ten: **Exam #2: Tuesday, October 27**
Oct 26-30 Playwright (continued)
Read David Ives’ *Sure Thing*
Discuss *Sure Thing*

Week Eleven: **Project #2 Due Tuesday, November 3 – Directorial Concept**

Nov 2-6 Costume Design – Chapter 14
Scene Design – Chapter 14

[November 6: deadline to withdraw with a W]

Week Twelve: Scene Design (continued)

Nov 9-13 **Begin Project #3 in-class: Costume or Scene Design**

Project #4 Assigned – Review of *Tempest*

Review for Exam #3

COVERS: Chapter 13 (Playwright), Chapter 14 (Costume and Scene Design only),
Ives' *Sure Thing*, and *Tempest*

REQUIRED PERFORMANCE: *The Tempest*

The Theatre, Doudna Fine Arts Center

November 13, 14, 16 and 17 at 7:00pm

November 15 at 2:00pm

Week Thirteen: **Project #3 Due Tuesday, November 17**

Nov 16-20 Lighting & Sound Design – Chapter 14

Week Fourteen: **No Class – Thanksgiving Break**

Nov 23-27

Week Fifteen: **Exam #3: Tuesday, December 1**

Nov 30-Dec 4 **Project #4 Due Tuesday, December 1– Review of *Tempest***

Discussion of *Tempest*

Begin Final Projects

REQUIRED PERFORMANCE: Student Directed One-Acts

The Movement Studio, Doudna Fine Arts

December 4 and 5 at 7:00pm

December 6 at 2:00pm

Week Sixteen: Discussion of One-Acts

Dec 7-11 Final Projects (continued)

AUDITIONS: *Fiddler on the Roof*

December 7th

The Theatre at 6:00pm

Finals Week **Final Exam Project Oral Presentations are Monday, December 14 at 12:30 – 2:30pm**

Dec 14-18

“Theatre is life with the dull parts cut out.”

----- Alfred Hitchcock