

**Eastern Illinois University**  
**New Course Proposal**  
**THA 3757G, Contemporary World Theatre**

Agenda Item #15-87 Effective Fall 2015
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**Banner/Catalog Information (Coversheet)**

1. ☒ New Course or \_\_\_\_ Revision of Existing Course
2. **Course prefix and number:** THA 3757G
3. **Short title:** Contemporary World Theatre
4. **Long title:** Contemporary World Theatre
5. **Hours per week:** 3 Class    0 Lab    3 Credit
6. **Terms:** \_\_\_\_ Fall    \_\_\_\_ Spring    \_\_\_\_ Summer    ☒ On demand
7. **Initial term:** ☒ Fall    \_\_\_\_ Spring    \_\_\_\_ Summer    Year: 2015
8. **Catalog course description:** A critical examination of major trends in contemporary drama and theatre throughout the world. Special attention will be paid to activity in the theatrical centers of Chicago, New York, and London. Connections to the social, political, religious, and artistic trends of the times will be emphasized. No background in or knowledge of theatre is required.
9. **Course attributes:**  
  
General education component: Fine Arts  
  
☒ Cultural diversity    \_\_\_\_ Honors    \_\_\_\_ Writing centered    \_\_\_\_ Writing intensive    ☒ Writing active
10. **Instructional delivery**  
**Type of Course:**  
  
☒ Lecture    \_\_\_\_ Lab    \_\_\_\_ Lecture/lab combined    \_\_\_\_ Independent study/research  
  
\_\_\_\_ Internship    \_\_\_\_ Performance    \_\_\_\_ Practicum/clinical  
  
☒ Other, specify: Asynchronous/synchronous interaction via online course delivery system  
  
**Mode(s) of Delivery:**  
  
☒ Face to Face    ☒ Online    \_\_\_\_ Study Abroad  
  
\_\_\_\_ Hybrid, specify approximate amount of on-line and face-to-face instruction \_\_\_\_\_
11. Course(s) to be deleted from the catalog once this course is approved. THA 3753G, "Development of American Theatre and Drama."
12. **Equivalent course(s):** None.
  - a. **Are students allowed to take equivalent course(s) for credit?**    \_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_ No
13. **Prerequisite(s):** ENG 1001G and 1002G.
  - a. **Can prerequisite be taken concurrently?**    \_\_\_\_ Yes    ☒ No

**b. Minimum grade required for the prerequisite course(s)? “C” or better.**

**c. Use Banner coding to enforce prerequisite course(s)?**   x Yes   \_\_\_ No

**d. Who may waive prerequisite(s)?**

\_\_\_ No one    x Chair    x Instructor    \_\_\_ Advisor    \_\_\_ Other (specify)

**14. Co-requisite(s):** None.

**15. Enrollment restrictions**

**a. Degrees, colleges, majors, levels, classes which may take the course:** All students eligible to take 3000-level classes.

**b. Degrees, colleges, majors, levels, classes which may not take the course:** None.

**16. Repeat status:** x May not be repeated    \_\_\_ May be repeated once with credit

**17. Enter the limit, if any, on hours which may be applied to a major or minor:** \_\_\_

**18. Grading methods:**   x Standard    \_\_\_ CR/NC    \_\_\_ Audit    \_\_\_ ABC/NC

**19. Special grading provisions:**

\_\_\_ Grade for course will not count in a student’s grade point average.

\_\_\_ Grade for course will not count in hours toward graduation.

\_\_\_ Grade for course will be removed from GPA if student already has credit for or is registered in:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Credit hours for course will be removed from student’s hours toward graduation if student already has credit for or is registered in: \_\_\_\_\_

**20. Additional costs to students:**

Supplemental Materials or Software    None.

Course Fee x No    \_\_\_ Yes, Explain if yes \_\_\_\_\_

**21. Community college transfer:**

\_\_\_ A community college course may be judged equivalent.

x    A community college may not be judged equivalent.

Note: Upper division credit (3000+) will not be granted for a community college course, even if the content is judged to be equivalent.

## **Rationale, Justifications, and Assurances (Part I)**

1. \_\_\_\_ Course is required for the major(s) of Theatre Arts  
\_\_\_\_ Course is required for the minor(s) of \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Course is required for the certificate program(s) of \_\_\_\_  
x Course is used as an elective (for Theatre Arts Major & Minor and other programs)
2. **Rationale for proposal:** This is an elective course in the Theatre Arts curriculum, and serves the general education population as well. For Theatre Arts students, this course is designed to supplement and augment the grounding they receive in their theatre history core coursework and make them aware of the directions the profession has taken in the recent era, which will in turn make them more competitive for positions in the field or for advanced study. (Prior to this course, the contemporary scene was necessarily the concluding portion of a course in 20<sup>th</sup>-century theatre, making any kind of in-depth study simply not possible time-wise, given the richness of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.) In keeping with the department's refocusing toward a more global view, as opposed to the more Euro-Ameri-centrist view of the past, the course will broadly sample traditions around the world. However, since the theatres of New York, London, and Chicago continue to have an outsized impact on the theatre landscape, it is likewise critical to put some emphasis on these scenes. Recognizing that theatre is by nature interdisciplinary, the course will be particularly useful to the general education population in that it will examine the reciprocal exchange between the theatre and the social, political, religious, and artistic phenomena that surround it, inform it, and are informed by it.

### **3. Justifications for (answer N/A if not applicable)**

Similarity to other courses: N/A

Prerequisites: The course requires an advanced level of critical analysis and engagement, and the ability to express this engagement through effective writing. The 3000-level and the prerequisites of ENG 1001G and 1002G will help ensure that students are prepared for this course.

Co-requisites: N/A

Enrollment restrictions: The restrictions are based in accordance with the University guidelines.

Writing active, intensive, centered: The advanced level of inquiry demands argumentation via substantial written expression. 50-plus % of the assignments involve writing. The evaluation of these will include an assessment of the student's quality of writing.

**4. General education assurances (answer N/A if not applicable)**

General education component: In the General Education curriculum, this course fits the "Humanities and Fine Arts Component; Fine Arts Designation." In keeping with the goals of Fine Arts Gen-Ed courses, it "provide[s] students with a basis for understanding...

theatrical...works in terms of their production and aesthetic reception." In the course, students "learn to apply historical, philosophical, and critical concepts" to the periods and genres of theatre history covered. The course will also "provide students with the foundations and methods necessary for a critical appreciation" of these periods and genres.

Curriculum: All of class time and all activities "relate to the skills in the learning goals or sub-goals" cited in the model syllabus below.

Instruction: All of class time and all activities "directly deliver instruction to help students learn the skills of the goals or sub-goals" cited in the model syllabus below.

Assessment: All modes of evaluation "directly assess if students can do the skills" cited in the model syllabus below, and this assessment wholly factors into a student's grade for the course.

**5. Online/Hybrid delivery justification & assurances (answer N/A if not applicable)**

Online or hybrid delivery justification: The electronic version of THA 3757G is designed to utilize EIU's online course delivery system. The Department of Theatre Arts is committed to making our courses as accessible as possible to students for whom online delivery is most appropriate. Recruitment and retention of students can be enhanced by judicious use of this mode of delivery. However, online delivery is not intended to replace on-campus delivery for resident or commuter students.

Instruction: Each week's goals will align with the student learning objectives for the course. Methods include brief lectures augmented with presentation software, reading assignments, relevant video material through Kaltura, and discussion prompts to facilitate synchronous and/or asynchronous class engagement and response. As required, all instructors of online sections will have passed EIU's Online Course Development Institute (or other documented method) by time of course offering.

Integrity: There are several ways to assure integrity in the online sections of the course. For the paper and poster/lecture project, since the research is guided, the process will be under the professor's scrutiny. Online examinations will require critical analysis and synthesis of

the materials encountered in the course. Furthermore, the professor will have developed a solid feel for the analytic style of the students via the synchronous and asynchronous discussions preceding the exams. Thus, it would be considerably difficult for students to use unethical means to take the exams.

Interaction: Professor-student and student-student interaction will notably include web-based discussions via the online course delivery system. Discussion prompts will encourage students to read and respond. These responses, with input from the professor, will also help the students comprehend the material and create an effective learning community.

Synchronous (live) sessions will be offered at multiple points to ensure student access and will allow students to discuss readings with professorial input.

### **Model Syllabus (Part II)**

Please include the following information:

1. Course number and title: THA 3757G: Contemporary World Theatre
2. Catalog description: A critical examination of major trends in contemporary drama and theatre throughout the world. Special attention will be paid to activity in the theatrical centers of Chicago, New York, and London. Connections to the social, political, religious, and artistic trends of the times will be emphasized. No background in or knowledge of theatre is required.
3. Learning objectives.

The course and its objectives address all five of the EIU Learning Goals: Critical Thinking, Writing and Critical Reading, Speaking and Listening, Quantitative Reasoning, and Responsible Citizenship. The following outlines how the course learning objectives align with the University Learning Goals.

Students will— (a) Analyze and evaluate primary and secondary source evidence (play texts, theoretical tracts, extant and extinct theatre spaces, photo/video evidence of sets and costume, etc.) of influential contemporary theatre in the English-speaking world and beyond.  
*(Goals CT-1 through 5; WR-5 and 6; QR-1 through 3; RC-1 and 2)*

- (b) Analyze and evaluate the relevant social, political, religious, and artistic trends that inform and are impacted by the theatres of the world in the present day.  
(Goals CT-1 through 5; WR-5 and 6; QR-1 through 3; RC-1 and 2)
- (c) Conduct guided research on contemporary theatre artists and their work; synthesize and present such research in scholarly-quality written formats.  
(Goals CT-1 through 6; WR-1 through 7; QR-1 through 5; RC-1 and 2)
- (d) Formulate, present, and orally defend cogent scholarly arguments regarding (a) and (b); orally defend the research synthesized in (c) in a conference-style setting.  
(Goals CT-6; SL-1 through 7; RC-1, 2, and 4)

4. Course materials. Brockett and Hildy, *History of the Theatre*, most current edition  
Course packet or reserve file of relevant theatre texts  
Attendance at University Theatre Productions as relevant to course

5. Weekly outline of content. The following outline is suggested as a template but may (and should) be varied as per professor's expertise.

Weeks 1 and 2: New York theatre.

BROADWAY. Background: the '80s and '90s. Effects of and response to 9/11.  
Musicals vs. Non-musicals. Revivals and New Directions. New Spaces and Old.  
Relationship to Hollywood. The Tony Awards.

OFF- AND OFF-OFF BROADWAY. Emergent artists. Notable shows "tested" here prior to Broadway. The avant-garde. The Obie Awards.

Week 3: Chicago theatre.

"Loop" vs. "Off-Loop." Influential Theatres: Steppenwolf, Goodman, Lookingglass, etc.  
Touring houses, successful (and not) touring runs and transfers. The rich texture of small

theatres and “homeless” theatre organizations. Significant directors, designers, playwrights finding a particular home in Chicago theatre.

Week 4: Influential Regional U.S. Markets.

Atlanta. Dallas/Houston. Los Angeles. Minneapolis. Washington, DC. Notable regional festivals. Other markets close to home: Indianapolis, St. Louis.

Week 5: London (U.K.), Toronto/Canadian Festivals.

The RNT and RSC. West End and Fringe. Shakespeare’s Globe. Stratford (Ontario) and Shaw (Niagara) Festivals. Mirvish and the Liven. EXAM #1.

Weeks 6-9: Contemporary work of emergent and established English-language playwrights.

UNITED STATES. Possibilities: Tony Kushner, Suzan-Lori Parks, Paula Vogel, Neil LaBute, John Patrick Shanley, Itamar Moses, Lynn Nottage, August Wilson.

CANADA, U.K., IRELAND, AND AUSTRALIA. Possibilities: Robert Lepage, David Williamson, Andrew Upton, Alan Ayckbourn, Caryl Churchill, Martin McDonagh, Frank McGuinness.

ANGLOPHONE AFRICA. Possibilities: Athol Fugard and Nicholas Ellenbogen (South Africa), Judy Adong and Angella Emurwon (Uganda), Biyi Bandele (Nigeria).

Week 10: Student Lecture and Poster Sessions on Emerging Playwrights, Directors, and Designers.

Weeks 11-12: Other Influential European Contemporary Theatre Traditions (Non-English Language, Plays will be read in English translation).

PARIS/OTHER FRENCH: The Comédie Française and Opéra. Théâtre du Soleil. Ariane Mnouchkine. Olivier Py. Yazmina Reza. Festivals like Avignon. Street theatre traditions. Influential Francophone theatre elsewhere: Cirque du Soleil, Ex Machina (Québec).

GERMANY: Berlin: Berliner Ensemble, Schaubühne, Deutsches Theater, festivals like Theatertreffen. Directors like Frank Castorf and Christoph Marthaler, Playwrights like Elfriede Jelinek and Moritz Rinke.

SCANDINAVIA, EASTERN EUROPE, AND RUSSIA. Royal Dramatic Theatre and City Theatre, Stockholm. Final plays of Václav Havel. Continuing work of the

Grotowski Institute and Moscow Art Theatre. The biennial Chekhov Festival in Moscow.

Weeks 13-15: Contemporary East and South Asia: a sampling.

JAPAN. Contemporary state of enduring classical forms: Noh, Kyogen, Kabuki, Bunraku. Significant spaces and artists to that regard. Spotlights: Tadashi Suzuki and Yukio Ninagawa. Butoh dance.

CHINA. Contemporary state of enduring classical forms: Jingju ("Beijing Opera"), Kungqu. Significant spaces and artists to that regard. Spoken drama and avant-garde: Meng Jinghui, Nick Yu, Candace Chong, etc.

INDIA. The current state of Sanskrit/folk drama performance. Relationship with Bollywood. Contemporary English-language artists: Manjula Padmanabhan, Mahesh Dattani, etc.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT ASIAN TRADITIONS WITH A CONTEMPORARY PRESENCE. Malaysian Shadow Puppetry, Korean Kamyonguk, Balinese Dance.

WEEK 16: EXAM #2.

**6.** Assignments and evaluation, including weights for final course grade.

Breakout group discussion participation 20%

Two (Essay-based) Exams 20% each (Total 40%)

One encyclopedia-style article on a contemporary artist 10%

Poster session entry + scholarly lecture on contemporary artist 30%

**7.** Grading scale.

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = below 60%



**8. Correlation of learning objectives to assignments and evaluation.**

	Breakout group discussion 20%	Two essay- based exams 20% each	Encyclopedia- style article 10%	Poster session + lecture 30%
(a) Analyze and evaluate primary and secondary source evidence (play texts, theoretical tracts, extant and extinct theatre spaces, photo/video evidence of sets, lights, costumes, etc.) of influential contemporary theatre in the English-speaking world and beyond.	X	X	X	X
(b) Analyze and evaluate the relevant social, political, religious, and artistic trends that inform and are impacted by the theatres of the world in the present day.	X	X	X	X
(c) Conduct guided research on contemporary theatre artists and their work; synthesize and present such research in scholarly-quality written formats.			X	X
(d) Formulate, present, and orally defend cogent scholarly arguments regarding (a) and (b); orally defend the research synthesized in (c) in a conference-style setting.	X			X

**Date approved by the department or school:** Jan. 28, 2015

**Date approved by the college curriculum committee:** Feb. 18, 2015

**Date approved by the Honors Council (*if this is an honors course*):**

**Date approved by CAA:** March 12, 2015      **CGS:** Not Applicable.