Weber State University

TH 4270: Dramatic Theory and Analysis

Fall 2010

3:30- 4:50 T/TH pm

**Instructor:**

Dr. Jenny Kokai **Office:** VBC 305

**Office hours**: T/TH 10-11 AM, and by appointment

**Email:** jenniferkokai@weber.edu

**Course objectives:** This course is designed to develop understanding of dramatic theory and critical analysis of dramatic texts. Through assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions, the student will acquire familiarity with the historical evolution of dramatic theory and dramatic genres, and gain understanding of the structural components of dramatic literature.

**Theatre Area Objectives:**

1. Have writing skills and ability to use research tools (library, internet, etc.).

7. Have the ability to critically evaluate what they and others have created.

8. Develop necessary skills to be proficient in at least 1 area of theatre (performance, teaching, technical/design-costume, technical/design-scenery, technical/design-lighting, technical/design-sound, directing, theatre management, or playwriting), with the ability to identify, analyze and resolve specific problems pertaining to that area.

9. Understand the historical context of theatre, drama, and performance including plays, major figures, costumes, scenic innovations, and theoretical approaches, and how these relate to contemporary society and culture.

10. Have experience with individual and collaborative processes needed to produce and understand theatre.

**Required texts:**

\*Backwards and Forwards by David Ball. (Southern Illinois Press, 1983)

\*Theatre/Theory/Theatre by Daniel Gerould (New York: Applause, 2000)

\*The Bedford Introduction to Drama, 6th Edition by Lee A. Jacobus (New York: Bedford, 2009).

**Required event attendance:** Students will be required to see the departmental productions Electra and All Shook Up. Students are responsible for procuring their own tickets. Students will need to pay close attention to these productions, as the success of their papers and exams depends upon it.

**Attendance:** The Theatre area recognizes the importance of class participation and performance. To this end we enforce the following attendance policy: Tuesday/Thursday classes are allowed 2 absences, Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes are allowed 3 absences, however these absences may not be on a scheduled test day. Once the allowed absence limit has been reached the student's grade will drop incrementally for each additional absence.

Example: Mitzi, an “A” student, has missed 3 classes in a MWF theatre class. Today she is missing class and her grade will drop to an A-. If she misses the next class, her grade will drop to a B+. One more absence and she will have dropped a full letter grade to a B.

Tardies are as important an issue as absences. Therefore, 2 tardies equal 1 absence. Students should plan ahead and use absences and tardies wisely.

**Course requirements:**

Participation: 10%

Homework/Quizzes: 10%

Paper: 20%

Midterm: 20%

Presentation: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

Total: 100%

**Assignments:**

Presentation: The presentations will be spaced out over the semester. In groups of 5, students will choose a scene from the Glass Menagerie and adapt it with the theorist given. Presentations should come with a program that identifies all members of the group, tells us what scene and what theorist is under analysis, gives us a brief bio of the theorist (from a peer reviewed source, with citations), and answers the following questions for the theorist: What is the purpose of drama? How should the audience react? What are 3 techniques that best create the kind of drama the theorist considers best? Outside sources are required and can be found with the help of our class librarian, Nicole Beatty. Scenes should be rehearsed and memorized and no longer than 15-20 minutes including set up and tear down.

Paper: After seeing the departmental production of Electra, students will analyze the “success” of the play in terms of one of the theorists we have studied to this point. Student will need to develop a thesis sentence identifying whether the theorist would consider the production a “success” or a “failure.” Papers should be 4-6 pages in length, one inch margins, and 12 point standard font. Header should be single spaced, but main body of text double spaced. Page layout should be adjusted on Microsoft Word so that there is not extra space after each paragraph. Please see me if you are concerned about formatting. You will have the option of turning in a draft for extensive feedback before the paper is due.

Mid-Term and Final: The midterm and final exams will consist of short answer and essay questions.

**Late Policy:** The grade on papers and homework will drop 1 letter grade for each day they are late, without a documented university approved excuse. If submitting a paper late, it needs to be date/time stamped and placed in my box in the main office, not slid under my door or submitted by email. Computer issues do **not** count as a valid excuse.

**Key:**

T/T/T= Theatre/Theory/Theatre

Bedford= Bedford Introduction to Drama

B&F=Backwards and Forwards

**Course schedule:**

**Aug 26:** Introduction/Manifestos

**Aug 31:** Williams Glass Menagerie *Bedford- 1028-1064*

**Sept 2:** Library Day- **Meet at Library for instructional session.**

**Sept 7:** B&F 7-35

**Sept 9:** B&F 37-76

**Sept 14:** Aristotle The Poetics *T/T/T- 43-67*

**Sept 16:** Horace “The Art of Poetry” *T/T/T- 68-83*

**Sept 21:** Castelvetro The Poetics of Aristotle *T/T/T- 108-116*

**Sept 23:** Corneille Of the Three Unities *T/T/T- 153-167*

Presentation 1:  **Bharata**

365/365

**Sept 28:** Schiller“The Stage as Moral Institution” *T/T/T- 250-254*

**Sept 30:** Nietzsche “The Birth of Tragedy” *T/T/T- 337-350*

Presentation 2: **Zeami**

**Oct 5:** Zola “Naturalism in the Theatre” *T/T/T- 358-367*

**Oct 7:** Maeterlinck“The Tragical in the Daily Life” *T/T/T- 381-389*

**Oct 12: MIDTERM EXAM**

**Oct 14:** Video

**Oct 19:** Strindberg Miss Julie *Bedford 697-715*

**Oct 21:** Strindberg “Preface to Miss Julie” *T/T/T- 368-380*

Presentation 3: **Lope de Vega**

**Oct 26:** Craig “The Actor and The Ubermarionette” *T/T/T- 390-398*

**Oct 28:** Marinetti “The Variety Theatre” *T/T/T- 419-426*

**Nov 2:** BrechtMother Courage *Bedford 987-1020*

**Optional Rough Draft of Paper Due**

**Nov 4:** Brecht“Modern Theatre is the Epic Theatre” *T/T/T- 446-453*

Presentation 4: **Meyerhold**

**Nov 9**: Artaud “The Theatre and Its Double” *T/T/T- 433-443*

**Nov 11:** Revisit B&F- bring book to class

Presentation 5: **Boal**

**Nov 16:**  Revisit B&F- bring book to class

**Nov 18:** **Class will not meet- paper due in my box time/date stamped by 5 PM**

**Nov 23:** Discussion and Analysis of “All Shook Up”

**Nov 25: NO CLASS- HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

**Nov 30:** Parks365 Days/365 Plays Excerpts *Bedford1760-1768*

Presentation 6: **Soyinka**

**Dec 2:** Manifesto Defense/Class Wrap-Up

**THURS DEC 9th: FINAL EXAM 5-7:30**

* Complete *readings* **before** class meets that day.
* Due dates for test and critiques are final. However, the instructor reserves the right to alter the order of topics on the course schedule as needed.

**Academic Dishonesty:** As specified in PPM 6-22 IV D, cheating and plagiarism violate the Student Code. Plagiarism is “the unacknowledged (uncited) use of any other person’s or group’s ideas or work.” Students found guilty of cheating or plagiarism are subject to failure of a specific assignment, or, in more serious cases, failure of the entire course.

**Core Beliefs:** According to PPM 6-22 IV, students are to “[d]etermine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, when course requirements conflict with a student's core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. A student who finds this solution impracticable may request a resolution from the instructor. This policy does not oblige the instructor to grant the request, except in those cases when a denial would be arbitrary and capricious or illegal. This request must be made to the instructor in writing and the student must deliver a copy of the request to the office of the department head. The student's request must articulate the burden the requirement would place on the student's beliefs.” As a note, I am not willing to censor your fellow students and their writing. Each student has an individual voice and it is very likely topics and language will come up that may be offensive to some.

**DEPARTMENT COURSE CONTENT POLICY**: Some of the writings, lectures, discussions or presentations in this course may include material that some students may find offensive. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.

**Disability Accommodation:** PPM 3-34 notes: “When students seek accommodation in a regularly scheduled course, they have the responsibility to make such requests at the Center for Students with Disabilities before the beginning of the quarter [semester] in which the accommodation is being requested. When a student fails to make such arrangements, interim accommodations can be made by the instructor, pending the determination of the request for a permanent accommodation.”

**Emergency Closure:** If for any reason the university is forced to close for an extended period of time, we will conduct our class via Canvas. Look for announcements through Weber email and on our Canvas page.