

Theatre History and Literature II Syllabus

THEA 3352/Fall 2019

M/W: 1:30-2:50

MAIN 211

Instructor: Georgina Hernandez Escobar, MFA

E-mail: TBA (e-mail is a much better method).

Office & Hours: BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. Please send me an e-mail, make sure that you identify yourself and CLEARLY state your concern.

Course Description: This course is designed to construct a foundation for the understanding and appreciation of the history of the art of theatre with a specific eye towards the “rebels and outcasts” writing from the mid 1800’s to the 1980s. Through participating in class discussions and activities, reading the text of plays, and actively participating in the research process, the student will develop a functional knowledge of the art of theatre from the 1800s-Present Day.

Course Objectives: 1) to enable the student to discuss and analyze some of our canon’s most famous plays, 2) to provide the student with an understanding of how theatre shapes our society and how theatre has been shaped by society in times of crisis and outrage, 3) to allow the student to gather, understand, and present pertinent information about theatre, and 4) to enable the student to write effectively about theatre history from a specific lens and critical analysis.

REQUIRED TEXTS

No textbook will be utilized for this class. The goal of this class is to infuse our critical analysis of the evolution of theatre via a collective learning method whereas our personal research, critical thinking, and in-class reading and discussions will supplement our understanding of theatre history and the following plays:

- The Importance of Being Earnest, by Oscar Wilde
- A Dolls House, by Henrik Ibsen
- End Game, by Samuel Beckett
- Mother Courage and Her Children, by Bertolt Brecht
- Zoot Suit, by Luis Valdez
- The Conduct of Life, by Maria Irene Fornés
- Angels in America, by Tony Kushner

Please try to purchase the versions of these plays that are available at the bookstore. If you have your own copy, digital or otherwise, this is okay, but just be aware that some items might differ dependent on translation.

GRADING*

Course Exams (2): 20% (10% each)

Presentation: 15%

Bullet Point Research Assignments: 25% (5% each)

Written Assignments: 20% (Paper #1: 10%, Paper #2: 10%)

Participation: 10%

Required Show: 10% (5% each)

***I DO NOT DROP STUDENTS FROM A CLASS—THAT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.**

GRADE BREAKDOWN

90-100: A
80-89: B
70-79: C
60-69: D
0-60: F

- **LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED**—IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PLAN IN ORDER TO GET WORK IN ON TIME. COMPUTER ISSUES ARE NOT YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY; PLAN AHEAD.
- ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE AT THE **BEGINNING** OF CLASS.
- **GRADES WILL NOT BE DISCUSSED OVER E-MAIL.**

ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

Participation (10%)

It is expected that all students participate in class discussions. Please prepare for class discussions by reading the assignments prior to coming to class. There will be several class activities that will count towards your final grade; it is important that you are present for such activities. We will be reading many plays in this course, it is your responsibility to be present on the reading days and/or read the play at home and be prepared for the discussion and special projects.

Presentation (15%)

You will be required to present on an assigned play (to be determined as the course progresses) with other classmates. The presentation will be broken up into parts and you will be responsible for organizing with your group and coming prepared to present on your assigned date.

Course Exams (20%) (10% each)

There will be two exams in this class:

- The first exam will cover the first half of the semester (10%) to be administered on **Monday Nov. 4th**
- The second will cover the second half of the semester (10%) to be administered on **Wed. Dec. 11th**

Bullet Point Assignments (25%) or (5% each)

As a textbook on theatre history is not required, YOU are going to bring in much of the knowledge. As listed in the class schedule, there will be homework assignments in which you will be responsible for bringing in research. These assignments 1) are due at the beginning of class, 2) must be sourced (MLA/APA) with valid resources, and 3) must be typed.

Written Assignments 20% (10% each)

There will be 2-3 page papers due in class: (all in 12 pt Times New Roman, single spaced).

- The first paper will be on a self-selected topic (10%) due on **Wednesday Oct. 30th**.
- The second will be an online-inspired article (10%) due on **Wednesday, Dec. 11th**.

UTEP Play Attendance 10% (5% each)

This is a THEATRE course and theatre is a vital component; in order to understand the element of performance, students should experience the theatre. You are required to attend **TWO** plays produced by the Department of Theatre and Dance (*El Paso Strong Reading Series*, *Real Women Have Curves*, *Tommy*, *Un(Documented)* and *A Christmas Carol, en la Frontera*). All other shows you might see such as student shows, the Dinner Theater, or the community, will be counted as extra credit. There are ushering opportunities for every show (ushers see the show for free) and specific discounted nights for every production.

EXTRA CREDIT will also be given for being an usher at a UTEP show (Dinner Theatre, Wise Family Theatre, or Studio Theatre), OR attending other productions around the city—you MUST provide a ticket stub and a program with your name in order to receive credit!!!! All extra credit ticket stubs/programs must be turned in by DECEMBER 6th.

PLEASE NOTE FOR ALL REQUIRED SHOWS AT UTEP:

You are required to sign an attendance sheet at the end of the performance you attend. If you do not sign this sheet at the end of the performance you will not get credit for attendance. The house manager will have the sign out sheet available at the end of each performance.

SUBJECT MATTER:

The performing arts have a power to stir strong emotions, or possibly touch on subjects you might not feel comfortable seeing on stage. If you have concerns about viewing or discussing specific subjects, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. As I will respect your individual's rights to choose what shows you want to see, I expect all our discussions—including any that may occur outside of class—to be conducted in a respectful and professional matter.

Proper Etiquette

1. Buy your tickets early & be familiar with seating and entrance policies; some spaces have specific seating and/or NO late seating policies
2. Arrive to the venue EARLY
3. Do not use your cell phone in the venue
4. Do not take photographs or video inside the venue
5. Be respectful of all involved--audience, performers and technicians--you are not the only one at the show

COMMITMENTS & CONSIDERATIONS

- **RECIPROCITY:** All students are in this class to learn. Please remember that everyone's time is money. Should a student disrupt the learning process, the instructor will take the appropriate steps to ensure that all students interact in a safe classroom that is conducive to the learning process.
- **GENEROSITY:** Remember that your instructor is also a human being. She is also a working, commissioned playwright whose home and base remains in New York City! She is **BUSY**. Please know that as a practicing artist she has many other responsibilities outside of this class, just as the student has several responsibilities outside of this one class.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Please read the syllabus, stick to class/university policies, utilize common etiquette and respect, and know that your instructor wants you to succeed in this course, but she is not responsible for that, you are. In addition, do not expect the instructor to make exceptions for you.
- **ABUNDANCE:** When participating in class discussions, make sure that you access all the things you've listened to, thought about, and considered, from a place of abundance. This means, think about what you can **ADD** to the discussion rather than thinking of it as lacking in something. Participate freely and know that you are in a safe environment where no question is a 'stupid' question.
- **RESPECT:** Like in the movies—Please make sure that you turn your cell phone OFF prior to the beginning of class. Also, please **DO NOT** text during class. If this becomes a reoccurring issue, the instructor will take the appropriate steps necessary.

CLASS POLICIES

Punctuality/Attendance: Punctuality is a necessity in theatre. As such, punctuality is necessary in this course. TEN minutes after the class start time, the doors will close; please **DO NOT** interrupt the class after the doors have been closed. Do not knock or try the door; chances are someone will be talking at that time and it is very disrespectful to interrupt. Also, if you need to leave class early, please let the instructor know—notification does not equal excuse, but it is the respectful thing to do. Attendance will not be taken regularly. It is each student's responsibility to attend class. All class/group activities will count towards the final grade. **Every student may miss two classes without providing an explanation and without suffering repercussions (i.e. I neither want nor need to know why you were not able to**

come to class). Choose your freebies wisely and plan ahead; emergencies with family, cars, and health may happen later in the semester. If there are extenuating circumstances, make sure that you notify your instructor immediately. As your two lowest class participation/quiz grades are dropped there is NO make-up work in this class. Class should only be missed due to EMERGENCIES; you signed up for the course with full knowledge of the date/time. **Be aware that freebies ONLY apply to class participation/quiz grades!**

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Office of Student Life for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions. Academic dishonesty is an assault on the basic integrity and meaning of a university. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the university's educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience not only for the perpetrators, but also for the entire community. It is expected that UTEP students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Office of Student Life for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions (<http://issweb.utep.edu/home/media/SampleOnlineCourseSyllabus.pdf>).

Any form of academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated in this course. I do read all of your papers and expect the work you submit to be ORIGINAL work.

Students with disabilities: I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally before or after class in the first two weeks or make an appointment, to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services in the East Union Bldg., Room 106 within the first two weeks of classes. The Center for Accommodations and Support Services can also be reached in the following ways:

Web: <http://www.utep.edu/cass>
Phone: (915) 747-5148 voice or TTY
Fax: (915) 747-8712
E-Mail: cass@utep.edu

Tentative Class Schedule:
UPDATED: 8/23

- M 8/26: Syllabus Review, Course Orientation
- W 8/28: Introductions and Class Commitments, Presentation Requirements (Author background, Time Period Significance/Historical value analysis, Visual World, Synopsis, Plot) and structure of assignments.
- M 9/2 OFF Labor Day
- W 9/4: NO CLASS—Students encouraged to attend Paula Vogel Bootcamp.
- M 9/9: History of Theatre Review & Bullet Point Presentation by Instructor: Oscar Wilde, the 1800s, Queer Drama.
- W 9/11: Select groups for Presentations (*The Importance of Being Earnest*)
IN CLASS READING: *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- M 9/16: IN CLASS READING: *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- W 9/18: **Presentation: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST** + Discussion—(15%)
HOMEWORK: Look Up Valid Information about Ibsen and Chekov (eight sourced bullet points for EACH, typed, due 9/23)
- M 9/23: **Ibsen v. Chekov Bullet points DUE (5%)** + Discuss 19th Century Theatre: Ibsen v. Chekov
- W 9/25: Select groups for Presentations (*A Dolls House*)
IN CLASS READING: *A Dolls House*
HOMEWORK: Finish *A Doll's House*
- M 9/30 **Presentation: A DOLL'S HOUSE** + Discussion—(15%)
HOMEWORK: Look Up Valid Information about Brecht and Beckett (eight sourced bullet points for EACH, typed, due 10/2)
- W 10/2: **Brecht and Beckett Bullet points DUE (5%)** + Discussion
- M 10/7: Select Groups for Presentations (*End Game*) + (*Mother Courage*)
IN CLASS READING: *End Game*
HOMEWORK: Finish *End Game*
- W 10/9: **Presentation: END GAME** + Discussion—(15%)
IN CLASS READING: *Mother Courage & Her Children*
- M 10/14 IN CLASS READING: *Mother Courage & Her Children*
- W 10/16 **Presentation: MOTHER COURAGE & HER CHILDREN** + Discussion—(15%)
Select Groups for Presentations (*Zoot Suit*) + (*The Conduct of Life*)
Discuss: Self-Selected Topic Paper
- M 10/21 NO CLASS—Students Encouraged to Review for Exam.
- W 10/23 **EXAM #1 (10%)**
- M 10/28 GUEST LECTURER (TBD)
- W 10/30 NO CLASS: **Paper #1: Self-Selected Topic DUE (10%)** via E-Mail.

- M 11/4: MID SEMESTER CLASS DISCUSSION.
HOMEWORK: Look Up Valid Information about Teatro Campesino and Maria Irene Fornes (eight sourced bullet points for EACH, typed, due 11/6)
- W 11/6 **Teatro & Fornes points DUE (5%) + Discussion**
 IN CLASS READING: *Zoot Suit*
- M 11/11 IN CLASS READING: *Zoot Suit*
- W 11/13 **Presentation: ZOOT SUIT + Discussion—(15%)**
 Select groups for Presentations (*Angels in America*)
 Discuss: Article-Inspired Paper #2
- M 11/18 IN CLASS READING: *The Conduct of Life*
HOMEWORK: Look Up Valid Information about Tony Kushner and playwriting during AIDS crisis (eight sourced bullet points for EACH, typed, due 12/2)
- W 11/20 IN CLASS READING: *The Conduct of Life*
- M 11/25 **Presentation: THE CONDUCT OF LIFE + Discussion—(15%)**
Kushner & the AIDS crisis points DUE (5%) + Discussion
- W 11/27 IN CLASS READING: *Angels in America*
HOMEWORK: Finish Angels in America; Complete Article-Inspired Paper #2
- M 12/2 **Presentation: ANGELS IN AMERICA + Discussion (15%)**
 Discuss: Exam #2 Review
- W 12/4 **EXAM # 2 (10%)**
- M 12/9 No Classes
- W 12/11 **Paper #2: Article-Inspired paper DUE (if not turned in previously) (10%)**

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE at the Instructor's discretion.

INSTRUCTOR BIO

Georgina Escobar is a playwright and director who employs multiple mediums to create and define the Latinx aesthetic as Sci-Femme and Frontera Funk in creating impossible narratives for the stage. She has participated in residencies including the MacDowell Colony, the Djerassi Artists Residency and is a recipient of the Theatre For Young Audiences National Award from the Kennedy Center. Her work has been exhibited throughout the USA and participated in festivals internationally (Denmark, Sweden). Her plays have made Steppenwolf's "The Mix" List, the Kilroy's List, Finalist at the National Playwrights Conference at the O'Neill and the Clubbed Thumb Biennial Commission. Artistic partners and presenters have included Gregory Hancock Dance Theatre, Primary Stages, Two River, INTAR, Clubbed Thumb, Lincoln Center, Milagro, Aurora Theatre, and Bushwick Starr, among others. She serves on the Board of Marfa Live Arts, is on Advisory Committee for the Latinx Theatre Commons, and an active steering committee member for the Climate Commons for Theatre and Performance. www.georginaescobar.com