

SCRIPT ANALYSIS
THEA3322
T/Th 9:00-10:20 Fox 180
FALL 2017

Professor: Kim McKean
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Office: Worrell 303
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-1:30pm
(or by appointment)

Course Description

This course provides actors, designers, and directors with the tools needed for breaking down and analyzing scripts intended for production. Using the framework of Aristotle’s Formalist Analysis and David Ball’s “backwards and forwards” approach, we will explore given circumstances, dramatic structure, theme, language, character development, beats, social context, and mise-en-scene within a range of classic, contemporary, and post-modern texts. The semester will culminate in a creative presentation within the student’s area of interest.

Learning Goals

Upon successful completion of this course you should be able to:

- Demonstrate how detailed analysis of scripts enriches artistic work and unlocks the artist’s creativity.
- Create a formal analysis of play scripts of various styles intended for production.
- Define story structure and how it relates to script analysis.
- Engage in provocative discussions about play scripts using standard terminology and concepts from dramatic criticism.
- Translate concepts from class to your own creative work.

Required Texts

Script Analysis for Actors, Directors, and Designers, Fifth Edition, by James Thomas
Three Sisters by Anton Chekhov, translated by Sarah Ruhl
Doubt by John Patrick Shanley
Sweat by Lynn Nottage

Recommended Text

Backwards & Forwards, A Technical Manual for Reading Plays by David Ball

Evaluation Criteria

All paperwork must be typed, double spaced, and printed.

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| 1. Participation | 10% |
| 2. In-Class Work (includes small group presentations and handouts) | 10% |
| 3. Quizzes..... | 20% |
| 4. Paper 1 (Analysis of <i>Doubt</i>)..... | 20% |
| 5. Paper 2 (Analysis of <i>Three Sisters</i> or <i>Sweat</i>)..... | 20% |
| 6. Final Creative Project..... | 20% |

Participation

Active participation is vital to your growth as artists and to your success in this class. You will be expected to come to class fully prepared and actively engage in class discussions. Absences, lateness, lack of preparation, or non-participation will lower your grade significantly—**each absence after two lowers your overall grade a whole letter grade. Three tardies are equivalent to one absence.** Share your voice and ask questions. Challenge yourself to speak up at least once a class period.

In-Class Work

Includes all work done in class and prepared for class. This includes exercises, written assignments, small group presentations and handouts. You will be evaluated on preparation, work ethic, professional standards, and ability to apply course concepts.

Quizzes

There will be two announced quizzes throughout the semester, evaluating comprehension of course concepts.

Paper 1

Apply course concepts to *Doubt* or *Three Sisters*

3-4 pages, 20 points total

Paper 2

Apply course concepts to *Sweat*

5-6 pages, 20 points total

Final Creative Project

The final project for this class can be done individually or with a group (4 students max). You will choose a play and present a 10-15 minute creative presentation on the play. Presentations should demonstrate analytical skills studied in class and may include a design presentation, a director's "look book" or creative approach, a dramaturgical notebook, an original adaptation of a text as a play script or screenplay, a 10 minute scene memorized and presented at "performance" level, a short film adapted from the text, a music video, or a movie trailer. Proposals for other ideas for presentations will be considered as well. Along with the presentation you must complete a project proposal (due at the end of October) and a written evaluation and rubric of your and your classmates work (1-2 pages). The grading breakdown is as follows:

Project Proposal—2.5 points

Creative Presentation—15 points

Written Evaluation—2.5 points

Academic Integrity

Any incident of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of zero on the assignment. This includes cheating and plagiarism. Please visit <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/> for more information.

Disability Accommodations

The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at UTEP provides students with disabilities, accommodations and support services to help them pursue their academic, graduation, and career goals. For more information, visit <http://sa.utep.edu/cass/>

Subject Matter

The scripts studied in this course deal with mature subject matters. Consequently, much of the discussion in class will require discussion of adult subject matter and language. If you have concerns, please see me as soon as possible to discuss possible accommodations. All classroom discussions must be held in a respectful and professional matter.

Electronic Devices

No electronic devices allowed in class unless permission is given beforehand. Students using electronic devices in class will be asked to leave and marked absent for the day.

Grading Scale

A = 90%-100%

B = 80% - 89%

C = 70% - 79%

D = 60% - 69%

F = 0% - 59%

“A”—indicates exceedingly high quality work. Masters all assigned work, completes work on time, shows originality and initiative, does more than required, and makes quality contributions in class.

“B”—indicates good progress, above the average, masters portions of the work, is alert and shows an interest in the work, completes work on time, and offers good discussion points in class.

“C”—indicates a quality of work acceptable at this level. Satisfactorily completes most assigned work under normal conditions and direction, shows interest in work, and completes work on time.

“D”—indicates that although most assignments may be completed there is a need for greater effort to meet the expected level of work for this course, student is hesitant to engage in the work or at times shows little interest, and seldom responds in class.

“F”—indicates failure to produce an accepted quality of work for this course.

Schedule of Classes & Assignments

(subject to change)

**the reading and assignments are due the day they are listed*

Week	Date	IN CLASS	Assignment(s) Due
1	T 8/29	Intro, Syllabus, and “Why We Read Plays”	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thomas, <i>Introduction</i>
	R 8/31	Lessons from the Past: Aristotle and The Poetics	
2	T 9/5	Aristotle Continued.. What is formalist play analysis? <i>Aristotelian Analysis Exercise.</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Aristotle” article, Blackboard

	R 9/7	“The First Steps in Preparation” <i>Doubt</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Doubt</i> • “Survey of Current Practices” from Blackboard
	F 9/8 9:30-12:00pm	Givens in <i>Doubt</i> — <i>Compiling Evidence, Organizing the Facts, Reading Between the Scenes</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas, Chapter 2 (p. 41-65, 70, 71)
3	T 9/12	Givens in <i>Doubt Continued..</i>	Given Circumstance Presentation in Groups
	R 9/14	Stasis, Intrusion, and Events in <i>Doubt</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Shape” article in Blackboard • Thomas, pages 145-154
4	T 9/19	Aristotelian Analysis and Story Mountain in <i>Doubt</i>	QUIZ 1
	R 9/21	The World of the Play for <i>Doubt</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EF’s <i>The World of the Play</i> in blackboard World of the Play presentations
5	T 9/26	Relationship web and “Suffering” in <i>Three Sisters</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Three Sisters</i>
	R 9/28	Character Bones and Character Objectives in <i>Three Sisters</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas, p. 172-196 • Blackboard articles, “Truth in Action” and “Six Ingredients and Two spices.”
6	T 10/3	Beats in <i>Three Sisters</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackboard: Bit by Beat Article

	R 10/5	Scenic Breakdown in <i>Three Sisters</i>	
7	T 10/10	The “Director Breakdown” and “Scene Objectives” in <i>Three Sisters</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1 Due
	R 10/12	Idea, Image, and Seed in <i>Three Sisters</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas, p. 204-226
8	T 10/17	Playing Space Analysis in <i>Three Sisters</i>	Project Proposal Due
	R 10/19	“The First Steps in Preparation” <i>Sweat</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sweat</i>
	F 10/20 9:30-12:00	Dialogue in <i>Sweat</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas, Chapter 8 QUIZ 2
9	T 10/24	Tempo, Rhythm and Mood in <i>Sweat</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas, Chapter 9
	R 10/26	Idea and Image in <i>Sweat</i>	Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thomas Chapter 7
10	T 10/31	Supplemental Research, <i>Sweat</i>	Blackboard: Supplemental Research Article
	R 11/2	Supplemental Research, <i>Sweat</i>	
	FRI 11/3 9:00-10:20am	Creative Presentation In-Class Work	
11	T 11/7	Putting it all together—thinking as a designer, actor, or director and GUT CHECK for <i>Water by the Spoonful</i>	Paper 2 Due Reading: Thomas, Chapter 10
	R 11/9	Putting it all together—thinking as a designer,	

		actor, or director and GUT CHECK for <i>Water by the Spoonful</i> continued...	
12	T 11/14	Creative Presentations 1	Creative Evals due when you present
	R 11/16	Creative Presentations 2	Creative Evals due when you present
13	T 11/21	No Class- Makeup Class on 9/8	
	R 11/23	No Class- Makeup Class on 9/8	
14	T 11/28	No Class- Makeup Class on 10/20	
	R 11/230	No class—Happy Thanksgiving!	
15	T 12/5	No Class- Makeup Class on 10/20	
	R 12/7	No Class- Makeup Class on 11/3	