

TERM: Autumn 2018
CREDITS: 3
LEVEL: U
DAY/TIME: W/F 9:35-10:55 a.m.
LOCATION: Drake 2038

INSTRUCTOR: Tyrrell Davidson
OFFICE: Drake 2042
OFFICE EMAIL: davidson.594@osu.edu
OFFICE HOURS: W/F 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

As an essential skill, actors, directors, and designers working in play production must have access to tools, methods, and techniques for accessing the meaning behind the text of play scripts. While not all productions will start from a play script, the capacity to base production decisions on a deep understanding of the text (if it exists) is vital. Much like a production, the text itself contains many interlocking parts and relationships: therefore Script Analysis requires close examination of these component parts for the purposes of understanding or interpretation.

This semester, we will explore some important elements for analyzing a script in production. This course is designed to provide you with an array of tools, strategies, and methods for reading and analyzing dramatic literature in order to allow creative expression while also keeping the theatrical goals of the production in mind. We will read several classical plays as well as more contemporary dramatic texts, in order to provide you with hands-on experience at performing close reading and employing script analysis techniques, which will enable you to further your growth as a theatre artist. Understanding the creative choices available from rigorous script analysis is a foundational first step towards producing moving, informed, complex, and exciting dramatic work on stage.

We will also examine how power relationships between various diverse identities are negotiated through the play text so that we will be able to make informed political choices about which representations of social identity and cultural norms we want to see reinforced. Finally, in order to demonstrate the acquisition of these new critical thinking skills, a major goal of this course will be to facilitate a structured writing project in order to give students an opportunity to engage in final project that demonstrates your ability to work in a collaborative working environment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To introduce students to the basic principles, techniques, and challenges of script analysis, where the text is examined from a production viewpoint rather than solely for literary merit.
- To provide students with methods to analyze a play from the perspective of many different members of a production team (including director, performer, designer, playwright, and dramaturg) and begin to make independent choices as an artist.
- To exercise script analysis methods (individually and in groups) through in-depth exploration of play texts
- To engage in both ensemble activities and individual work fully and successfully while developing a distinct artistic voice.

PREREQUISITES

- Intro to Theatre (100, 100H, 101H, 2100, 2100H, 2101H)

- This course is not open to students with credit for TH210

TEACHING METHOD

I try to design lesson plans that cover as many pedagogical bases as possible. Class meetings will usually include units of lecture, Socratic questioning, group work, and open discussion. Whatever your learning style, background, and/or predisposition toward analysis, I hope to convince you that this work is relevant and necessary, and to empower to continue exercising your analytical muscles beyond your time at OSU.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Most of the reading assignments will be available for purchase in the campus bookstore as well as online retailers. Some will be accessible through Carmen.

- Ball, David. *Backwards & Forwards*. Southern Illinois UP, 1983.
- Flitsos, Anne. *Interpreting the Play Script: Contemplation and Analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Gainor, Ellen J., Stanton B. Garner Jr., and Martin Puchner, ed. *The Norton Anthology of Drama* (2nd Edition, Shorter Edition). W.W. Norton & Company, 2014.

REQUIRED PERFORMANCES

Tickets shall be available for purchase at the Ticket Office in the Drake Performance and Event Center, over the phone (614-292-2295), and/or online through Ticketmaster. Please see <https://theatre.osu.edu/boxoffice> for more information, including hours of operation and how to volunteer to usher in exchange for admission.

- *Twelfth Night*, by William Shakespeare
Edited for Young Audiences by Christopher Matsos (PhD, '10)
Directed by Lesley Ferris
September 28 - 30, 2018
Thurber Theatre, Drake Performance and Event Center
- *Michael von Siebenburg Melts Through the Floorboards*
By Greg Kotis
Co-Directed by Jennifer Schlueter and Karie Miller
October 17 - 27, 2018
Roy Bowen Theatre, Drake Performance and Event Center
- *Legally Blonde, the Musical*
Book by Heather Hach
Music and Lyrics by Laurence O'Keefe and Neil Benjamin
Directed by Mandy Fox
November 8 - 18, 2018
Thurber Theatre, Drake Performance and Event Center

CREATING THE CLASSROOM CULTURE

Here is the official language from the university's Office of Disability Services.

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they

may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

On the first day of class, I will give everyone the opportunity to privately inform me of any important information about your needs and expectations for the course. Note: This is not at all mandatory and is only to help curate your experience this semester. I will treat any such information as entirely confidential, and I will do my best to accommodate you. Examples of things you could tell me include:

- What name you prefer to use;
- Which e-mail address you check most often;
- Allergies to certain foods or smells that would interfere with your ability to participate;
- Aversion to speaking much during class;
- Major transportation issues that could interfere with your punctuality; or
- Need to sit in a certain part of the classroom.

During your time in this course, you could possibly encounter ideas, arguments, questions, and other stimuli that evoke an intense, mental/psychological/emotional reaction. There is no shame in such an experience; from what I have seen, most people have some degree of sensitivity to one thing or another. A variety of passionate responses can produce wonderful conversations and inspire further creative work, but it can also contribute to misunderstandings and conflict. My ideal classroom environment exists somewhere just beyond our normal comfort zones. That does not mean I want to traumatize or threaten anyone with the course material or to encourage hostile debates. In order to keep our time together positive and productive, we all have to behave respectfully, even charitably, toward our classmates. This is especially important during instances of disagreement, and I expect everyone to maintain civility and eschew *ad hominem* attacks.

That being said, if you ever do feel overwrought or overwhelmed, it is perfectly reasonable to honor yourself and step outside the classroom. You are the most important person in your quest.

ASSIGNMENTS

- **Short response essays (20 pts. ea. x 7 essays = 140 pts.):** Every week students shall write one-page responses to the assigned reading materials, with the option to respond to questions provided by the instructor or to devise original topics. These short essays must comment or elaborate on how 2+ texts relate to each other.
- **Quizzes (10 pts. ea. x 6 quizzes = 60 pts.):** Every week students shall complete one reading quiz. Eligible material includes six full-length plays and a small set of excerpts, as well as the selected readings from the textbook and other scholarly sources. Each quiz is a set of ten objective, fill-in-the-blank questions. I shall drop the lowest quiz grade.
- **Exams (100 pts. ea. x 2 exams = 200 pts.):** There are two exams: a midterm and a final. The final is not cumulative.
- **Final Project (50 pts./part x 2 parts = 100 pts.):** With a group of classmates, you will read one additional play (chosen from a list to be provided later) and design an analytical presentation. More detailed guidelines shall be provided after the midterm exam. The final project will consist of two separate grades: a group score, worth 50 points, and an individual score, worth 50 points.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

- A 450-500 pts.
- B 400-449 pts.
- C 350-399 pts.
- D 300-349 pts.
- F 250-299 pts.

GRADING CRITERIA

Every assignment will come with a rubric explaining what can earn/lose points.

EXTRA CREDIT

To be eligible for extra credit, you must have turned in all of the required assignments. There are multiple opportunities for extra credit, such as bonus questions on quizzes and exams. Additionally, you may submit written, analytical response essays to dramatic texts and/or theatrical performances that are not already required for this course. You may earn up to 50 bonus points throughout the semester.

LATE/MAKE-UP WORK

Partial credit for missed assignments is subject to the instructor's approval. Students must present written documentation of the medical, academic, or military event. Students with closely scheduled classes must notify the instructor if they anticipate being late.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are allowed three unexcused absences. Additional unexcused absences shall cost a student five points each.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487).

BASIC NEEDS SECURITY

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess.

TITLE IX STATEMENT

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories (e.g. race). If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu.

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. I also have mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as an Ohio State employee. I seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct with the University's Title IX Office. If I can be of assistance in helping you to make a report and in finding campus and community resources, please let me know. If you would like to access resources directly, please feel free to contact the Title IX office (see above). Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting Counseling & Consultation Services at [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766) or the 24-hour helpline from the Sexual Assault Response Network of Central Ohio (SARNCO) at [614-267-7020](tel:614-267-7020).

FOR YOUR SAFETY

The OSU Student Safety/Escort Service is available after 7 p.m. by dialing 292-3322.

FEELING STRESSED? NEED HELP OR SOMEONE TO TALK TO?

Here are some helpful resources available on campus:

- OSU Counseling & Consultation Services: Younkin Success Center (4th floor) or 614-292-4527
- OSU Student Wellness: RM B130 RPAC or 614-292-4527
- OSU Student Advocacy: 1120 Lincoln Tower or 614-292-4527

THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center offers the following free services to members of the OSU community:

- Help with any assignment (ranging from lab reports to dissertations) at any stage of the writing process (brainstorming, thesis development, revising, etc.).
- Face-to-face, 50 minute tutorials by appointment at our main location in 4120A Smith Labs, Monday through Friday!
- Online tutoring sessions via CarmenConnect by appointment.
- Walk in appointments at our two satellite locations!
 - Smith-Steeb dorms, Monday-Wednesday, 7-9pm.
 - Thompson library 1st floor, Monday-Thursday, 11am-3pm and 5-7pm.
- Online appointment scheduling, available 24/7. Please visit <http://cstw.osu.edu> or call 688-4291 to make an appointment.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings should be completed prior to class meeting; all reading not in the required textbooks will be available on Carmen the week before.

Week 1

Wed, Aug 22	Topic Homework	Course introduction; syllabus overview; define <i>analysis</i> Read Ball, Chapter 14: "Trusting the Playwright," pp. 83-4 Read Fuchs, "Visit to a Small Planet"
Fri, Aug 24	Topic Homework	Drama as rhetoric, the world of the play Read Soyinka, <i>Death and the King's Horseman</i>

Week 2

Wed, Aug 29	Topic In class Homework	Soyinka discussion Short response essay 1 Read selections from Flightsos, Part I: "Contemplation and Intuitive Response"
Fri, Aug 31	Topic In class Homework	Soyinka discussion, continued Reading quiz 1 Read Treadwell, <i>Machinal</i>

Week 3

Wed, Sep 5	Topic In class Homework	Treadwell discussion Short response essay 2 Read Flightsos, Part II: "Formalist Analysis," pp. 35-60 Read Ball, Part I: "Shape," Chapters 1-3, pp. 9-18
Fri, Sep 7	Topic In class Homework	Treadwell discussion, continued Reading quiz 2 Read Aristophanes, <i>Lysistrata</i>

Week 4

Wed, Sep 12	Topic In class Homework	Aristophanes discussion Short response essay 3 Commercial advertising assignment (due online by Th classtime)
Fri, Sep 14	Topic In class	Aristophanes discussion, continued Reading quiz 3

Homework Read Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, Prologue-Scene X

Week 5

Wed, Sep 19 Topic Marlowe discussion
In class Short response essay 4
Homework Read Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, Scene XI-Epilogue

Fri, Sep 21 Topic Marlowe discussion, continued
In class Reading quiz 4
Homework Read excerpts from *Hamlet*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*
Read Ball, Part I: "Shape," Chapters 4 & 5, pp. 19-31

Week 6

Wed, Sep 26 Topic Shakespeare discussion
In class Short response essay 5
Homework Read excerpts online from Brecht, *The Messingkauf Dialogues* and *Brecht on Theatre*

Fri, Sep 28 Topic Shakespeare discussion, continued
In class Reading quiz 5
Homework Read Fliotsos, Part II: "Formalist Analysis," pp. 61-75
Attend the OSU production of *Twelfth Night*

Week 7

Wed, Oct 3 Topic *Twelfth Night* discussion
Fri, Oct 5 Topic Review for Midterm

Week 8

Wed, Oct 10 Topic Midterm exam
Homework Read Brecht, *The Good Person of Setzuan*
Autumn break, no class

Fri, Oct 12

Week 9

Wed, Oct 17 Topic Brecht discussion
In class Short response essay 6
Homework Read Ball, Chapter 6: "Ignorance is Bliss," pp. 32-4
Read Ball, Chapter 13: "Background Information," pp. 81-2

Fri, Oct 19 Topic Brecht discussion, continued
In class Reading quiz 6
Homework Read Parks, *The America Play*

Week 11

Wed, Oct 24 Topic Parks discussion
In class Short response essay 7
Homework Read Fliotsos, Part III: "Interpreting the Nonlinear Play"

Fri, Oct 26 Topic Parks discussion, continued
In class Reading quiz 7
Homework Attend the OSU production of *Michael von Siebenburg Melts Through the Floorboards*

Week 12:

Wed, Oct 31 Topic *Michael von Siebenburg* discussion
Fri, Nov 2 Project group meeting

Week 13

Wed, Nov 7 Project group meeting

Fri, Nov 9		Project group meeting
<u>Week 14</u>		
Wed, Nov 14		Presentations
Fri, Nov 16		Presentations
<u>Week 15</u>		
Nov 21-23		Thanksgiving Break, no class
<u>Week 16:</u>		
Wed, Nov 28	Topic	<i>Legally Blonde</i> discussion
Fri, Nov 30	Topic	Review for final exam
<u>Week 17</u>		
Wed, Dec 5	Final Exam	