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## Theater History 1

### THE 4110

MWF 1:00 to 1:50

**Professor Michael Yawney**

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#### **Course Description**

This course will survey the works, production techniques, and styles of theater from ancient times through 1800, focusing on the cultural elements that shaped the work. A secondary focus will be on how these works have been interpreted by other global cultures since their initial creation.

**This is a Discipline-specific Global Learning course that counts towards your FIU Global Learning graduation requirement.**

#### **Course Objectives**

Through lectures, readings, and discussion students will attain an understanding of how cultural values, philosophic and religious beliefs, and the physical realities of each era that have shaped Western theater from the Greeks to the English Restoration as well as selected non-Western theaters in that same period. Students will apply this understanding of factors outside of the play text that shape meaning to deepen their artistic insight into these works.

#### **Global Learning Course Outcomes**

- Students will interpret theatrical works referencing the cultural context that gave rise to these works.
- Students will interpret work from outside their culture based on a multi-perspective analysis of the plays in question.
- Students will describe the benefits in using dramatic texts to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.

### **Required Texts**

- Wilson, Edwin and Alvin Goldfarb. *Living Theatre: A History of Theatre*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2018. (ISBN: 978-0-393-60226-5) NOTE: Any edition published by McGraw-Hill may also be used.
- Gainor, J. Ellen, Stanton B. Garner Jr. and Martin Puchner, editors. *The Norton Anthology of Drama, Volume One*. New York: Norton, 2009. (ISBN: 0393974707 or 0393932818) NOTE: The second edition may also be used.

### **Course Requirements**

1. **Quizzes.** Many classes will begin with a short quiz. Students who are late or absent cannot make these quizzes up.
2. **Research Paper.** The purpose of this paper is to help you develop the research and communication skills you need in your future career. Your ability to find strong sources and coordinate the information you find there will be the basis of your grade.

You have three options for the type of paper you write

a) *Traditional Research Paper.* Choose a topic about theater before 1800. Develop a question and research to answer that question. Use at least 4 sources.

b) *Dramaturgical Protocol.* Choose a play NOT on the class syllabus. This paper will relate the play to the time in which it was written and to today.

You will examine how the play was understood at the time it was written by relating it to its physical production, audience, philosophical context, political meaning, etc.

Choose three to five topics, explain how each relates to an understanding of the play, (e.g. knowing how English Renaissance audiences understood witchcraft makes MacBeth clearer).

After explaining how the play was understood, you will then suggest ways to translate that understanding into production for today's theater. However, the purpose of this translation is to demonstrate that your understanding is rich enough to be used creatively. Creativity (however brilliant) without solid grounding in knowledge will not fulfill the assignment.

Use at least two sources for each topic.

c) *Production History.* Choose a play written before 1800 and discuss three productions of it. Describe the design, staging, and acting, relating these choices to an overall interpretation of the play. Ideally these productions should each be from a different century. However, if that is not possible, a wide separation in time is recommended.

Use reviews, biographies, and visual sources in your research. Because these sources are likely to be short, I recommend using at least 10 in total.

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The heart of this paper is research, so I do check sources. Use only primary sources and scholarly sources. Use of predigested websites, study guides, notes, and superficial sources will impact your grade.

I want you to do well with this paper, so please, discuss it with me. I might be able to suggest plays and other research materials that might be useful.

- The paper must be fully footnoted and include full citations, MLA style.
- The paper must be 8 to 11 pages long. (The citations are NOT included in the page count!)
- Outlines of research topics must submitted by October 21 at the latest
- The research paper is due December 6 at 5:00 pm.

3. **Play Reports.** Students are required to see two theater performances outside of PSU (opera and dance theater will also count). A two page response to each performance must be turned in at any point before exam period. The response should discuss elements of the production (such as performances, design, staging, etc) noting why the elements were effective—or not effective. NOTE: Play reports from other classes can not be accepted for this one.
4. **Exam.** The final exam will be a take home exam due in Mrs. Yawney's mailbox on December 7 at 5:00 pm.
5. **Group Presentations.** Groups will be assigned to make presentations. They will present a coordinated production plan for one of the plays read from the era to which they are assigned.

Group members may take on the roles of:

- director
- scenic designer
- costume designer
- lighting designer
- actor
- marketing specialist

Each group member will write a 150 word concept statement that explains how they would approach their function in the production. Together they should form a coherent picture of a possible production.

**Class Participation.** Students are expected to participate in class discussions and debates. For this reason, attendance is vital! Being on time is key! It is also important that you take the risk of putting your thoughts out there. Take the risk!

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### **Grading**

Quizzes	10%
Group Project	10%
Play Reports	5%
Research Paper	30%
Final Exam	30%
Class Participation	15%

*Note:* You must pass in each of the five evaluation areas to pass the course. That is to say, if you fail at one of the five (Quizzes, Paper, Reports Exam, Participation) you will fail the entire course—even if you are doing A-level work in the other four areas.

No make-ups or extensions will be given unless there is a hospital stay or death that prevents you from meeting your obligations.

### **Attendance**

Each student is allowed one unexcused absence per semester. Any further unexcused absences will result in your grade being lowered by a half point (i.e. A to B-). Absences are excused only in very serious circumstances and require documentation within a week of the absence.

If you accumulate four or more unexcused absences you will automatically fail the course. If you acquire four or more absences for a documented medical or personal emergency you may be required to repeat the course. You should also be aware that if you engage in any unprofessional or unsafe behavior during class you may be asked to leave the classroom. This will count as an unexcused absence. If you leave a class early this can be counted as an absence if the instructor desires.

Tardiness is unacceptable. If you arrive after attendance has been taken you will be marked as being late. Three “lates” equal one unexcused absence. If you are absent or tardy for a class you are responsible for the material and information covered in the class that day. You should also be aware that if an assignment is due and the entire class is unprepared the instructor has the right to cancel the class session that day and may give each student an unexcused absence if the situation warrants such action.

If for some reason you need to miss class arrange to get notes from a classmate.

### **Electronic Devices**

Electronic Devices will be used for quizzes. Outside of quizzes there are to be no open laptops, phones or other devices in class unless specifically asked.

**TURN OFF YOUR PHONE AND COMPUTER: THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED IN CLASS UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.**

### **ADA Policy**

Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements, should **contact the instructor during the first week of classes** to

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make the necessary accommodations and the appropriate verification should be presented by the student at that time. The Disability Center here on campus can further help facilitate these special arrangements.

**The Disability Center is located in GC 190  
The Disability Center: 305-348-3532**

**Schedule (subject to change)**

The following schedule and the assignments listed are subject to change.

The chapter numbers for **Living Theater** are not given because they differ from edition to edition. The page numbers given are from the 7th edition.

**Introduction**

M 8/26      Introduction

**Greek Theater**

W 8/28      Reading: Excerpts from **The Poetics** (handout)  
Topic: The Poetics  
Strategy: Debate

M 9/2      LABOR DAY- NO CLASS

W 9/4      Reading: **Living Theatre: Greek Theatre**, pp. 33-69  
Topic: Greek Theater Production  
Strategy: Creating Visual Models

F 9/6      Topic: Greek Theater Production (continued)

M 9/9      Reading: **Oedipus the King** (Oedipus Rex)  
Topic: Oedipus and Aristotle  
Strategy: Role Play

W 9/11      Reading: **The Bacchae**  
Topic: The Changing Language of Greek Theater

F 9/13      Topic: Greek Comedy (continued) and issues of translation

M 9/16      Topic: Ancient Greek Theater--Today

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### Roman Theater

- W 9/18      Reading: **Living Theatre: Roman Theatre**, pp. 71-93  
Topic:    Roman Theater Production  
GROUP A PRESENTATION  
Strategy: Team Presentations
- F 9/20      Topic:    TBA
- M 9/23      Reading: **Psuedolus (Act 1)**  
Topic:    Roman Comedy  
Strategy: Role Play
- W 9/25      Reading: **Thyestes**  
Topic:    Roman Tragedy  
Strategy: Debate
- F 9/27      Research Paper Guidelines

### Medieval Theater

- M 9/30      Reading: **Living Theatre: Medieval Theatres in Europe**, pp. 125-155  
Topic:    Theater in the Middle Ages  
GROUP B PRESENTATION  
Strategy: Team Presentation
- W 10/2      Reading: **Second Sheppard's Play**  
Topic:    Cycle Plays  
Strategy: Creating Visual Models
- F 10/4      Reading: **Eccyryman**  
Topic:    Moralities  
Strategy: Role Play

### Italian Renaissance Theater

- M 10/10     Reading: **Living Theatre: Theatre of the Italian Renaissance**, pp. 159-189  
Topic:    Dramatic Theory  
Strategy: Role Play
- W 10/9      Topic:    Scenography

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Strategy: Creating Visual Models

- F 10/11      Topic: Commedia dell'Arte  
                Strategy: Physical Demonstration

**English Renaissance Theater**

- M 10/14     Reading: **Living Theatre, Theatre of the English Renaissance**, pp. 191-229  
Topic: English Renaissance Drama—What We Know and What We Guess  
GROUP C PRESENTATION  
Strategy: Team Presentations

- W 10/16     Reading: **Antonio and Mellida** (on Blackboard)  
Topic: The Structure of English Renaissance Drama  
Strategy: Role Play

- F 10/18     Topic: TBA

- M 10/21     Topic: Production at the Globe and Blackfriars  
Strategy: Creating Visual Models  
RESEARCH PAPER OUTLINE DUE

- W 10/23     Reading: **Duchess of Malfi**  
Topic: Jacobean Drama  
Strategy: Role Play

- F 10/25     Topic: English Renaissance Theater--Today

**Sanskrit Theater**

- M 10/28     Topic: Four Principles

- W 10/30     Topic: Rasa  
Strategy: Physical Demonstration (Rasa Boxes)

**Spanish Golden Age Theater**

- F 11/1     Reading: **Living Theatre: Theatre of the Spanish Golden Age**, pp. 231-248  
Topic: Spanish Golden Age Theater in Performance

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GROUP D PRESENTATION  
Strategy: Team Presentations

- M 11/4      Reading: **Fuente Ovejuna**  
Topic: Lope de Vega  
Strategy: Role Play
- W 11/6      Topic: Spanish Golden Age Genres  
Strategy: Creating Visual Models

**French Neoclassic Theater**

- F 11/8      Reading: **Living Theatre: French Neoclassical Theatre**, pp. 241-269  
Topic: The Background of French Neoclassic Theater  
GROUP E PRESENTATION  
Strategy: Team Presentations

M 11/11 MEMORIAL DAY - NO CLASS

- W 11/13      Reading: **Le Cid Summary** (to be handed out in class)  
Topic: The Scandal of Le Cid  
Strategy: Debate

- F 11/15      Reading: **Tartuffe**  
Topic: Molière  
Strategy: Role Play

- M 11/18      Reading: **Rhaedra**  
Topic: Neoclassic Dramatic Theory Triumphs

- Noh Theater**  
W 11/20      Reading: **Atsumori**  
Topic: The Dramaturgy of Noh  
GROUP F PRESENTATION  
Strategy: Team Presentations

- F 11/22      Topic: Performer Training for Noh and Its Legacy  
Strategy: Creating Visual Models

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### **Restoration Theater**

M 11/25    Reading: **Living Theatre, Theatre of the English Restoration, pp. 273-301**

Topic: Restoration Filth

GROUP G PRESENTATION

Strategy: Team Presentations

W 11/27    Reading: **The Rover**

Topic: Production in the Restoration

Strategy: Creating Visual Models

F 11/29    THANKSGIVING BREAK -NO CLASS

M 12/2    Topic: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare

W 12/4    Topic: TBA

F 12/6    RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Final Exam Distributed (Cross-Cultural Analysis)

F 12/7/13    FINAL EXAM DUE BY 5 pm!!!

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and honestly to demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the Academic Misconduct procedures and sanctions, as outlined in the Student Handbook.

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