



**THE 542: DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN THEATRE
COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2016
THURSDAY 4:30 p.m. - 7:10 p.m.
PAC #112**

Instructor: Rebecca Worley, MFA, Assistant Professor of Theatre
Office Location: Performing Arts Center #105
Office Hours: MWF 10-11 a.m., T 11-noon, R 2-4 p.m. or by appointment
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COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbooks:

The Empty Space, Peter Brook

Theater of the Avant-Garde 1890-1950, Bert Cardullo and Robert Knopf

The Theatre and Its Double, Artaud

Towards a Poor Theatre, Jerzy Grotowski

Playing Underground: A Critical History of the 1960s Off-Off Broadway Movement, Stephen J. Bottoms

Hand-outs, journal articles, scripts, etc. Provided in class, via email or on eCollege

Required Viewing:

Eurydice

Directed by Rebecca Worley

Produced in the Main Stage Theatre by the University Playhouse at A&M Commerce

March 1-5 at 8 p.m. and March 6 at 3 p.m.

Luna

Directed by Dr. Carrie Klypchak

Produced in the Main Stage Theatre by the University Playhouse at A&M Commerce

May 5-7 at 6 p.m. and May 8 at 3 p.m.

with a special elementary school performance on May 6th at 9 a.m.

Tickets are available for a nominal fee from the University Playhouse Box Office (PAC 101) from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. Or, you may make advance reservations by phone at any time by calling 903-886-5900 or by email at playhouseboxoffice@tamuc.edu.

TAMU-C One-Act Play Festival

Thursday, March 10 and Friday, March 11

As part of this course, each student is required to successfully work at least one position shift in TAMU-C's One-Act Play Clinic/Festival on Thursday, March 10 or Friday, March 11. Most work shifts last approximately four to six hours and are scheduled throughout the day and evening hours.

**Note: Please understand that viewing a performance of both of the University Playhouse shows listed above and working at the One-Act Play Festival are absolute requirements of the course. Clear your schedule now! If you cannot attend all of these events, for whatever reason, you must consult with the instructor in advance in order to receive an alternate written assignment(s) for these portions of your overall grade in the course.*

Course Description:

A survey of the modern theatre from the rise of Naturalism to the present day, with attention being given to the theatrical conditions and changing intellectual climate of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. To develop a working background on the late 19th and early 20th century theatre, its plays and theories, that will assist students in making intelligent assessments regarding modern theatre.
2. Display a learned knowledge of the skills of the working theatre historian.
3. Synthesize academic research into cohesive scholarly writing and oral presentation.

Course Objectives:

To examine and appreciate the legacy of the late 19th and early 20th centuries with regard to contemporary theatre. To identify, with ease, historical antecedents at work on present theatrical practices. Particular emphasis will be placed on the influences of foundational theatrical giants Artaud, Brook, and Grotowski set against realism.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments:

Active Participation (10 pts): Your Active Participation will play a substantial role in acquiring your final grade – for good reason! This graduate course is structured to support a “community of learners.” In order to contribute to the community, you must come to class fully alert, prepared, and ready to actively participate in discussions of assigned readings or engagement in determined activities, etc. **Please be advised that your attendance at both University Playhouse productions and assistance with the UIL Festival will be considered part of your Active Participation grade.** Be aware that the “participation” aspect of your grade requires more than simply being present or arriving to class on time (although absences and late

arrivals/early departures will significantly reduce your Active Participation grade). *Please keep in mind that you must be present in order to participate.* Lack of demonstrable preparation will have a substantial negative impact on your course grade.

As graduate students you should realize the importance of acquiring skill in voicing your opinions during discussion in positive and respectful ways. Realize that sometimes you will have to agree to disagree with other members of the class. As I know that you all can do: avoid “knee-jerk reactions” and frame your comments respectfully, with scholarly intelligence, and as a point of academic discourse. *Disrespect, rudeness, or offensive language of any kind has no place in the classroom. If such an instance occurs (either toward another student or the instructor), I will ask the student to leave and/or substantial points will be reduced from the student’s Active Participation grade.*

Participation grades will be calculated daily and reflected upon/tabulated at the end of the semester. *Each student will begin with a mid-passing Participation grade of 8 points.* Strong effort or lack of effort during each class and over the course of the semester as a whole will either raise or lower that grade.

Talking Points (10 @ 2 pts = 20 pts.): Each student will complete ten lucid and cogent talking points for each class meeting. These can be in whatever format you choose (bullet points usually work best) but should be questions and/or comments (anything that can assist with a class discussion) that struck you while reading.

Precise (4 @ 5 pts = 20 pts.): Each student will complete four **organized** summaries of specified readings. These summaries should cover the major points made in the reading and should be anywhere from 3-10 pages in length. You may use bullet points, write in prose, make an outline, or a combination. If done correctly, these should be useful references/guides for our discussions of the readings (notate page numbers in MLA format).

Application Papers (2 @ 5 pts. = 10 pts. total): Students are required to attend performances of both Playhouse productions (clear your schedules NOW!). Students will submit papers that identify and discuss specific theories/theorists/practitioners discussed in class as they apply to contemporary productions. Papers should be approx. 3-4 pages, typed, 12 pt. font (or whatever your default font/size is), well-organized (complete sentences, full paragraphs). I will consider spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure in the grading. (See grading rubric in your syllabus). Papers are to be submitted via email. I will not accept hard copies of your papers.

Reading Presentations (2 @ 10 pts = 20 pts.): Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to lead two discussions over assigned readings, as well as provide supplementary material in the form of visual aids or activities. Each presentation/discussion should last **twenty-thirty minutes**. Although you are welcome to use a power point presentation as support for your ideas, please understand that you are responsible for leading and facilitating the class discussion as well – not just summarizing points and lecturing to the class. You should plan your presentation very carefully as you are developing a short lesson plan (shorter presentations will receive substantial grade deductions.) **You should provide each person in the class (including the instructor) with a handout or study guide.**

You must also come prepared with questions and topics to stimulate class discussion. One of the goals of this assignment is to give you an opportunity to hone your teaching and

presentation skills. Be imaginative in your presentational strategies, including audiovisual material, activities, etc. The student that is presenting is in charge of arranging for any equipment to be present in PAC 112 that is necessary for the day's activities. You will be graded on the content of your presentation/handout, the structure/construction of your presentation/handout, ability to lead class discussion effectively, ability to field your peers' questions, and the overall professionalism/preparedness exhibited.

Research Presentation (20 pts.): You will be required to facilitate a well-researched, detailed presentation on a topic of your own selection that is informed by theoretical and/or historical work in the fields of theatre and/or performance and that intersects with the topic of this course in some way. This includes: 1) reading and relating scripts to the theories at hand; 2) identifying subsequent theatrical practitioners who were influenced by the person(s) you research; 3) finding appropriate sources to share with the class; 4) conducting hands-on activities and/or sharing visual aids and leading the class discussion. **A packet of information on the topic must be assembled and distributed to the class.** This packet must include web addresses and bibliographical material for sources utilized in preparing it – so each of us may benefit later. This packet should be around 15-20 pages long. Since class meetings are 2 ½ hours long, you should vary our activities on the day you facilitate – some visuals, a little reading, a hands-on activity, and leave time for questions and discussion. Plan on actively engaging us for about 45 minutes. **YOU WILL TEACH THE CLASS.**

Please plan all elements of your presentation carefully and offer it to the class in a formal, well-rehearsed manner. You will be graded on the content and construction of your material, your preparedness, your ability to knowledgeably respond to questions from the audience, and the professionalism exhibited in your formal presentation and as an audience member. We will have additional in-depth discussion about the requirements of this assignment during class sessions.

Options for research presentations **You may **not** choose to focus on a topic for which you have provided a readings presentation in this class*:*

REALISM/NATURALISM

-Ibsen
-Shaw
-Chekhov

SYMBOLISM

-Maeterlinck
-Strindberg
-Appia/Craig

EXPRESSIONISM

-O'Neill
-Rice
-Treadwell

SURREALISM

-Appollinaire
-Breton
-Cocteau

-Bauhaus/Walter Gropius

CONSTRUCTIVISM

-Meyerhold

THEATRE OF THE GROTESQUE

-Pirandello

EPIC THEATRE

-Piscator/Brecht

THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

-Pinter
-Ionesco
-Beckett
-Genet

THEATRE OF THE 1960s

-Open Theatre
-Living Theatre
-Weiss
-La Mama/Ellen Stewart
-Caffe Cino
-Judson Poets' Theater
-Schechner

Grading:

The following grading scale will be used to determine all individual grades as well as the student's overall grade in the course:

90-100 =	A
80-89=	B
70-79=	C
60-69=	D
59 and below=	F

Please note: A grade of "A" will not be assigned to an individual who has not completed ALL outside of class assignments, regardless of average.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

WORKING EMAIL REQUIREMENT: It is a course expectation that you have a working email address that you check daily. If you have not already acquired an email address through the university or otherwise, please make arrangements to do so before the next class meeting. There WILL be times that I need to contact you with important information and email is often the speediest and easiest way of doing so. Additionally, I WILL provide electronic copies of the plays and supplemental reading through email.

WRITTEN WORK: Unfortunately, papers/projects do occasionally get lost. Please, for your sanity, save your work on a disc or thumb drive, etc. Do not depend on your paper staying on the hard drive of any university computer, as it will be deleted, altered, or worse – turned in by someone else as their work! Be aware that it is a course expectation that you keep copies of your assignments until you receive your final grade for the semester.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Contacting Me:

Please feel free to visit me during my office hours at any time during the semester. If you can't make my office hours due to a scheduling conflict, please set up an appointment with me. Communicate, communicate, communicate! If something is occurring that is presenting you with difficulties in this class, let me know. I cannot help you if I don't know what is going on.

The easiest and most reliable way to contact me is **via email**. I check it almost constantly. Please do not leave a message for me in the main department office.

Student Resources:

Department of Theatre

Performing Arts Center (PAC) #101

Phone: 903-886-5346 (Main Office)

<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/mmct/default.asp>

Communication Skills Center

Hall of Languages #103

<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/litlang/CSC/index.htm>

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES
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Attendance Policy:

Attendance is mandatory and grades will be lowered ½ letter grade per absence. That being said, I do understand that there are unavoidable, *emergency* situations in life. You are allowed two *emergency* absences in this course with no attendance grading penalty (although you are still responsible for all work during said absences).

Late Arrivals:

To further foster a high level of commitment—and because the work we will be doing this semester will involve intensive focus—the class will adopt the following late entry policy. Students must be on time for every class. Entering a class late or leaving early is disruptive to the flow of the class and indicative of a less than disciplined/committed artist. Please be on time out of consideration to your learning process and the processes of others. If you are late for class, your participation grade will reflect this. The class will begin promptly at 4:30 p.m.! If you arrive after 4:40 p.m., please do not enter the classroom (you will be marked absent regardless). If you arrive within the ten minute grace period, please do so discretely in order to avoid disrupting the class activities/discussions. *It is your responsibility to make sure that you find me after class and document your late attendance for the day—otherwise, your initial marked absence documented during roll will remain.* Also, you are expected to stay until you are dismissed from class. An early departure will significantly reduce your participation grade as well. **Two late arrivals (within the ten-minute grace period) or early departures (or any combination of the two) may be counted as one absence in the class.**

Cell Phones and Laptops:

Please turn off all cell phones upon entering the classroom. Please do not check messages or engage in text messaging during class. This is disruptive to the flow of the course. Further, you are welcome to take class notes on a laptop or other electronic device. However, these devices should only be used for taking notes over the current discussions/activities – and you must type

very quietly and turn off all sound so as not to disturb other class members. If I suspect that laptops are being used for other purposes, I will ban them from the classroom.

Late Work:

I do not accept late work.

Extra Credit:

As a general rule, there is no extra credit offered in this class – please, do not even ask.

Incompletes:

Under normal circumstances, an Incomplete (I or X) will NOT be given for a final grade in this course. Per University policy, students who **because of circumstances beyond their control** are unable to attend classes will, upon approval of their instructor, receive a mark of X (incomplete) in all courses in which they were **maintaining passing grades at the time of the request** for an incomplete.

University Specific Procedures:

Academic Dishonesty:

This course adheres strictly to the college's guidelines for Academic Dishonesty printed in the *Student's Guide Handbook*. Plagiarism, cheating, or otherwise representing another's work or ideas as your own without proper attribution will not be tolerated. All work must be new and created for this class during this semester by you. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand the definition of Academic Dishonesty at Texas A&M-Commerce. If such an instance occurs, the student will receive an automatic zero for the work in question, and I will immediately report the incident to the Head of the Department. (*You should be aware that this could result in dismissal from school without credit for the semester.*)

Students with a Disability:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct:

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Reading and Assignments are due on the days on which they are listed below.

WEEK ONE

Jan 21 Introduction to course & assignments
Introductory Discussion: efficacy of theatre for social change across time/Create timeline
In-class article readings/discussion
**Determine Reading Presentation assignments

Monday, January 25 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 80% REFUND

WEEK TWO

Jan 28 **NO CLASS – TETA**
Library Day – Independent Research/Reading Presentation Development

(TETA Convention 1/28-1/31)

Monday, February 1 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 70% REFUND

**Wednesday, February 3 - CENSUS DAY
LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITH REFUND**

WEEK THREE

Feb 4 **Reading:** *The Empty Space* (in its entirety) and articles on Peter Brook distributed in last class/on eCollege
Talking Points #1 due
Precise #1 due
Discuss Peter Brook
Facilitator for Brook: _____

Monday, February 8 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 50% REFUND

WEEK FOUR

- Feb 11 **Reading:** “En Garde. . .” in Cardullo AND **re-familiarize yourself with a Realistic play** (Ibsen or Chekhov for example)
Talking Points #2 due
Review any brief and basic sources on late 19th – early 20th c. theatre on the theatrical ISMs (example-appropriate chapters in Brockett or in an Intro to the Theatre text)
In Class: Begin chronological exploration of theories and styles.
Discuss Realism *versus* Non-Realism, etc.

Monday, February 15 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH 25% REFUND

WEEK FIVE

- Feb 18 **Reading:** “Franco-Russian Symbolism” and “Pataphysical Theater” (pp. 41-125)
Talking Points #3 due
The Chalky White Substance, “Ubu” (hand-outs to be read in class)
Select expressionistic plays to read for March 3rd
Students should have spoken to me individually and decided on their research topic
Facilitator for Symbolism: _____

Facilitator for Pataphysical Theater: _____

WEEK SIX

- Feb 25 **FUTURISM AND DADA**
Reading: “Italian Futurism” pp. 187-206; “Dada” pp. 264-289 in Cardullo
Talking Points #4 due
Scenes from Tom Stoppard’s *Travesties* in class

Facilitator for Futurism: _____

Facilitator for Dada: _____

(DoT Production *Eurydice* March 1-6)

WEEK SEVEN

- Mar 3 **EXPRESSIONISM & SURREALISM**
Reading: “German Expressionism,” pp. 207-263; “French Surrealism” pp. 327-372 in Cardullo; Expressionistic play determined in advance: *Machinal*, *The Hairy Ape*, *A Dream Play*, *The Adding Machine*, or another expressionistic play of your choice; *The Breast of Tiresias* (hand-out for use in class)
Talking Points #5 due

Facilitator for Expressionism: _____

Facilitator for Surrealism: _____

WEEK EIGHT

Mar 10 *Eurydice* paper DUE **via email!**
NO CLASS – UIL OAP CLINIC

(UIL OAP Clinic 3/10-11)

*****Spring Break March 14-20*****

WEEK NINE

Mar 24 **THEATRE OF CRUELTY**
Reading: “The Theatre of Cruelty” pp. 373-388 in Cardullo; *The Theatre and Its Double*
Discuss Artaud
Talking Points #6 due
Precise #2 due
Facilitator for Theatre of Cruelty: _____

WEEK TEN

Mar 31 **POOR THEATRE**
Reading: Begin *Towards a Poor Theatre*
Discuss Grotowski
Talking Points # 7 due
View clips

Sunday, April 3 - LAST DAY TO DROP A CLASS WITH Q GRADE

WEEK ELEVEN

Apr 7 **Reading:** Finish *Towards a Poor Theatre*
Talking Points #8 due
Precise #3 due
Facilitator for Grotowski: _____
Continue discussion

WEEK TWELVE

Apr 14 **Reading:** *Playing Underground*, to pp. 191 (beginning-“The Open Theatre Transformations”)
Plays: The Living Theatre’s *The Brig* or *The Connection*
Living Theatre clips
Talking Points #9 due
Facilitator for the Caffe Cino: _____

Facilitator for the Living Theatre: _____

WEEK THIRTEEN

Apr 21 **NO CLASS – UIL OAP REGIONAL CONTEST**

WEEK FOURTEEN

Apr 28 **Reading:** *Playing Underground*, pp. 192-end (“La Mama Troupe: The Kernel of Craziness”-“Signals through the Flames: The Afterlife of a Movement”)

Plays: *The Serpent* or *Terminal*

Talking Points #10 due

Precise #4 due

Wrap-up/Discuss Final

Facilitator for Open Theatre: _____

Facilitator for La Mama: _____

Friday, April 29 - LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW

(DoT Production *Luna* May 3-8)

WEEK FIFTEEN

May 5 Begin Research Presentations

WEEK SIXTEEN – FINALS WEEK – May 9-13

FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY, May 12th 4:30 p.m. – 7:10 p.m.

Luna paper DUE **via email** by the Final Exam!

OFFICIAL RUBRIC -
Grading of Performance Response Essays

Format and Details 1.5 pts.

- Does the author have a clear introductory paragraph that expresses the goal(s) of the overall paper (See prompt.)?
- Does the opening sentence draw the reader in?
- Does the author clearly state a thesis and go on to support it?
- Does the author identify specific examples from the script or production?
- Does the author stay clearly in the past tense?
- Did the author proofread carefully for proper grammar and misspelled words?
- Is paragraphing appropriate (parallel to changing ideas)?
- Is there a concluding paragraph?

Content 1.5 pts.

- Does the author clearly discuss topic(s) outlined in the prompt?
- Are there specific examples from the text/performance to support the argument?
- Is there unnecessary information (such as recounting the plot versus using plot points to support argument)?
- Is the information in the performance response essay accurate?
- Does the author balance their opinion/interpretation with concrete examples from the text/performance?
- Is the author concentrating on what was written or presented as opposed to what was missing or what they preferred to see?

Style and Flow 1.5 pts.

- Does the paper flow smoothly?
- Is there a clear and logical organization to the paper?
- Does the author make clean, logical transitions from idea to idea?
- Does the author use theatrical terms appropriately?
- Does the author clearly write for an appropriate audience (instructor and peers)?

.5 “free floating point” to be used as + or – at the instructor’s discretion.