

THEATRE APPRECIATION

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Course Number: FTA 1000 Section: 001

Semester: Fall 2017

INSTRUCTOR:

Ryan Michael Decker
PAC 351, by appointment
rmdecke1@uno.edu

MEETINGS:

Monday/Wednesday
4:00-5:30 p.m.
PAC 313

CREDIT:

3 units towards UNO
general requirements for
Arts or Electives

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

FTCA 1000 is an introductory course for students interested in understanding and appreciating the art of theatre. Our work will focus on the artists and technicians who create theatre, the history of theatre, and an examination of the process involved in producing contemporary theatre. No prior knowledge of theatre is required. Class structure is based on class lectures and discussions from readings in the required text, viewing of video material, and required attendance at two (2) UNO theatre performances. This class does not involve the actual production of a play or performance training. No laboratory hours are required for this course.

COURSE OUTCOMES:

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- identify and explain selected major events and movements in theatre history;
- analyze the artistic quality of acting, playwriting, directing, and design;
- recognize the basic components of live performance.

The student should also gain an enhanced appreciation of the Theatre Arts.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles
- *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare
- *A Doll's House* by Henrick Ibsen
- *Fences* by August Wilson

ACCOMPLISHING OUTCOMES (HOW GRADES ARE DETERMINED):

- Play Reading Quizzes (8%)
- Design & Analysis Assignments (12%)
- Play Attendance & Critique Papers (20%)
- Creation Myth Project (20%)
- Final Exam (40%)

PLAY READING QUIZZES:

5 points each, 20 points total

This semester, we will read the plays *Oedipus Rex*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Doll's House*, *Fences*. On the day reading assignments are due, we will have 5-point, short answer quizzes to test your reading.

DESIGN & ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENTS:

10 points each, 30 points total

As we progress through the semester, we will cover theatre history and placing its literature into the context of contemporary theatre practice. Assignments to achieve this include: a set design for *Oedipus Rex*; a costume design for a character from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; the third assignment will be a script analysis or character analysis for either *A Doll's House* or *Fences*.

PLAY ATTENDANCE & CRITIQUES:

25 points each, 50 points total

You are required to attend two (2) Theatre UNO productions this semester and write a critique on each. You are responsible for purchasing or otherwise gaining your own admission to each performance. Your paper must be at least two (2) pages in length, typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins and an MLA-style header. Papers should be your evaluation of the theatrical experience using terminology and concepts presented in class. You are to write on you thought was successful and/or unsuccessful and why; this may include, but is not limited to the script, performances, and/or production elements. Be honest and respectful in your papers. **A summary of the play will not count toward your two-page minimum.** Papers are due in class shortly following the final performance of each show (listed in Course Outline), accompanied by a show program or ticket stub. For Theatre UNO performance information and tickets, visit www.theatre.uno.edu.

***** Not seeing a performance does not excuse you from your required attendance nor the assignment!
*** IF YOU CANNOT MEET THIS REQUIREMENT, YOU NEED TO DROP THIS COURSE!**

Extra Credit: Periodically, additional theatre attendance opportunities will be announced in class. If you would like to attend these performances and write additional two-page critiques, you may receive 10 extra credit points each, up to 40 points (4 additional shows). **Required critiques of Theatre UNO performance must be completed and submitted on time to be eligible.** The last day to submit extra credit is the final.

CREATION MYTH PROJECT

50 points possible

In the second half of the semester, we will put our understanding of theatre into practice with a small group project/performance. You will be assigned into a group and together you will “write,” design, and present a small, devised performance of a particular creation myth. These projects will be evaluated on completion, participation, and effort – **not** the quality of the performances or production elements.

FINAL EXAM:

100 points possible

A comprehensive exam of the semester, via Scranton, will take place during the designated UNO final period.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT:

- Be in class on time. Tardiness is disrespectful to your instructor as well as your classmates.
- Turn off all cell phones before you walk through the door. TEXTING WILL NOT BE PERMITTED DURING LECTURES. IF I SEE YOU DOING IT, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE.
- Go to the bathroom before class begins.
- Please raise your hand to comment or question.
- Respect our classroom. Do not leave your trash behind.
- You are expected to prepare for each class and be ready for active engagement and discussion.
- Civility in the classroom and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in class.
- Courteous behavior and responses are expected. Exercise caution and tact when discussing issues of gender, sexuality, religion, or political viewpoints that differ from your own. Disagreement is an opportunity to learn and to expand your world view.

PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE CONDUCT:

Arrive early (no later than 15 minutes before curtain.) If you arrive at performance time, you are late and may not be seated. Turn OFF your cell phone! Never talk or text while a play is in progress. This is disrespectful to the performers as well as those around you. Comments of any kind are disrespectful to the performers and other audience members. Inappropriate responses of any kind during the performance could result in your ejection from the theatre and prompt failure of the course, without exception.

COURSE & UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Attendance: Attendance is required. You will be permitted two absences during the semester. Subsequent absences – for any reason – will result in a **deduction of 15 points (6%) of your overall grade**, per offense.

* *Exceptions may only be made in the most serious of uncontrollable circumstances at this instructor's discretion with official documentation and advanced notice.*

Tardiness: Two tardies will be equivalent to one absence and bear the same consequences.

Missed/Late Work: Work submitted one day late will be deducted 50%; work submitted any later will receive zero (0) points. Missed quizzes, exams, and performances cannot be made-up or rescheduled.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for further information. The Code is available online at <http://www.studentaffairs.uno.edu>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services as well as their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. For more information, please go to <http://www.ods.uno.edu>.

COURSE OUTLINE:

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

18 Aug, R	Introduction, Syllabus & Expectations	
23 Aug, T	Lecture: Ritual, Storytelling, Theatre & Performance Theory	
25 Aug, R	Lecture: Greek & Roman Theatre	
30 Aug, T	Interview: Set/Lighting Designers	<i>Oedipus Rex</i> Due
1 Sept, R	Lecture: Medieval & Restoration Theatre	
6 Sept, T	Watch: <i>Doctor Faustus</i>	Set Design Assignment Due
8 Sept, R	Lecture: Elizabethan Theatre	
13 Sept, T	Interview: Costume Designer	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> Due
15 Sept, R	Lecture: Theatrical Conventions	
20 Sept, T	Watch: <i>Hamlet</i>	Costume Design Assignment Due
22 Sept, R	Lecture: Modern Theatre	
27 Sept, T	Interview: Director/Actor	<i>A Doll's House</i> Due
29 Sept, R	Activity: Elliptical Scenes	
4 Oct, T	Watch: <i>Uncle Vanya</i>	Script Analysis Assignment Due
6 Oct, R	Lecture: Contemporary Theatre	
11 Oct, T	Interview: Playwright	<i>Fences</i> Due
13 Oct, R	OFF – MID-SEMESTER BREAK	
18 Oct, T	Interview: Stage Manager	
20 Oct, R	Tour the Performing Arts Center	
25 Oct, T	Discuss: <i>Airline Highway</i>	1st Critique Paper Due
27 Oct, R	Lecture: Musical Theatre, Asian Theatre	
1 Nov, T	Watch: <i>Rocky Horror</i>	
3 Nov, R	Creation Myth Devising	
8 Nov, T	Creation Myth Devising	
10 Nov, R	Creation Myth Devising	
15 Nov, T	Creation Myth Devising	
17 Nov, R	Perform: Creation Performances	
22 Nov, T	Discuss: <i>The Aliens</i>	2nd Critique Paper Due
24 Nov, R	OFF – THANKSGIVING BREAK	
29 Nov, T	Final Review (Pt. 1): History, Literature	
1 Dec, R	Final Review (Pt. 2): Artists, Processes	

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including discussions/activities, project and performance due dates, and test dates, when unforeseen circumstances occur. These changes will be announced as early as possible so that students can adjust their schedules.