

# THEATRE APPRECIATION

## THE2000 – Spring 2018

Monday & Wednesday: 11:45--12:35 (Carleton 100)

Friday: (check schedule for time and location)

Professor: Dr. Charlie Mitchell  
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(McGuire is attached to the Reitz Union)  
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### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to expose you to live theatre so that you will better appreciate its complexities and cultural importance. Over the course of the semester, you will look behind the scenes in order to explore the collaborative processes that make it work. In addition to studying some of the literature, theories, history, forms, and styles of theatre, you will explore how influences such as ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and economic class shape the experience of theatre in the United States. You will also learn to write and speak critically about theatrical production. This course fulfills a general education and diversity requirement.

### GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives. In-class lectures will provide the framework for understanding the theatrical arts and how they connect to the human experience. Additional instruction will come through textbook and play reading augmented by the watching of live theatre.

### GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES FOR DIVERSITY

Diversity courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that create cultural differences within the United States. These courses encourage students to recognize how social roles and status affect different groups in the United States. Students are expected to analyze and evaluate their own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures, and to distinguish opportunities and constraints faced by other persons and groups. Lectures will emphasize the struggles and theatrical contributions of marginalized groups while the reading discussion of assigned plays by “hyphenated” Americans will provide a context for understanding how cultural differences have been negotiated in this country.

### GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Content:** Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline.

**Communication:** Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline.

**Critical Thinking:** Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline-specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. Student learning outcomes will be assessed in various ways. Exams and quizzes on assigned readings will test mastery of content. Communication and critical thinking will be tested through the writing of papers that critique live performance, creative projects that interpret the symbology of theatrical texts, and performance in class discussions.

## REQUIREMENTS

- You will do a close reading of all plays and supplemental material. There will be several quizzes given throughout the semester based on your reading.
- You will see three specific shows and write a production critique about each one. I will post guidelines on Canvas.
- You will complete two creative projects. I will post guidelines.
- There will be three exams and a final based on the lectures and assigned reading. I will provide a topic list a few days before an exam. I do not give early exams - *no exceptions*. Exam dates are provided on the Course Outline but are subject to change. Make your family aware of the final exam date before they make holiday travel plans. I am prohibited from giving the final exam earlier than scheduled.

## REQUIRED PLAYS

The following texts should be available in the bookstore:

*Theatrical Worlds*, ed. Charlie Mitchell (University Press of Florida)

This book was developed in response to the high cost of theatre textbooks which commonly retail between \$90 and \$120 for new editions. I receive no royalties from the sale of this book. A free pdf version is available at <https://opencoursetheatretextbook.wordpress.com/> but most students find that a physical copy is easier to read and study.

*Fat Pig* by Neil LaBute

*A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry

*M. Butterfly* by David Henry Hwang

*Honky* by Greg Kalleres

*Anna in the Tropics* by Nilo Cruz

*The Laramie Project* by Moises Kaufman (the bookstore may have ordered a version which includes an additional piece entitled *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*. You are only responsible for *The Laramie Project*.)

*Machinal* by Sophie Treadwell

You can purchase *any* edition of these plays from any source but get them *at the beginning of the semester*. After a few weeks, unsold books in the campus bookstore are returned to the publishers. There is no valid excuse for not locating a copy of the play, including waiting for third party vendors.

## CANVAS

Grades, additional readings, and paper/project guidelines will be posted on the class website in Canvas. Log on to <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>, click the orange button that reads "LOG IN TO E-

LEARNING,” and then enter your Gatorlink username and password. This course should appear if you are officially registered. If you require technical assistance with your computer, start with the UF Computing Help Desk at <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>.

## REQUIRED PERFORMANCES

For this class, you are required to see three shows which will be the basis for three short papers and may also be the topic of exam questions. You will be given a coupon which you will trade for a ticket. The exact process will be explained in class.

### Extra Credit Opportunity:

The *only* extra credit offered in this course is providing proof that you have seen a Florida Players or Hippodrome Theatre show. Details will be provided in class.

## BREAKOUT SESSIONS and TA's

Every week on Friday (see your schedule), your section will meet in a different classroom with one of my teaching assistants (TA's). During these sessions, you will discuss assigned reading, do activities, or take exams. When discussing plays, it is expected that you will bring the text to class and share your opinions and observations. At the end of the semester, your TA will assign you a grade in Participation (see "Grade Breakdown"). This grade will be based on your degree of involvement in breakout sessions as well as attendance (see below). This means that simply showing up to class is not enough to earn an A in Participation. If you have any questions about the course or course material, contact me. If you have questions about missing grades, contact your TA.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

You are expected to attend all lectures and breakout sessions. You are responsible for all material covered. If you miss a class, get the notes from a friend. The following attendance policy begins the first day you are enrolled in the course: You can miss two unexcused classes without penalty. Your third unexcused absence will automatically assure that the highest grade you can receive in Participation is a B, four unexcused absences will drop that level to a C, and ***five unexcused absences will earn you a failing grade for the entire course.*** The following absences are excused: illness (doctor's note required), religious holidays, and participation in official university activities. Weddings, job interviews, and other life events do not count as excused absences. If you have a logistical problem that is preventing you from arriving to class on time, notify your TA immediately. Being late three times equals one absence. Share all attendance documentation with your TA.

*Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog at*

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

## GRADE BREAKDOWN

Three Exams	45%
Production Critiques	15%
Quizzes	15%
Final Exam	10%

Participation	10% (assigned by your TA)
Production Projects (2)	5%

I do not curve grades or drop low grades.

### SCALE

	96-100	Reserved for Outstanding Effort
A	93-95	Superior Effort
A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	
B	83-86	Good Effort
B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	
C	73-76	Average Effort
C-	70-72	
D+	67-69	
D	63-66	Minimum Effort
D-	60-63	
E	59-	

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points can be found in the online catalog at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

### CLASS CONDUCT

Classes of this size demand a mutual respect to function positively. Therefore, there will be no cell phone use (including texting), sleeping, eating, drinking, doing work for other classes, reading, or disruptive talking. If you engage in any of these behaviors, you will be ejected by me or one of my teaching assistants. Notes must be taken by hand. No laptops, netbooks or tablet computers can be open once class has begun. If you have special needs that require a computer, you must get permission from me.

### HONOR CODE

As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: "I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University." ***If you cheat on a test or quiz, or plagiarize material, i.e., use someone else's words or ideas without attribution, you will automatically receive a failing grade in this class.*** Ignorance of the definition of plagiarism or the absence of intent to deceive does not constitute an acceptable defense in matters of scholarly dishonesty.

### LEARNING DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be

presented to the instructor when requesting accommodations. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

## **AVAILABILITY**

If you have something you want to discuss with me, feel free to stop by during my office hours. You are my student - you are never “bothering” me. During these hours, I encourage you to bring drafts of your papers and projects or ask about lecture material. I will be happy to go over your work and suggest improvements. If your schedule conflicts with my office hours, see me before or after class and we will come up with another time to meet.

## **EVALUATIONS**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Your ongoing enrollment is confirmation that you understand and will comply with the requirements of this course. I reserve the right to alter the syllabus and course outline if necessary.