

Syllabus

Introduction to Theater

THR K101, T01 10756

1:00-2:15pm Tuesday and Thursday

Room B125

Three Rivers Community College

Spring 2010

Instructor: Leigh Cremin
Office Hours: By appointment before or after class
Office Location: Adjunct Faculty Office, D205
TRCC Email: LCremin@TRCC.COMMNET.EDU
Preferred email: leigh.cremin@gmail.com

Course Description

Welcome to Introduction to Theater! This course introduces students to all the aspects of creating, producing, performing, and watching stage productions. Students read and answer questions in an instructional textbook, read and also watch video excerpts from a dozen plays, write three papers, and engage in exercises and activities designed to provide a hands-on introduction into the art of bringing a dramatic text to life onstage.

Course Objectives

In this course, you will:
learn how to analyze dramatic structure and classify genre,
gain familiarity with the various types of performance venues,
learn the functions and processes of theater personnel,
develop a lexicon of the theater,
read plays from throughout the history of Western civilization,
analyze and evaluate theater works both as literature and spectacle.

Texts

Intro to the Art of Theatre by Marsh Cassady [ISBN:9781566081177]
Theatre Alive! by Norman Bert [ISBN:1566080088]

Other Required Materials

A personalized account and blog in The Writing Studio at www.writing.colostate.edu.
Attendance at one professional theater production by the end of March.

Grading

You will be graded on the following three assignment categories.

Course Grade %

Chapter Questions and Written Exercises: Read the chapter, and afterward, answer in full sentences the questions at the end of the chapter. Type your answers in

25.00

Word, and then cut and paste them on your blog in The Writing Studio. There are ten chapters, and two written exercises.

Papers and Presentation: This category has a grade for your Analysis Paper, your Theater Review, your Concept Paper, and your Concept Presentation. Any drafts of papers due are not for a grade, just your benefit. Drafts are peer-workshopped in class and offer great feedback on your ideas and writing. 25.00

Participation: The participation grade reflects your participation, and therefore your preparation for, class discussions, activities, and exercises. Arriving late, leaving early, absence, and not doing the reading will lower your grade in this category. 50.00

All assignments are worth 12 points. For Paper One and Two, a scoring rubric is used. All other assignments are marked with a check, check plus, or check minus. Here is the grade conversion from a 12 point scale to 100 percentile:

12=100, 11.5=96, 11=92, 10.5=87, 10=83, 9.5=79, 9=75, 8.5=71, 8=67, 7.5=63, 7=58

√+ (11.5) equals 96 = A
 √ (10) equals 83 = B
 √- (8.5) equals 71 = C-

Paper Formatting Guidelines

1. Use 1" margins.
2. Each page should have a right-aligned header containing only your last name and the page number.
3. Do not include a title page.
4. Use only 12 point Times New Roman font in black ink.
5. The first page should have the following information left-aligned:
 Student's Name
 Instructor's Name
 Course
 Date
 Assignment Title (from Course Outline)
6. Double-space all text in papers.
7. Entitle all papers, but do not add spaces around the title, nor put the title in italics, bold print, or underlined. Center the title.

Attendance and Preparation

Please come to every class session on time and prepared. In the rare event you are not prepared, please come to class anyway. You are a vital part of this community.

Every class will have an activity, either a written or verbal exercise, for which you will receive a participation grade. The grade cannot be made up in the event of an absence or failing score; however, the lowest grade will be dropped and not averaged into your final grade.

If you missed a class, and need the handout, I will leave extra copies for one week in the box that has my name on it in the Adjunct Faculty Office, D205.

If you are exhibiting flu-like symptoms (especially with a fever of 100 or greater,) please do not come to class, and arrange an appointment with me so that we may discuss make-up classes. When in school, please be vigilant about containing the spread of germs, e.g. carry tissues, wash your hands frequently, and consider using sanitizing gel or wipes on hands and work areas.

Please turn off all cell phones and other technologies before class begins, and do not use them during class. Please leave the classroom and all work areas neat and tidy for the next class that will use the space.

Late Work Policy

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Any assignments not turned in on time will have five points deducted for each day that it is late, including the day it was due, if not submitted at the beginning of class. Late work may be put in my mailbox in the Adjunct Faculty Office in D205. Any assignments other than papers are also due at the beginning of class on the due date. If you were absent when an assignment other than a paper was due, you must bring the assignment to the next class meeting. Any submission after that carries the same grade reduction of five points off per day past the due date. If you are going to be absent on the day one of the papers is due, please electronically submit the paper, by the time class starts on the due date, into the assignment drop box in The Writing Studio, and bring a hard-copy to the next class meeting.

Academic Dishonesty Zero-Tolerance Policy

Academic Dishonesty shall in general mean conduct which has as its intent or effect the false representation of a student's academic performance, including but not limited to (a) cheating on an examination, (b) collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course, (c) plagiarizing, including the submission of others' ideas or papers (whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained) as one's own, (d) stealing or having unauthorized access to examination or course materials, (e) falsifying records of laboratory or other data, (f) submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course, and (g) knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or

performed.

In short, please paraphrase or cite a direct quotation giving the author credit because any other use of someone's writing is stealing, and subject to expulsion from the class. Any acts of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will be referred to the Chair of Humanities.

Inclement Weather and Class Cancellation

In the event of inclement weather, students should call the college's main number at 860-886-0177. There will be a recorded message indicating whether or not classes are being held.

I typically am in the classroom at least ten minutes before class. In the rare event that I am not in the classroom at the beginning of class, college policy requests that students wait twenty minutes before leaving the classroom if the instructor has not arrived. If I cancel class, I will send an email through The Writing Studio and also will ask the Academic Division to post a notice on the classroom door.

On occasion, class has to relocate. I will send an email if I have advance notice, and otherwise, the new location will be written on the whiteboard in the classroom.

Disabilities Statement

If you have a hidden or visible disability which may require class modifications, please notify me as soon as possible. Students with Learning Disabilities should contact the Learning Specialist, Chris Scarborough at 860.892.5751 or at cscarborough@trcc.commnet.edu as soon as possible to ensure timely accommodations. Students with Physical Disabilities should contact Judy Hilburger at 860.892.5744 or at jhilburger@trcc.commnet.edu, or Matt Liscum at 860.383.5420 or via email at mliscum@trcc.commnet.edu to facilitate accommodations.

Special Accommodations and Tutorials

Please bring any required special accommodations to my attention within one week of today along with any documentation from medical professionals to support your request. I can make suggestions for resources to accommodate special needs for non-medically ordained special needs.

The campus writing center, services within The Writing Studio at writing.colostate.edu, and I, are available for extra help at any time and for any reason. This is your course, your education. Embrace the tools and resources available to ensure your scholastic achievement and vocational preparedness.

The Writing Studio

The Writing Studio (TWS) is free online courseware similar to what Three Rivers uses called Blackboard Vista. Special features of TWS include a "Feedback" tab where students can submit papers for critiquing and suggestions. Also, a class blog allows you to post your answers online, and an assignment drop-box is available to submit

assignments in case you are absent from class. Your account in TWS allows you to send email to anyone in the class, but please remember that you can not hit "reply" to answer a message sent from TWS since it does not act as your email storage box (like yahoo, or gmail, etc.) Another great feature is a function that allows you to create an online electronic portfolio.

In case of the Fire Alarm

In case of the Fire Alarm, or another emergency that requires us to vacate the classroom, please take only your jackets, and go directly outside to our agreed meeting place. In the event that you are out of the classroom during an emergency as such, please exit the nearest door, walk around the building, and join us in the agreed meeting place. I will take attendance outside to ensure that all are safely out of the building.

Schedule of Classes (subject to revision)

Thurs Jan 21	Welcome & TWS
Tue Jan 26	ch 10 Reviewer & Theater games
Thurs Jan 28	Support Your Local Police and The Stolen White Elephant (fiction)
Tue Feb 2	ch 1 Theater and Drama
Thurs Feb 4 NO CLASS	College Professional Day -- classes not in session
Tue Feb 9	ch 2 Dramatic Genre & ch 3 Dramatic Style
Thurs Feb 11	Death of a Salesman
Tue Feb 16	ch 4 Dramatic Structure
Thurs Feb 18	The Philadelphia and Sure Thing
Tue Feb 23	Medea
Thurs Feb 25	structure of Support...Police, Medea, Salesman, Phila, Sure Thing
Tue Mar 2 Analysis Draft Due	workshop draft
Thurs Mar 4 Analysis Final Due	fable exercise/Everyman
Tue Mar 9 NO CLASS	Spring Break--no class
Thurs Mar 11 NO CLASS	Spring Break--no class
Tue Mar 16	ch 5 Playwright
Thurs Mar 18	fable scripts/He Who Says Yes
Tue Mar 23	ch 6 Actor
Thurs Mar 25	social rep exercise/The Hypochondriac
Tue Mar 30 Last day to turn in Theater Review	acting techniques
Thurs Apr 1	character sketch/
Tue Apr 6	ch 7 Director
Thurs Apr 8	

Tue Apr 13	great directors
Thurs Apr 15	
Tue Apr 20	ch 8 Designers
Thurs Apr 22	
Tue Apr 27	great designs
Thurs Apr 29	
Tue May 4	ch 9 Business side
Thurs May 6 Concept Paper Draft due	workshop draft
Tue May 11 Concept Paper Due	concept presentations
Thurs May 13 Last class	concept presentations
Tues May 18 *Supplemental	*Supplemental

Descriptions of Assignments

1) Chapter Questions

Each week, read the assigned chapter in Intro to the Art of Theater. Answer the questions at the end of the chapter using complete sentences. Do your work in Microsoft Word and save and print it. Then, cut and paste your answers as a new entry on your blog in The Writing Studio. Bring the printed copy (aka hardcopy,) to class for reference during discussion.

2) Paper One: Analysis

Approximately one third into the semester, you will bring a rough draft of a 3-5 page paper that analyzes one of the plays we have read so far in class. The elements you choose to use for analysis are up to you. Possible approaches include analyzing dramatic structure, or discussion of any of the topics in bold writing in the chapters, such as universality. The paper will be workshopped in class utilizing a classmate's feedback on content, organization, grammar, and MLA mechanics. During the workshop, I will check and possibly suggest revision to the paper's thesis statement. To the next class meeting, you will bring a hardcopy of the paper revised, proofread, and ready for grading.

3) Theater Review

Every theater student is expected to see and review a professional theater production before Spring Recess. The criteria used for a review is in chapter 10, the first chapter we cover in class. After seeing a production, you will submit a 3-5 page paper that evaluates what you experienced, describing the production's overall tone, the special effects and characterizations used to create that tone, and the audience's reception of the production. The best time to write a review is right after seeing the production, when the details are still fresh in your mind. The Theater Review should discuss a drama, preferably not a musical, and may be turned in any time prior to the final due date.

In the past, TheaterWorks in Hartford has hosted a free matinee for Three Rivers theater students. Additionally, the TRCC Lone Juliet club, and the Student Programs Office has coordinated trips to professional theatres at discounted rates. Area professional theaters include Hartford Stage and TheaterWorks in Hartford; Yale Repertory Theater, Yale Cabaret, University Theater, and Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven; CRT at UCONN in Storrs; Ivoryton Playhouse in Ivoryton (near Old Saybrook,) and Garde Arts Center in New London. Every theater offers student discounts on tickets. Check theater websites for diagrams of the seating and season information, and availability of special ticket offers.

4) & 5) Paper Two and Presentation: Concept

Instead of a final exam, the Concept Paper and Presentation give you the opportunity to apply all you have learned over the course of the semester. The Concept Paper, also first peer-workshopped in class and then revised for submittal, describes an overall directing concept for a stage production of any of the plays we read over the course of the semester, and elaborates on a specific production value, such as scenic design. You may choose a different play to develop a concept for, but please have it approved by me before you begin working on it.

For the presentation of your concept, you will verbally describe your directing concept and specific production value. Additionally, you will share with the class some illustration of the production value to give us a visual or aural idea of your concept. We will discuss this more as we get closer to the project's preparation time and due date. Past presentations have included a costume demonstration, a set model, a full-color poster, and an abbreviated video version of a play. Only one "art project" to accompany your explanation is required, and the presentation is not longer than five minutes.

6) Written theater exercises, and 7) Participation in class discussions and activities

Throughout the semester, you will participate in theater games that develop skills in observation and collaboration. Likewise, written exercises contribute to improvement in these skills, reinforce learning of key concepts, and provide opportunities to synthesize and apply new knowledge. Theater is a collaborative art, and so everyone must contribute for any project to be successful. To give you an example, when we learn about how an actor prepares a role, you will do movement exercises and write a character sketch. Ensuing discussions of the exercises offer analysis and growth for all members of the class community -- of which you a vital member. You may feel shy at first, but the class is designed to progress slowly and help you to feel safe taking creative risks.